

# Ukraine War Not a Reason to Increase Base Pentagon Budget

June 2022

## Overview

As Congress begins to deliberate and determine the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2023, those advocating for big increases in the military budget often cite the war in Ukraine as a reason to approve more U.S. military spending. But Congress is providing massive support to Ukraine directly; in March, alongside the FY22 Omnibus, Congress passed a [\\$13.6 billion aid package](#) to Ukraine. In late May, a second supplemental provided an [additional \\$40 billion](#). The Ukraine war is simply not a reason to increase Pentagon spending.

President Biden has requested \$813 billion for FY23 – roughly a \$30 billion increase – for the Pentagon, an agency that has not yet passed an audit and has a horrific track record of waste, fraud, and abuse. Congress must resist calls to raise the Pentagon budget above President Biden's request.

### 1. Further bloating the Pentagon budget will not end the war in Ukraine.

For years, the Pentagon budget has increased based on arguments that the U.S. must be prepared to counter threats posed by adversaries such as China and Russia. Yet, despite the fact that the U.S. spends [12 times more](#) on our military than Russia, and more than the next [9 countries combined](#), hawks are arguing that the money we have funneled into the Pentagon is still not enough. But Russia's incursion into Ukraine has only demonstrated its comparable military weakness, and there is no evidence that the United States or NATO is at a military disadvantage by comparison. For all the challenges inherent in this crisis, a lack of U.S. military money is not one of them.

### 2. Congress is supporting Ukraine directly through supplemental spending; it does not make sense to raise the base budget to address a timebound need.

Increasing the base budget in response to temporary funding needs rather than through supplemental funding packages would functionally permanently inflate the annual budget. Congress can continue weighing ongoing support to Ukraine without amending the overall Pentagon topline request for FY23.

### 3. Proposals to increase the FY23 base budget in order to replenish weapons stockpiles are redundant.

The U.S. has already dedicated over \$30 billion to Ukraine in military assistance through supplemental funding, including \$12 billion for stockpile replenishment. Through Presidential Drawdown Authorities (PDA), the U.S. has provided Ukraine with over \$4 billion worth of weapons transfers [from DOD stockpiles](#) since September 2021. The Pentagon should not be permitted to "double-dip" into multiple funding sources by requesting even more for replenishment.

#### **4. The U.S. has a sufficient number of Stingers and Javelins in our inventory and does not need to allocate additional funding to procure more.**

As of May 6, the [U.S. has transferred](#) over 1,400 Stingers, 5,500 Javelins, and 14,000 other anti-armor systems to Ukraine. While the number of weapons in the U.S. inventory is classified, experts estimate that we retain 2/3 of our Javelin and 3/4 of our Stinger inventory.

#### **5. U.S. military readiness is determined by overall capabilities, not one or two discrete weapons systems.**

The U.S. can meet the nation's overall security needs in Fiscal Year 2023 without immediately plugging up the base budget or replacing every weapons system sent to Ukraine. Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby has noted that "It's not about counting [...] Javelins and being able to say that when you reach a certain level then all your readiness is gone. The Javelin is an anti-armor capability, so we judge it all as a conglomerate of what's our ability to meet this particular mission set, realizing that a Javelin isn't the only capability you have against armor."

#### **6. Stinger and Javelin replenishment cannot be solved by throwing more money at the systems.**

Replenishment issues lie with the supply and manufacturing chains. In the case of the Stingers, produced by Raytheon, some components are no longer commercially available, necessitating a weapon redesign. This will require prototyping and testing the new design prior to producing a new weapon. Lockheed Martin, which produces Javelins, has said they are currently meeting production demands and are working to increase their production capacity to meet future demands.

#### **7. The Pentagon needs to spend strategically and with more oversight.**

Without sufficient oversight and reporting, the Pentagon's bottomless coffers become a liability, not an asset. The Pentagon is known for misspending or failing to report on additional funding it receives. For example, much of the \$10 billion allocated to the Pentagon in the 2020 CARES Act relief package was spent on [jet engine parts](#), [body armor](#), [IT](#), and [space analytics](#) rather than COVID-19 response. Just last fall, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that [more than \\$100 billion](#) could be removed or reallocated away from the Pentagon's base budget without sacrificing national security objectives. Legislators should confirm an inspector general for the Department of Defense, while requiring that the Department pass an audit and spend its existing annual budget discerningly.

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