

The Honorable Speaker McCarthy
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Minority Leader Jeffries
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Majority Leader Schumer
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Minority Leader McConnell
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

May 30, 2023

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*
 Washington Physicians for Social Responsibility, *Washington*
 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