

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

March 7, 2022

Dear President Biden,

The undersigned 86 national and state organizations are deeply dismayed that our federal military budget has ballooned to more than three-quarters of a trillion dollars during the first year of your presidency. Further, we are alarmed by reports of the pressure you are receiving to request an even greater sum in your proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget, particularly from those poised to profit the most from the Pentagon's ever-growing largesse.

We write to make abundantly clear that despite what the military-industrial complex and its advocates in Washington may suggest, true national security will not be achieved by pouring more money into military might. Rather, the people of this country require serious, non-military investments to be truly secure, such as pandemic relief, jobs, healthcare, and climate crisis solutions.

This is why many of our groups and the activists we represent have spent the last year tirelessly fighting to strengthen the Build Back Better package and make the case for meaningful social programs. Yet Congress instead gave into the demands of defense contractors by plussing up military spending beyond even the amount you requested, both through the appropriations process and in supplemental measures such as those addressing China and Ukraine. Clearly, for those who benefit from the military-industrial complex, no amount is ever enough. This year alone, three quarters of a trillion dollars slid through Congress with minimal resistance, all while legislators penny-pinched over items like paid family leave, subsidizing school lunches, free community college, and providing dental care to seniors.

Why is it that there is always more money for weapons and war – providing no additional protection for national security and arguably diminishing it – even as our government refuses to invest at scale in its most important resource – its people? Every dollar thrown carelessly to the Pentagon – the only Department that has never passed an audit – is a dollar not spent on the people who need it the most. Unquestioned war spending takes us further away from true, human-centered values and towards a country that acts at the behest of corporations, not its residents.

Presidential leadership is desperately needed at this moment if we are to change course. We urge you to right-size the Pentagon budget this year by lowering the amount of military spending in your Fiscal Year 2023 budget request.

Sincerely,

National Organizations:

ActionAid USA
Action Center on Race & the Economy
Adorers of the Blood of Christ, US Region
American Friends Service Committee
Center on Conscience and War
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
Coalition on Human Needs
CODEPINK
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
CommonDefense.us
Community Peacemaker Teams
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity, U.S. Provinces
Congregation of St. Joseph Justice Team
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
Criminalization of Poverty Project at the Institute for Policy Studies
Daily Kos
DC Peace Team
Demand Progress Education Fund
Detention Watch Network
Disciples Peace Fellowship
Dissenters
Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR-USA)
Friends Committee On National Legislation
Friends of the Earth US
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
Greenpeace USA
Indivisible
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center
Jewish Voice for Peace Action
Justice Is Global
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Leadership Team of the Felician Sisters of North America
MADRE
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
MoveOn
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Council of Churches
National Council of Gray Panthers Networks
National Priorities Project at the Institute for Policy Studies
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Our Revolution

Passionist Solidarity Network
Pax Christi USA
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Poligon Education Fund
Presentation Sisters Union - USA Unit
Project on Defense Alternatives
Public Citizen
RootsAction.org
Sisters of Charity Federation
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team
Social Security Works
Sojourners
Srs. of St. Joseph of Cluny
Sunrise Movement
Union of Concerned Scientists
Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice
United Church of Christ, Justice and Local Church Ministries
Veterans For Peace
Win Without War
Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)
World BEYOND War

State and Local Organizations:

Citizens for Peace (Michigan)
Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa (Wisconsin)
Equity and Transformation (Illinois)
Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center (Washington)
InterReligious Task Force on Central America (Ohio)
Justice Committee of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Albany Province (New York)
New Mexico & El Paso Region Interfaith Power and Light (New Mexico and Texas)
Office of Peace, Justice, and Ecological Integrity, Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth (New Jersey)
Peace Action of Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania)
Peace Education Center (Michigan)
Pennsylvania Council of Churches (Pennsylvania)
Sisters, Home Visitors of Mary (Michigan)
Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Pennsylvania)
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (Kentucky)
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, U.S.-Ontario Province (Oregon)
Sisters of the Humility of Mary (Pennsylvania and Ohio)
Sisters of Providence (Indiana)
Sisters of St. Francis (Iowa)
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill (Pennsylvania)