

To all U.S. Senators and Representatives,

We write to you with grave concern regarding President Biden's [request](#) of more than \$813,000,000,000 in Pentagon spending as part of the federal budget for fiscal year 2023. This funding request, if approved by Congress, will be the highest level of defense funding sought in [history](#). As women state legislators who believe deeply in the necessity of demilitarizing U.S. foreign and domestic policy, we ask that you reject the urge to increase the exorbitant Pentagon budget and boost spending for domestic investments that will help low and middle-income families become economically sound.

We have been watching the somber tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, and condemn, in the strongest terms, Russia's violent and unprovoked attacks on the Ukrainian people. We grieve with the people of Ukraine and sympathize with the pain and uncertainty that they face. The gross reach for power on display by President Vladimir Putin requires a response, and we firmly support the use of non-military actions, including sharp multilateral sanctions, that increase the cost of war to Russia and open space for peace negotiations.

At the same time, Russia's war in Ukraine does not necessitate additional U.S. military spending. We already have extraordinary military capabilities in Europe, and our European allies are rapidly changing their own military policies in response to the war. Moreover, the U.S. has [contributed](#) more than \$1 billion in security assistance to Ukraine in the past year, and Congress has provided massive support to Ukraine directly this year including [a \\$13.6 billion aid package](#) in March and an additional [\\$40 billion](#) in a second supplemental spending package in late May.

We cannot ignore the many people in our own country who are struggling to make ends meet. We are heartened by your stated commitments to addressing systemic and racial inequalities as we believe that policy solutions that center poor and low-income people create a more equitable, just, and effective society for everyone. And while we were also disappointed in last year's Pentagon budget request, we were pleased with last year's overall budget request that increased nondefense spending by 16 percent, allowing for much needed investments in our states.

As our country continues to climb out of the economic downturn brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, it is imperative to reduce Pentagon spending and invest taxpayer dollars in programs that will help families. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) rightly [pointed out](#) that the nation has severely underinvested in core public services over the past 10 years, the consequences of which we are seeing today: reductions in [food and nutrition assistance](#) left many families struggling to afford adequate food and cutbacks in housing assistance left many individuals and families [struggling](#) to afford adequate housing.

Militarism and war have an impact on the whole world, with a disproportionate effect on poor and low-income families. With more resources for domestic priorities, we could provide critical services for poor and low-income families such as affordable housing, education, and child care.

We must start by setting the example that having a strong national security does not mean spending billions of dollars on weapons and destruction, but rather investments in our people and social infrastructure are key to our nation's strength, security, and long-lasting prosperity.

Sincerely,

The undersigned state legislators:

Arkansas Representative Denise Garner  
Colorado Representative Naquetta Ricks  
Connecticut Representative Robyn Porter  
Connecticut Senator Marilyn Moore  
Georgia Senator Nan Grogan Orrock  
Georgia Senator Kim Jackson  
Georgia Representative Park Cannon  
Georgia Representative Becky Evans  
Georgia Representative Kim Schofield  
Hawaii Representative Amy Perruso  
Iowa Representative Marti Anderson  
Illinois Representative Robyn Gabel  
Illinois Representative Joyce Mason  
Kansas Senator Pat Pettey  
Kansas Representative Sydney Carlin  
Kansas Representative Cheryl Helmer  
Massachusetts Senator Patricia Jehlen  
Massachusetts Representative Natalie Higgins  
Massachusetts Representative Lindsay Sabadosa  
Maryland Delegate Sheila Ruth  
Maine Representative Valli Geiger  
Maine Representative Amy Roeder  
Maine Representative Suzanne Salisbury  
Maine Representative Maureen Terry  
Maine Representative Lynne Williams  
Minnesota Senator Jen McEwen  
Missouri Representative Ingrid Burnett  
Montana Representative Mary Ann Dunwell  
Montana Representative Andrea Olsen  
North Dakota Representative Mary Schneider  
New Mexico Senator Mimi Stewart  
Rhode Island Senator Meghan Kallman  
South Carolina Representative Annie McDaniel  
Utah Representative Elizabeth Weight  
Virginia Senator Kaye Kory  
Vermont Representative Gabrielle Stebbins  
Vermont Representative Tiffany Bluemle  
Vermont Representative Jessica Brumsted  
Vermont Representative Elizabeth Burrows  
Vermont Representative Michelle Bos-Lun  
Vermont Representative Erin Brady  
Vermont Representative Sara Coffey

Women Legislators' Lobby  
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