



# WASHINGTON NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION

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## More Bombs Won't Bring More Peace

President Donald Trump is proposing massive increases in Pentagon spending. Lamenting that “we never win wars anymore,” the president sought a \$30 billion increase in the Pentagon’s budget this year, to be followed by \$54 billion more next year. In Congress, leaders on the Armed Services committees have proposed a \$100 billion increase for next year.

These budget choices are paired in the president’s proposals with massive cuts in diplomacy, development, and other spending that protects our nation: in the State Department, the US Agency for International Development, the Environmental Protection Agency, nutrition and housing assistance, and other key institutions and programs. No matter what your advocacy priorities, they are under threat from the president’s proposal to grow the Pentagon budget.

### Congress Is Key

But the president doesn’t have the final word on how our nation spends its money. For this fiscal year, Congress approved about half the Pentagon budget increase that the president pushed for. **This \$15 billion Pentagon spending increase is still more than the entire budget for our diplomatic engagement across the world.**

The Constitution stipulates that Congress determines how our nation spends its money, and lawmakers from both major political parties have said that the president’s overall budget priorities for next year are “dead on arrival.”

That is why our FCNL community is focusing on encouraging Congress to rein in out-of-control Pentagon spending. Our advocacy together will make a difference.

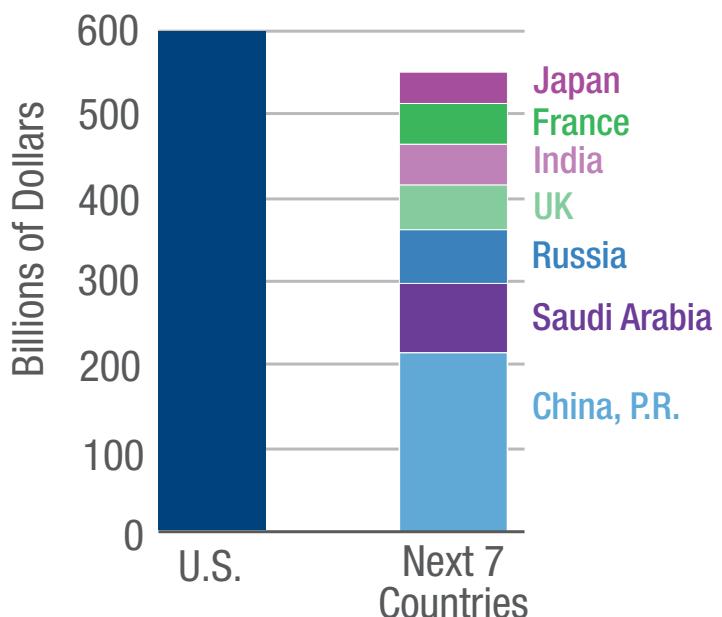
### A Matter of Faith

As a Quaker-led community, we believe that peace is only possible through peaceful means that include diplomacy, development, and peacebuilding. A foreign policy and economy increasingly dependent on the military drives up the likelihood of war.

As our legislative policy states, “Militarism has permeated our society, skewing our national budget toward support for the military and its attendant industries and forcing our local economies increasingly to depend on them. We oppose the militarization of U.S. foreign and domestic policy.”

*(continued on p. 2)*

### U.S. MILITARY SPENDING: More than the next 7 countries combined



*Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.  
Data is from 2015.*



### More Bombs Won't Bring More Peace (from p. 1)

But you don't have to be a Quaker to see that war isn't working. Fifteen years of bombings and war have not led to peace in Afghanistan, Iraq, or the countries that are a focus of U.S. military action. Bombing campaigns in Iraq, Afghanistan, and now Syria do nothing to address the reasons for violent extremism and do a great deal to radicalize the people being attacked. Doubling down on this same strategy will not produce a different outcome.

Too often in Congress, the desire to "do something" outweighs consideration of that "something's" effectiveness. Violence only breeds more violence, yet violence is what the U.S. turns to time and again, despite the evidence that diplomacy and development work has the best chance of producing a long-term solution.

