

Join Pocan/Lee Letter to Stop Defense Spending Increases During the Pandemic

Sending Office: Honorable Mark Pocan

Deadline Friday May 15, COB

Current Signers (21): B. Lee; Blumenauer; Cohen; DeFazio; DeGette; Espaillat; J. Garcia; Grijalva; Huffman; Jayapal; H. Johnson; A. Levin; Norton; Ocasio-Cortez; Omar; Pocan; Pressley; Raskin; Sarbanes; Tlaib; and Watson Coleman

Endorsing Organizations: Peace Action; Public Citizen; Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL); Just Foreign Policy; Pax Christi USA; United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries; National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies; American Friends Service Committee; Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ; Council for a Livable World; CODEPINK; Women's Action for New Directions (WAND); Indivisible; Center for International Policy; Beyond the Bomb; Demand Progress; Win Without War

Dear Colleague:

We write to invite you to join us in calling for a lower NDAA authorization level this year than last year.

The coronavirus is now America's greatest enemy. More than 70,000 Americans have died from the coronavirus over the past two months – far more than the number of American casualties during the entire Vietnam War. Our spending priorities must remain focused on coronavirus testing, tracing, treatment, cures, and economic assistance and relief.

At some point, spending more than every other nation on earth must be enough. We think that time is now as we focus on combating the coronavirus. To add your name to the letter copied below, please contact David Bagby with Rep. Mark Pocan (david.bagby@mail.house.gov) or Gregory Adams with Rep. Barbara Lee (gregory.adams@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

/s/
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

/s/
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Thornberry:

We write to request a reduction in defense spending during the coronavirus pandemic.

As you draft this year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), we encourage you to authorize a level of spending below last year's authorized level. Congress must remain focused on responding to the coronavirus pandemic and distributing needed aid domestically. In order to do so, appropriators must have access to increased levels of non-defense spending which could be constrained by any increase to defense spending.

In the last three years alone – during a time of relative peace – we have increased annual defense spending by more than \$90 billion, or 15 percent. This has occurred during a period without any military action authorized by Congress.

Right now, the coronavirus is our greatest adversary. It has killed more than 70,000 Americans over the past two months, far surpassing the number of casualties during the Vietnam War. We must remain focused on combating the coronavirus and not on increasing military spending that already outpaces 144 nations combined. At some point, spending more than every other nation on earth must be enough.

America needs a coronavirus cure, not more war. We need more testing, not more bombs. In order to reopen our nation in a data-driven, safe manner, we need to focus our spending efforts on the millions of additional coronavirus tests and tens of thousands of additional contract tracers we will need, as well as covering treatment costs, developing therapeutics, and distributing future vaccines.

We thank you for your service as Chairman of the Armed Services Committee and your consideration of this request. These are unparalleled times. We encourage you to constrain defense spending during this pandemic so that we can defeat the greatest threat to our nation – the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

[Members of Congress]