



FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION

... a Quaker lobby in the public interest

Dear Representative,

We at FCNL hope that Congress will take a hard look at President Barack Obama's request for \$83.4 billion in supplemental spending. **Congress should vote "no" on more funding for warfighting in Iraq and Afghanistan but approve the \$7.1 billion international affairs request for development and diplomacy.**

In our judgment, the president's supplemental funding request is not structured to wind down and end the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Rather than funding aggressive new military tactics that could widen the war in Afghanistan and Pakistan, we urge Congress to restructure the package to focus funding on the expanded diplomacy, development assistance, and international cooperation that are key to ending these conflicts and promoting a stable peace in the wider region.

In speeches, reports, and testimony before Congress, the president, the Pentagon, and other officials in the new administration have stressed the importance of U.S. investments in regional strategies that rely on smart diplomacy, expanded development assistance, and cooperation with other countries in the region. Yet the proportion of military to non-military expenditures in the president's request is not very different from previous warfighting supplementals. More than 95% of the funds allocated for Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan in the \$83.4 billion supplemental funding request President Obama submitted to Congress will pay for military operations in those countries.

In particular, the war supplemental will fund the aggressive new military tactics and the wider war in Afghanistan and Pakistan that President Obama outlined in a policy statement March 27. *Nothing in the president's policy or in the funding request addresses the widely-held judgment that the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan and U.S. raids in Pakistan are the most important elements driving the resurgence of the Taliban.* Nothing in the policy or the bill reflects the president's previously expressed insight that the U.S. must convince Afghans that it has "no interest or aspiration to be there over the long term."

Congress should not write a new blank check for warfighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Congress should instead:

- Affirm that the U.S. has no intention of maintaining a long-term presence in Afghanistan by prohibiting expenditures to build permanent bases there and requiring the administration to set a date certain for withdrawal.
- Reduce the civilian death toll and resultant hostility toward the U.S. by requiring the administration to end Predator missile strikes and other aerial bombing responsible for civilian casualties in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The UN Assistance Mission in

Afghanistan reported air strikes are responsible for 64% of all civilian deaths caused by the U.S., NATO, and Afghan forces in 2008.

- Ensure that the United States withdraws all of its armed forces from Iraq no later than December 31, 2011, by requiring the administration to submit the U.S.-Iraq withdrawal agreement of November 2008 (the “SOFA”) to Congress for approval. Such approval would establish that U.S. forces cannot remain in Iraq beyond 2011 without congressional consent.

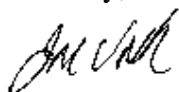
At the same time Congress should:

- Approve the \$7.1 billion in funding for the international affairs budget, including:
 - \$3.7 billion for humanitarian aid, development initiatives, and diplomatic support in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq
 - \$0.8 billion for aid to the West Bank and humanitarian assistance for the crisis in Gaza
 - \$0.8 billion to fund UN peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, and the Central African Republic.
 - \$1.7 billion in global humanitarian, economic, and development assistance to address international disasters, food shortages, and the global financial crisis in countries outside of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq.
- Approve \$30 million for the Department of Justice for shutting down the Guantanamo Bay prison and implement a review of the U.S. detention and interrogation procedures.
- Approve the administration’s request for State and Energy Department funding for nuclear disablement and dismantlement work in North Korea.

The president’s supplemental funding request as a whole does not support policies that will end U.S. warfighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Any further funds appropriated by Congress for Iraq and Afghanistan should clearly be directed to end, not expand or extend, the wars. The failure of the supplemental request to significantly increase the proportion of U.S. resources allocated for non-military security vs. military operations, moreover, threatens to contradict the administration’s new emphasis on using all of the instruments of U.S. power to build a better world.

We at FCNL oppose all new funding for war and urge you to vote against the war funding in this bill. At a minimum, Congress should condition the supplemental funding bill to end U.S. warfighting in Iraq and Afghanistan and change the proportion of funding allocated to non-military purposes. Rather than calming and stabilizing the situations, continued U.S. warfighting is destabilizing the region and feeding the seeds of extremist violence. Please do not write yet another blank check for war.

Sincerely,



Joe Volk
Executive Secretary