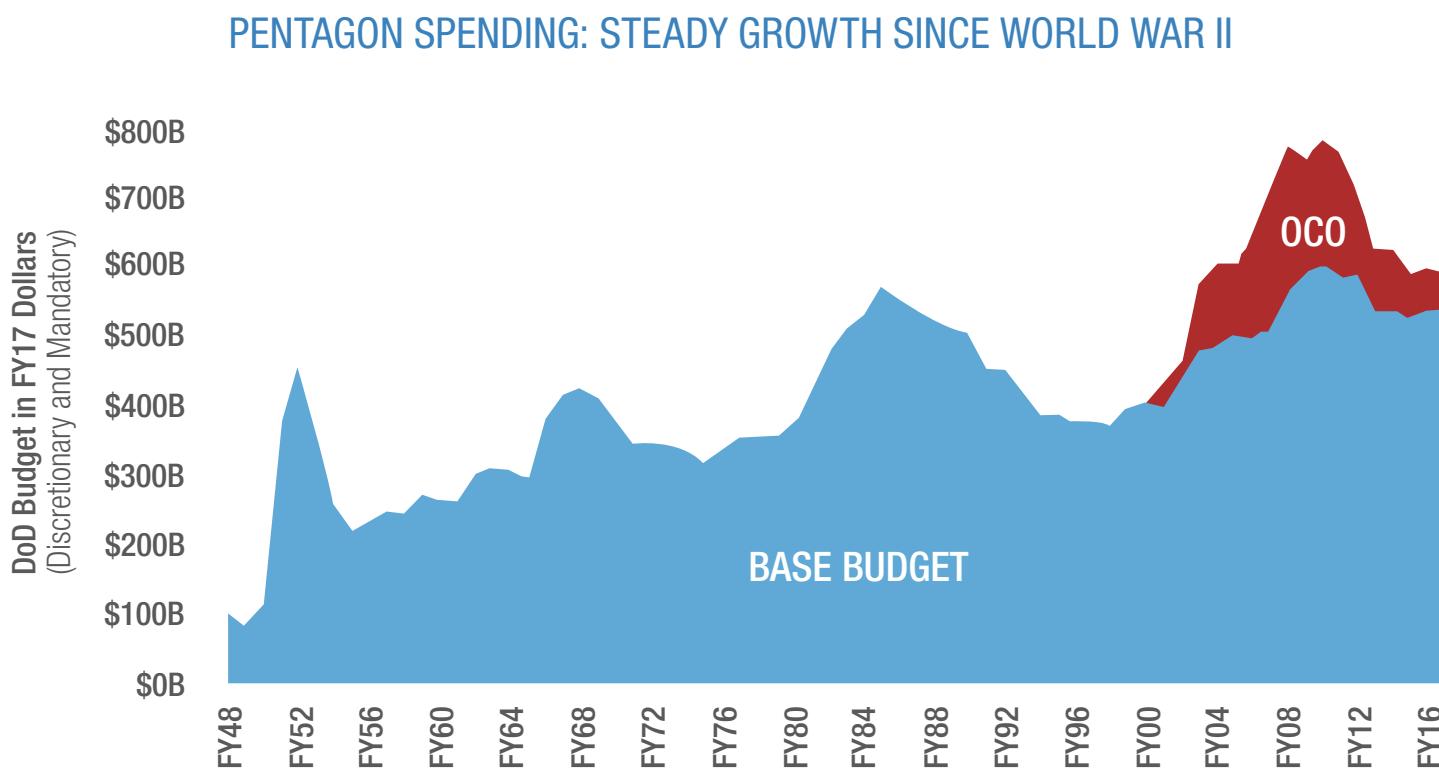
Further increasing the Pentagon's budget is also fiscally irresponsible. Pentagon spending rose sharply after 9/11, increasing more than 40 percent in 10 years. Even after Congress instituted a cap on federal

spending, the \$600 billion Pentagon budget is still at or near the levels of the Cold War and Vietnam War. The U.S. spends more than three times what China spends on its military and more than ten times what Russia spends (see chart on pg. 1).

