

Quotes in Support of the Lee-Pocan-Auchincloss Letter to President Biden Calling for a Reduction in Pentagon Spending

“More Pentagon spending has not made us safer, and continuing on this unsustainable path endangers our ability to recover from our current crises. It's past time for Congress to check this runaway spending and waste of taxpayer dollars.”

Mandy Smithberger

Director of the Center for Defense Information at the Project on Government Oversight

“President Biden has said that ending poverty would be a theory of change in his Administration. We know we can't end poverty or systemic racism or address the scourge of this pandemic, without also addressing our distorted spending on militarism and redirecting resources towards meeting our basic needs.”

Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis

Director of the Kairos Center for Religions, Rights and Social Justice

“We at the Friends Committee on National Legislation appreciate this timely and urgent call to reevaluate our national priorities. Spending so much on weapons and war while so many pressing domestic needs go unmet is not just unnecessary and unwise, but deeply immoral.”

Diana Ohlbaum

Legislative Director for Foreign Policy at the Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)

“We make our priorities clear by what we spend our money on. Given the breadth of challenges Americans face--a global pandemic, racial injustice, threats to democracy, the potential for catastrophic climate change--we need to expand the concept of security beyond military might and reallocate some U.S. nuclear and defense spending to meet these challenges.”

Tara Drozdenko

Acting Executive Director at Outrider Foundation

“The Pentagon's budget is at an all-time high, exceeding spending on all appropriated domestic programs combined. Reducing unnecessary Pentagon spending will free up much needed revenue for human needs priorities, enabling us to reduce poverty, protect our health, and improve economic security for our nation.”

Deborah Weinstein

Executive Director at the Coalition on Human Needs

“If this Administration is serious about prioritizing people and planet, it must substantially reduce military spending and invest in a just transition for workers and communities, including those on the frontlines of the climate crisis. The US military remains the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Now is the time to break with the era of endless wars and shift away from institutions and industries that endanger our future.”

Gaurav Madan

Senior Campaigner at Friends of the Earth

“The U.S. alone spends trillions of dollars on nuclear weapons, lining the pockets of warmongers and profiteers. This is not only unnecessary and wasteful, but is putting the American people at higher risk. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that taxpayer dollars must be diverted to the things that matter most: healthcare, education, safety nets, and the environment.”

Yasmeen Silva
Partnerships Manager at Beyond the Bomb

“At a time when hundreds of thousands of Americans have died of Covid-19 and the climate crisis is causing widespread devastation, we should not be spending nearly three quarters of a trillion dollars per year on the Pentagon. In addition, we need to make ongoing investments in fostering racial and economic justice. Most of the greatest challenges to our security are not military in nature, and the federal budget should reflect that reality.”

William D. Hartung
Director of the Arms and Security Project at the Center for International Policy

“Decades of endless war and an ever-expanding Pentagon budget have done nothing to keep us safe. In fact, as the Covid-19 crisis has made all-too clear, our misplaced priorities have left us woefully unprepared to meet the security threats of the 21st century. President Biden must break with the failed approach of his predecessor and start listening to the people. It’s time to cut the Pentagon budget.”

Erica Fein
Advocacy Director at Win Without War

“The Sisters of Mercy of the Americas join with others in calling for a significant reduction in the Pentagon budget. If the last year has taught us anything, the lesson is that massive military spending is totally ineffective in dealing with pandemic disease, climate change, racism, economic inequality and political polarization, realities which pose the greatest threats to our survival as a nation. We urge President Joe Biden to prioritize health, education, renewable energy, environmental protection and infrastructure repair over weapons and preparation for war.”

Sister Patricia McDermott
President of Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

“Congressional and executive action to reduce the Pentagon topline is long overdue. Cuts should be carefully considered and enacted with stakeholder input, but that is no excuse to avoid bold and immediate action to right-size the Defense budget for the years to come. The top priority should be reducing America's extraordinary debt burden and cutting the budget deficit, but cutting waste from the Defense budget is an achievable solution and we applaud lawmakers for advocating for the right kinds of cuts. We look forward to working with lawmakers across the ideological spectrum on spending reductions for FY 2022.”

Andrew Lautz
Director of Federal Policy at National Taxpayers Union

"The members of Congress urging Biden to cut Pentagon spending are right. Pouring taxpayer dollars into weapons and war doesn't keep us safe—it harms people around the world, and funnels resources away from pressing global needs. To truly 'Build Back Better,' President Biden must cut the bloated Pentagon budget, and reinvest that money into addressing issues like climate change and global health."

Tori Bateman

Policy Advocacy Coordinator at American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

"Representative Lee and her colleagues know that it's past time we put brains over brawn. The pattern of U.S. defense spending is completely unsustainable and does not make us safer. Sensible cuts to the Pentagon budget will leave room to recover from the pandemic and get Americans back to work."

Nancy Parrish

Executive Director of Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)

"Cutting the Pentagon budget and reinvesting in the needs of our communities is not only morally necessary, it's also urgent if we're going to address the biggest threat to our planet: climate change. The Pentagon is the world's single largest consumer of oil and one of the world's top greenhouse gas emitters. If we're going to take the future of our planet seriously, we need to cut the Pentagon budget now."

Carley Towne

Co-Director of CODEPINK

"The pandemic has underscored how grotesquely bloated is our Pentagon budget and how spending on weapons does nothing to address many of the greatest national security risks. Now is the time to reverse course on the "too much is never enough" approach to Pentagon spending and start redirecting some of that money into priority domestic and human needs."

Robert Weissman

President of Public Citizen

"The pandemic has proven that safety doesn't come from an ever-increasing Pentagon budget. It comes from investments in health care, education, good jobs, and infrastructure. It's time to reverse the Trump Pentagon increases and put those dollars where they will do the most good."

Lindsay Koshgarian

Program Director at the National Priorities Project

"The Union of Concerned Scientists strongly endorses this letter from Congressional leaders to President Biden. It highlights the critical choices facing our country at a time when too many are suffering from the harmful effects of the pandemic, climate change, racial inequality and the economic crisis. Now is not the time to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on an oversized military, but instead to make investments in improving people's daily lives."

Stephen Young

Senior Washington Representative, Global Security Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists

“The United States simply cannot afford to continue spending unsustainable amounts of money on the military, especially as we continue to lose American life to a health-security threat that cannot be defeated with military might. The Covid-19 pandemic is a wake-up call: If we wish to avoid repeating the same mistakes that contributed to the vulnerability of our population to the coronavirus, then we must correct our misplaced budget priorities and adequately fund public health to ensure a more holistic and effective national security.”

Jeff Carter

Executive Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility

“The Trump administration increased the already bloated Pentagon budget which failed to protect Americans from the pandemic. Why spend a quarter of a trillion dollars on money pit nuclear missiles? Voters want a change in priorities and an end to endless wars.”

Paul Kawika Martin

Senior Director for Policy and Political Affairs at Peace Action