Dear Speaker McCarthy, Minority Leader Jeffries, Majority Leader Schumer, and Minority Leader McConnell,

We, the undersigned organizations, write today to urge you to support strong investments in non-Pentagon discretionary spending. The budget is a moral document, outlining the priorities of our country. Congress should base its budget decisions on how these choices will impact the least among us; addressing human needs, supporting environmental stewardship, and promoting peace at home and abroad.

**We urge you to oppose harsh cuts and overall spending caps. Instead, we call on you to protect and expand critical programs that allow all to live with dignity in peaceful, thriving communities.**

Increasing investments made over the past two fiscal years in programs that support nutrition assistance, healthcare, housing, climate adaptation and peacebuilding have allowed many communities around the country, and the world, to survive the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, communities across the country continue to face challenges providing affordable and accessible food, shelter, and healthcare. Today, nearly 15% of U.S. households face food insecurity, impacting more than 40 million people, a quarter of whom are children. Rising inflation and housing prices, combined with stagnant wages, have led millions of households to struggle to afford safe, stable housing, with only one in four eligible households receiving federal housing assistance.

At the same time, violence and instability are rising globally. The Institute of Economics and Peace, in its 2022 *Global Peace Index Report*, found that overall global peacefulness has continued to deteriorate for the eleventh consecutive year, driven mainly by ongoing conflict. Since 2019, we have seen a tripling in global food insecurity, overwhelmingly concentrated in areas afflicted by violence and war. Additionally, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that 117.2 million people will be forcibly displaced or stateless in 2023, a record level in recent decades.

Now is not a time for reckless threats and political brinkmanship. Congress must resist calls to cut critical domestic and international programs that support nutrition assistance, accessible healthcare, affordable housing, climate adaptation and sustainable peace in upcoming budget negotiations. Proposals to maintain or increase spending for the Pentagon, while cutting anywhere from 9% to more than 24% of other discretionary spending, will severely exacerbate poverty and insecurity.

Congress should expand – not slash – investments in discretionary spending to alleviate food insecurity and poverty, improve access to affordable healthcare and housing, and reduce violence at home and abroad.

We urge you to reject cuts and overall spending caps to the federal budget that would unjustly impact American communities and our most vulnerable neighbors. We call on you to support robust investment in programs that protect human rights and dignity, alleviate suffering, strengthen peace, and reflect our nation’s values and global leadership.

Sincerely,
Atlanta Friends Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia
Berkeley Monthly Meeting, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Berkley, California
Buddhist Global Relief, Carmel, New York
Charlottesville Friends Meeting Peace and Social Concerns Committee, Charlottesville, Virginia
Citizens’ Climate Lobby, Yolo County CA Chapter, Yolo County, California
Clean Energy Action, Colorado
Colorado Coalition for a Livable Climate, Fort Collins, Colorado
Colorado Jewish Climate Action, Colorado
Community of Christ USA Apostles Team, National
East Bay Citizens for Peace, East Bay, Rhode Island
Fire Ecology Restoration Project, Southern Oregon
First Presbyterian Church, Logan, Utah
Gandhi Alliance for Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah
Indivisible Colorado, Colorado
Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, California
Jewish Voice for Peace, Denver and Boulder, Colorado
Just Peace RI, Providence, Rhode Island
Justice and Peace Action Team of Greater Kansas City, Greater Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas
Justice and Peace Team of Medford United Church of Christ, Medford, Oregon
Methodist Action Program, Wilmington, Delaware
Mount Olympus Counseling Center, Holladay, Utah
Mountain View Friends Meeting, Denver, Colorado
Nashville Peace and Justice Center, Nashville, Tennessee
No Endless War or Excessive Militarism, Rhode Island
Pax Christi Northwest, Washington
Pax Christi RI, Rhode Island
Peace Action Network of Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Peace Action WI, Wisconsin
Peace Education Center of Greater Lansing, East Lansing, Michigan
Peace House, Jackson County, Oregon
Providence Friends Meeting, Rhode Island
Rogue Valley Health Care for All Oregon, Jackson County, Oregon
San Jose Peace & Justice Center, San Jose, California
Sister Carmen Community Center, Boulder County, Colorado
SPAN Ohio Columbus Area Region, Franklin County, Ohio
Utah Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, Salt Lake County, Utah
West Hartford Monthly Meeting/Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Hartford, Connecticut
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, San Francisco Branch, San Francisco, California
YWCA Berkeley/Oakland, Alameda and Contra Costa County, California
ZUHOP, Seattle, Washington

Friends Committee on National Legislation’s local constituent Advocacy Teams:

- Berkeley/San Francisco, CA Advocacy Team
- Buffalo, NY Advocacy Team
- Eastern Iowa Advocacy Team
- Atlanta, GA Advocacy Team
- Colorado Advocacy Team
- Independence, MO Advocacy Team
- Lansing, MI Advocacy Team
- Nashville, TN Advocacy Team
- North Texas Advocacy Group
- Providence, RI Advocacy Team
- Rogue Valley, OR Advocacy Team
- Seattle, WA Advocacy Team
- Salt Lake City, UT Advocacy Team
- Virginia Advocacy Team
- West Virginia Advocacy Team
- Western Iowa Advocacy Team
- Western North Carolina Advocacy Team
- Whittier, CA Advocacy Team