### The OCO Slush Fund

Congress also found ways to get around these budget caps for the Pentagon through special Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding that was intended just for immediate, unbudgeted war operations — such as a surge of troops in Afghanistan.

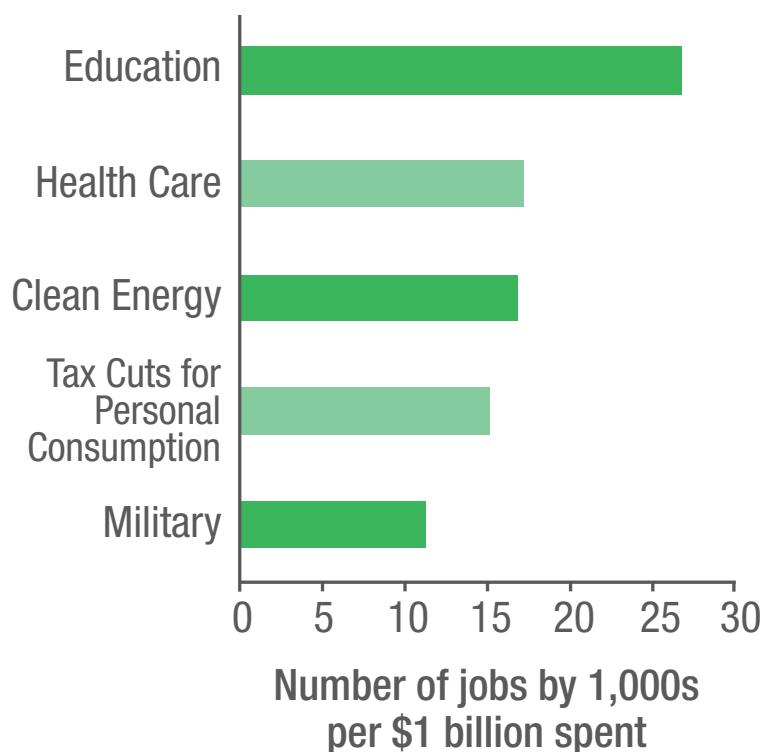
FCNL opposes any additional war funding, including through the OCO slush fund. As budget pressures have increased, the Pentagon has begun using this fund to pay for regular, non-war funding, providing a way for Congress to add up to \$60 or \$70 billion in spending beyond budget caps. While some of the funding goes to purposes we support — such as peacebuilding — we don't believe the slush fund itself is a good idea.



*Even with recent reductions, U.S. military spending rivals the Pentagon budget during the Cold War. The red portion shows military spending through the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund, "emergency" money that has become a way for the Pentagon to get around efforts to control spending. Source: Center for Strategic & International Studies*



## PENTAGON SPENDING NOT EFFECTIVE AT CREATING JOBS



Brown University's Heidi Garrett-Peltier found that Pentagon spending is less effective at creating jobs than the other options she studied. This chart shows the number of jobs created per \$1 billion investment. Source: "The Job Opportunity Cost of War," by Heidi Garrett-Peltier (2014)

The Pentagon budget now accounts for more than a quarter of all the money that Congress appropriates. A law passed in the early 1990s requires every government agency to be audited, but the Pentagon's books still aren't ready for this basic demonstration of fiscal accountability. Despite multiple extensions, many experts are skeptical that the Pentagon will be able to meet its September deadline for an audit.

This audit matters because of the well-documented waste, fraud, and abuse at the Pentagon, about which members of Congress from both major parties have raised concerns. Weapons systems regularly overrun their budgets or are rendered obsolete while still in

development — from the billions-over-budget F-35 fighter jets to the Littoral combat ship that the Pentagon says it doesn't need. The Pentagon's own internal study found some \$125 billion in potential savings over five years just in administrative and bureaucratic waste.

The Pentagon's requests for money, supported by big business, are just part of the problem. Each year, Congress approves new money for Pentagon expenditures that the military hasn't even requested because spending supports jobs in the military and defense industry. For example, while many of our nation's military leaders question the need for a land-based ICBM missile system, senators from all

three states where missile sites are located keep championing their usefulness. These senators are understandably concerned about jobs for their constituents. In fact, investment in the Pentagon is one of the least effective ways to create jobs (see chart at left).

