

It's Time to Put People Over the Pentagon

The Pentagon Budget

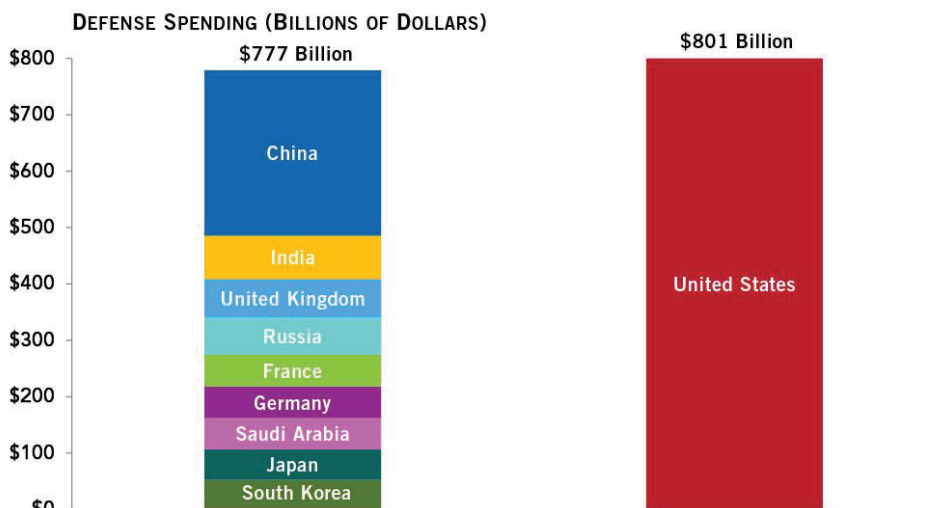
The U.S. spends more on its military than the next nine countries combined. These numbers don't even include the budgets for the C.I.A., N.S.A., and Department of Homeland Security.

Military might cannot take on the climate crises or public health emergencies, and yet we see the Pentagon getting more and more money every year.

For decades, consistently massive military budgets have been funding wars and overseas operations that disproportionately target and harm people of color around the world. All while simultaneously eating up funding for critical programs here at home, which then takes a greater toll on communities of color.



The United States spends more on defense than the next 9 countries combined



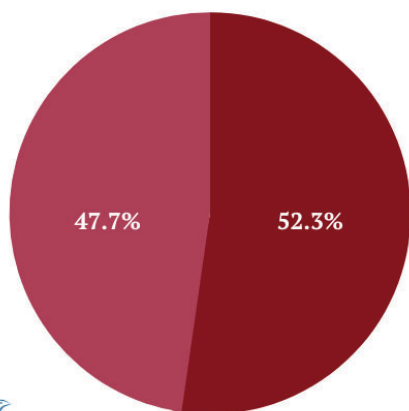
SOURCE: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, April 2022.
 NOTES: Figures are in U.S. dollars converted from local currencies using market exchange rates. Data for the United States are for fiscal year 2021, which ran from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021. Data for the other countries are for calendar year 2021. The source for this chart uses a definition of defense spending that is more broad than budget function 050 and defense discretionary spending.
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Skewed Spending Priorities

Biden FY 2024 Discretionary Budget Request, \$1.7 Trillion

The discretionary budget, the portion of the total budget that Congress decides how to allocate on a yearly basis, demonstrates how skewed our government's priorities are.

Non-Military
\$809 Billion



Military
\$886 Billion

Even as we face a historic pandemic, economic crisis, and worsening severe weather events, President Biden's budget request allocates over half of the budget to the military industrial complex. In fact, he has requested **\$886 billion** for the 2024 budget. That is a whopping \$44 billion more than last year!

Polling Shows Americans Don't Want Pentagon Increases

Polling finds that Americans can see the problem. Particularly at this time of dueling crises, we should be prioritizing human needs over the military industrial complex. We can activate communities on this issue by reminding them of the tradeoffs that come with increases to the Pentagon budget.

- A [spring 2022 survey](#) found 63% of voters opposed an increase in military spending above Biden's request, something Congress did regardless. The same survey found 55% of voters were "somewhat concerned" or "very concerned" about current military spending levels.
- In [January 2022](#), 56% of U.S. adults said they support cutting Pentagon spending and reinvesting those funds in pandemic recovery, health care, and jobs.
- [November 2021 poll](#) found that when Americans were asked what the highest priority for increased funding should be, the military ranked fifth as a priority at 11%, behind healthcare (23%), border security (17%), education (15%), and infrastructure (14%).
- A [July 2020 Data for Progress survey](#) found that 57% of voters support cutting the defense budget by 10% to reallocate funding to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and other pressing domestic needs. Only 25% of voters opposed either somewhat (11%) or strongly (14%), with the remainder unsure.
- That same month, [another poll](#) found that a plurality of respondents (37%) think we should decrease Pentagon spending, compared with only 13% who think it should be increased. However, when another group was asked the same question but with an initial sentence laying out the massive national debt, calls for cuts rose significantly — with roughly half the people polled (49%) believing we should decrease Pentagon spending, and only 8% thinking we should increase it.

Take Action

- **Contact your Senators and your Representative** and let them know your thoughts.
 - Ask members of Congress to cut the topline Pentagon budget and redirect those funds to critical human needs.
 - To find your member of Congress, go to www.usa.gov/elected-officials.
 - Call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 to get connected with their offices.
- **Contact the Biden administration** and let them know your thoughts.
 - Call the White House switchboard at 202-456-1414 or fill out a form online at www.whitehouse.gov/contact.
- **Write and submit letters to the editor** in response to articles on Pentagon spending.
 - Letters to the editor can be a powerful way to educate the public and influence public opinion. Keep your letter short and to the point, and critique or add to a published article.