

REDIRECT EXCESS DEFENSE SPENDING TO HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS AND JOB CREATION

March 25, 2009

Dear Senator/Representative:

We are writing in support of reducing unnecessary Department of Defense (DOD) spending in the Fiscal Year 2010 budget resolution and appropriations subcommittee allocations. Americans need a security strategy that keeps us safer and costs less. We urge you to reduce excess Department of Defense spending to help meet domestic discretionary needs.

The President's FY10 budget outline calls for \$534 billion for DOD. That is an increase of \$9 billion beyond inflation. In addition, separate supplemental appropriations continue to provide most of the money for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, some \$130 billion for FY10. Nuclear weapons and some miscellaneous military costs could add an estimated \$23 billion for a national security total of \$557 billion.

Even though we are encouraged that this outline calls for a smaller increase than in recent years, it continues a relentless increase in DOD spending to a higher level than at any point since World War II. This does not make sense in a time of fiscal crisis. Indeed, this budget continues to fund strategies of a bygone era, against an enemy that disappeared last century. Even commanding generals attest that many of today's security challenges do not have military solutions. We believe that if we do not begin to make actual reductions in military spending, we cannot adequately meet needs here at home.

We must turn back the harsh trend of rising poverty, unemployment, hunger and homelessness. We can extend opportunity and security for families in all walks of life by expanding health care coverage and affordable housing, making college attainable to more students, supporting the financial and nutritional needs of low-income families, investing in a far-reaching policy that will develop cleaner sources of energy and protect the planet by reducing global warming pollution, and generate good jobs to rebuild our middle class.

This is a time when we need to do all we can to boost programs that create jobs and stimulate the economy. While military spending does create jobs, a study by University of Massachusetts economists* found that *public dollars invested in health care, education, mass transit, or construction for home weatherization and infrastructure create more jobs than investing an equivalent amount in the military.*

In today's world, we need a broader definition of security; greater defense spending does not guarantee greater security. True security for individuals and families lies in the ability to provide for their needs.

Sincerely,

National groups

Americans for Democratic Action, Inc.
American Friends Service Committee
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
Black Women's Health Imperative
British American Security Information Council
Catholic Mobilization Network
Church Women United
Coalition of Labor Union Women
Coalition on Human Needs
Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism
Common Cause
Community Action Partnership
Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Foreign Policy in Focus

Franciscan Action Network
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Gender Action
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
Methodists United for Peace with Justice
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
National Organization for Women
National Priorities Project
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Peace Action
People with Disabilities for Social & Economic Justice, Inc.
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office

Progressive States Network
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Women's Focus Committee
Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, United States
Province
3D Security Initiative
True Majority

United Church of Christ, Justice & Witness Ministries
The United Methodist Church – General Board of
Church and Society
USAAction
Washington Office of Public Policy, Women's
Division, United Methodist Church
Women's Action for New Directions

Local, State, and Regional groups

Protecting Arizona's Family Coalition/Phoenix, **Arizona**
Marin Interfaith Task Force on the Americas/Larkspur, **California**
Tri-Valley CAREs (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment)/Livermore
St. Mark Presbyterian Church Peace and Justice Commission/Newport Beach
Interfaith Peace Ministry Orange County/Orange
Orange County Interfaith Coalition for Peace and Justice/Orange
California Church IMPACT/Sacramento
Sellers & Company/San Diego
Orange County Interfaith Coalition for the Environment/Tustin
Jewish Family Services/Danbury, **Connecticut**
Collaborative Center for Justice/Hartford
Pax Christi Northeast Florida/St. Augustine, **Florida**
Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda/Atlanta, **Georgia**
Georgia WAND/Atlanta
North Decatur Presbyterian Peace & Justice Committee/Decatur
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Central Leadership/Nazareth, **Kentucky**
Peace Action Maine/Portland, **Maine**
Xaverian Brothers USA/Baltimore, **Maryland**
PeaceAction Montgomery/Brookeville
Nepal America Welfare Association/Somerville, **Massachusetts**
Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield
Gray Panthers of Huron Valley/Ann Arbor, **Michigan**
WAND Southeast Michigan/Southfield
Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs/Duluth
Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Advisory Committee, Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls
People of Faith Peacemakers/Minneapolis and St. Paul
Women Against Military Madness/Minneapolis
Public Policy Center of Mississippi/Jackson, **Mississippi**
Leadership Team of the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood/O'Fallon, **Missouri**
St. Louis Province of the Carondelet Congregation, U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph/St. Louis
West Midwest Justice Team, Sisters of Mercy/Omaha, **Nebraska**
NH Citizens Alliance for Action/Concord, **New Hampshire**
New Jersey Tenants Organization/Hackensack, **New Jersey**
YWCA of Binghamton & Broome County/Binghamton, **New York**
Reaching-Out Community Services Inc./Brooklyn, NY
West Side Campaign Against Hunger/New York, NY
North Carolina Fair Share/Raleigh, **North Carolina**
Oklahoma Therapeutic Foster Care Association/Oklahoma City, **Oklahoma**
Albany Peace Seekers/Albany, **Oregon**
Corvallis Alternatives to War/Corvallis
Climate Crisis Working Group/Eugene
Community Alliance of Lane County, Eugene
Eugene Peace Works, Eugene
Oregon WAND, Eugene
Veterans for Peace – Squadron 13/ Eugene
Seeking Out Democracy/Junction City
Human Services Coalition of Oregon/Portland
Peace with Justice Ministries/Network Oregon-Idaho United Methodist Church Conference/Portland
Oregon PeaceWorks/Salem
PathWays PA/Holmes, **Pennsylvania**
Epiphany House, Inc./Lansdowne
Campaign for Working Families/Philadelphia
Just Harvest/Pittsburgh
Providence Connections Inc./Pittsburgh
Tennessee Citizen Action/Nashville, **Tennessee**
37th Legislative District Democratic Committee/Seattle, **Washington**
Peace Action Wisconsin/Milwaukee, **Wisconsin**

**Alternative Public Spending: Effects on Job Creation, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Economics Department (October 2007)*

*Letter organized by NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
and Women's Action for New Directions*