The Pentagon itself has noted the excessive number of military bases around the country and around the world, but members of Congress routinely oppose any efforts to close bases in their states or districts. Sens. John McCain (AZ) and Jack Reed (RI) and Rep. Adam Smith (WA) have all said a new effort to establish a Base Realignment and Closure process (known in Congress as BRAC) should begin in 2019. Savings could amount to \$2 billion a year or more.

### We Can Halt Spending Increases

When we blindly hand over our country's resources to the Pentagon while starving successful programs that care for our neighbors, the earth, and each other, we have lost sight of our priorities as a country. We also deprive our leaders and our country of the necessary tools to avoid war.

Our collective strength is not a tally of how many wars we win. It is a measure of the free, just, and equitable society we create. The administration's efforts to add to an already bloated Pentagon budget move us farther away from creating that society. Together, we can stop these dangerous proposals.



## “We Can’t Kill Our Way to Victory”

The Trump administration may believe that violence and its threat is enough to advance U.S. interests, but few policy experts or military leaders agree. Instead, they argue that an “America first” approach will be more expensive, feed cycles of crisis that allow extremism to thrive, and put U.S. troops in needless danger.

“The State Department, USAID ... and other development agencies are critical to preventing conflict and reducing the need to put our men and women in uniform in harm’s way,” more than 120 retired generals told Congress in late February. These military leaders echo the bipartisan panel convened by FCNL last year, which concluded that early conflict prevention programs “help forestall open-ended crises that are far more damaging to American interests and power and far costlier to the American taxpayer.”

Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, head of U.S. Command in Africa, was even more direct in his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March. He told senators, “We could knock off all of ISIL and Boko Haram this afternoon, but by the end of the week, those ranks would be filled. Many people, especially those in uniform, have said we can’t kill our way to victory here.”

Yet the Trump administration’s budget proposal seeks to do just that. And Pentagon budget increases are likely to come at the expense of the very programs with proven effectiveness to prevent violence and build peace. At a time when the U.S. is facing multiple foreign policy crises, the U.S. should increase investment in the cost-effective programs that promote diplomacy, development, and international cooperation. We need more tools in our foreign policy toolbox, not fewer.

President Trump’s budget blueprint for 2018 calls for a 29 percent reduction in funding for the State Department and USAID. It specifically eliminates programs that effectively prevent violent conflict, mass atrocities, and genocide. These programs include the Complex Crises Fund, which allows USAID to respond quickly and flexibly to emerging and unforeseen violence; and the U.S. Institute of Peace, which works directly in conflict situations.

In addition, the budget proposes to “reduce or end funding for international organizations whose missions do not substantially advance U.S. foreign policy interests.” U.S. contributions to the United Nations could be cut by half. Those “savings” would enable the Trump administration to make good its promises to increase Pentagon spending.

The savings from eliminating these programs are modest at best. The Complex Crises Fund received \$30 million in 2016 — less than one percent of what the U.S. spends each year on construction of a single F-35 fighter jet. The State Department’s 2017 budget is a mere fraction of the Pentagon’s \$600 billion annual expenditure. For that investment, however, the U.S. is able to prevent violence before it breaks out and help to create a more secure, democratic, and prosperous world.

It is up to Congress to protect this essential funding, not give it away to the Pentagon. To achieve peace, we need to strengthen, not weaken our nation’s capacity to build it. 

### Dig Deeper on FCNL’s Website

- **How Much Does the U.S. Spend on War?** It’s more than just what goes to the Pentagon.
- **Jobs and the Pentagon.** If Congress is worried about job creation, it would do better to spend money elsewhere.
- **The Myth of the “Readiness Crisis.”** Military leaders dispute the idea that more money is needed to ensure the U.S. military is fighting-ready.

Visit [fcnl.org/pentagonspending](http://fcnl.org/pentagonspending) for these and other resources.



# The Pentagon Budget: 3 Ways to Cut Back

While Congress considers new money for the Pentagon, we have some suggestions for cutting back.

1. **\$25 billion a year in military waste.** An internal Pentagon report identified this much bureaucratic waste at the Pentagon each year.
2. **\$12 billion a year for F-35 fighter planes.** These planes have been plagued with cost overruns and faulty equipment. They are designed for wars the U.S. doesn't fight any more.
3. **\$0.5 billion a year to reduce nuclear missile bases.** Congress has refused to allow reductions requested by the Air Force, which spends billions every year to maintain three Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) bases.

Read more: [fcnl.org/3ways](http://fcnl.org/3ways)

## THE FUTURE OF FCNL

Join Diane Randall for a webinar May 31, 8 p.m. Eastern

As we enter the final month of our capital campaign, *The World We Seek: Now Is the Time*, join Diane for a conversation about how FCNL is strengthening our Quaker lobby, developing programs that engage young adults, and expanding our presence on Capitol Hill.

RSVP at [fcnl.org/nowisthetime](http://fcnl.org/nowisthetime)



## A Witness Against War

*John Huyler, a member of Boulder Friends Meeting, shares his journey to Friends and to FCNL. Read his full essay: [fcnl.org/journey](http://fcnl.org/journey)*

When I first set foot in a silent meeting I said to myself, “this is the real thing.” I have been a Quaker ever since. My journey hasn’t been easy, though. A year after I went to that first meeting, I was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy. In 1970, when I began attending meeting again, there were three Quakers who sat in the back of the La Jolla meeting. All had been in prison for their conscientious objection to war: one during World War I, one during World War II, and one during the Korean War. The silent witness provided by those three Quakers was an important contributor to my ability to stand one day before my commanding officer and say, “Sir, I am a conscientious objector, and I refuse to fly.”

Some decades later, when I first became familiar with the work of FCNL, I also said to myself, “this is the real thing.” In my career, I have facilitated strategic planning for many nonprofits, and I can say unequivocally that FCNL is one of the most functional and stable nonprofits that I’ve worked with. I also believe that FCNL carries the anti-war banner more consistently and effectively than any other organization. This is the witness that is particularly needed and the vision of a world without war and the causes of war is what I hope for in the decades to come.

When my wife and I were rewriting our wills as I turned 70, it was logical to think of how our modest contribution might help enable FCNL to continue its astonishingly effective work after both of us have passed. I’m particularly passionate about FCNL’s work to put its money where its mouth is in broadening opportunities for younger generations and to continue its singular witness and testimony against war.

Learn how you can join John in making a gift to the future of FCNL: call Mary Comfort Ferrell at 202-903-2539 or go to [fcnl.org/will](http://fcnl.org/will)



## FCNL Advocacy Teams: Quaker Vision & Collective Action to Rein in Pentagon Spending

Congress has the power to stop unchecked increases in Pentagon spending. Both Democrats and Republicans have questioned the president's proposal to grow military spending, but members of Congress are often hesitant to vote against Pentagon funding. Active, engaged constituents are the best antidote to that reluctance.

That's where the FCNL network comes in, especially the FCNL Advocacy Teams. These groups of Quakers and friends, now in more than 50 communities across the country, have been working since 2015 to build meaningful relationships with their members of Congress. This year, as Congress weighs big decisions on federal budget priorities, Advocacy Teams are engaging their members to support a budget that advances peace and justice.

Already, 2017 has been record-breaking for Advocacy Teams, with more than 111 lobby visits and 49 published letters to the editor so far. A few examples show the creative and effective ways that teams are asking their members of Congress to oppose more money for the Pentagon.

Advocacy Team members get to know their members of Congress and what is most persuasive to them. For one **Michigan** Republican representative, the team focused on a shared faith connection to



*Michigan Advocacy Team lobbies Senator Stabenow's office.  
Learn more about Advocacy Teams: [fcnl.org/advocacyteams](http://fcnl.org/advocacyteams)*

make their point. The representative agreed enthusiastically when a team member pointed out that Jesus calls us to feed the poor, protect orphans and widows, heal the sick, and be peacemakers. He was less comfortable, however, when the team member asked how those beliefs were reflected in his voting record. Despite this challenge, the visit ended with a hug—and much for the representative to think about.

Advocacy Teams also use the power of the network to support each other. In a visit with their senator, **New Haven, Connecticut** team members learned about a congressional sign-on letter urging a Pentagon audit. The team realized that this kind of letter could put members on record to oppose new spending until the Pentagon undergoes an audit required by law. They shared the letter with teams in other states. The result: members of Congress from Arizona to Georgia are hearing that their constituents want them to speak out publicly on the sorry state of the Pentagon's budget—and representatives are acting. In a visit with the **Los Angeles, California** Advocacy Team, the top aide to one representative said his boss would be open to drafting a similar letter for the House, a significant increase in leadership for this member of Congress.

While many Advocacy Teams have been working for months to build relationships with their congressional delegation, others are taking the first steps. Geoff Hilsabeck of the **Morgantown, West Virginia** team spoke about his first lobby visit on a national call with other team members in April. Despite his fears of encountering hostility, indifference, or challenge, the visit was an important first step in their lobbying journey. Geoff and his team reflected on what it means to see that of God in everyone—including Congress.

This relationship-building enables our Advocacy Teams to be successful agents of change. One lobby visit isn't enough—it takes time and patience for the seeds planted in a conversation to grow. Through their ongoing work, Advocacy Teams are helping members of Congress take the next step to question unthinking investment in the Pentagon and in military responses to violence. 



# NOW IS THE TIME

**NOVEMBER 2-5, 2017 | WASHINGTON, DC**  
FCNL's Annual Meeting and Quaker Public Policy Institute  
[fcnl.org/annualmeeting](http://fcnl.org/annualmeeting)

## Advocacy Calendar (*from p. 8*)

continuing resolution by that date to give more time to complete authorization and appropriations bills.

Sometime this fall, the U.S. will hit the “debt ceiling,” a limit Congress has set for how much money the U.S. can borrow. The debt ceiling determines whether the government can pay for existing obligations. Unless Congress raises this limit, the U.S. government will not be able to pay creditors and will default on its loans. A U.S. default would have devastating consequences for the global economy.

With a great deal at stake in raising the debt ceiling, some members of Congress are likely to ask for conditions before they will agree to a vote, including rolling back caps on Pentagon spending set in 2013. FCNL opposes this move if it allows Pentagon spending to increase while cutting key health care, food assistance, and other domestic programs.

### November – December

At the end of the year, Congress will make binding decisions about how much money the Pentagon will get in 2018, and possibly 2019, when it passes final appropriations and authorization bills.

Throughout this year, members need to hear steady opposition to increased Pentagon spending. Knowing that their constituents value investment in programs that build peace and true security, rather than in the tools and strategies of violence, can help give representatives and senators the support they need to vote against more Pentagon spending. 

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- "We Can't Kill Our Way to Victory"

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## Opportunities to Cut Pentagon Spending this Year

President Trump wants to increase Pentagon spending, but Congress will make the ultimate decision. While Congress is often only too eager to fund military programs — whether or not the Pentagon requests them — members are open to influence from their constituents.

Time and again this year, your members of Congress will be asked whether to add more money to the Pentagon's already excessive and unaccountable budget. Your advocacy can make a difference in whether Congress will reject these proposals.

### May – July

Representatives will vote on both military policy and appropriations. The National Defense Authorization Act sets what the U.S. could spend money on. Rep. Mac Thornberry (TX), who leads negotiations over what goes into the authorization bill, is seeking a \$90 billion increase in Pentagon spending. But other representatives will push back on these increases with their own amendments — if they hear enough support from their constituents.

Once the military policy is set, the military appropriations bill determines how much the Pentagon can actually spend. That legislation provides another opportunity for representatives to reject increased Pentagon spending.

### August

At town halls and meetings with constituents in August, members will gauge voters' views headed into the fall. This is an important opportunity to let your members know you oppose Pentagon spending increases.

### September – October

The Senate will take up military authorization and appropriations bills. As in the House, senators can offer amendments and go on the record against new Pentagon spending.

Congress must make a decision about how to fund the government by the end of its fiscal year on September 30. It is likely that Congress will pass a

(continued on p. 7)