



## An Open Letter to the Congress: Spending Smarter on Defense Can Make Us Stronger

January 8, 2014

Our organizations don't agree on many issues, but we have come together to ask Congress, as it finalizes the Department of Defense portion of the Fiscal Year 2014 omnibus appropriations bill, to remember that spending on ineffective weapons systems and wasteful Pentagon programs does not make us safer, but spending smarter can make us stronger.

Last month, Congress enacted a bipartisan budget deal that altered sequestration levels for defense and non-defense agencies alike. In FY 2014, the Pentagon would have been facing a \$20 billion cut. However, the new budget deal increases the cap on defense spending to more than \$520 billion, up from \$498 billion. We believe that the Pentagon could have accommodated the lower spending level of \$498 billion, which existed before the new budget deal's enactment.

Nonetheless, the appropriations committees in both chambers are in the final stages of crafting an omnibus appropriations package that will conform to the new statutory spending cap. However, the military spending bills that Congress had been drafting all last year are still marked at roughly \$30 billion above the new spending cap.

Indeed, Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin, who also serves as the Chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, recently remarked on the upcoming defense bill that, “We have to cut spending. This is not a growth appropriations bill.” Senator Durbin further proclaimed that it “won’t be easy.”

While implementing reform and spending reductions at the Pentagon is no simple task, our organizations from across the ideological spectrum have, for the past three years, released numerous recommendations that could save hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars if not more. These smart, prudent, and strategic recommendations would enhance America’s security posture for decades to come. To be clear, we do not agree among ourselves on every recommendation listed here. However, we are united in the belief that there are plenty of ways to strategically target pork-barrel projects and programs designed to fight the Cold War instead of 21st century threats. We hope you will give them your full consideration as you craft spending bills for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2014.

The signatories to this letter are:

American Friends Service Committee, Americans for Tax Reform, Campaign for America’s Future, Campaign for Liberty, Citizens Against Government Waste, Coalition on Human Needs, Coalition to Reduce Spending, Come Home America, Cost of Government Center, Council for a Livable World, CREDO, DownsizeDC.org, FreedomWorks, Friends Committee on National Legislation, National Priorities Project, National Taxpayers Union, Peace Action, Progressive Democrats of America, Project On Government Oversight, R Street Institute, Republican Liberty Caucus, Take Back Washington, Taxpayers for Common Sense, Taxpayers Protection Alliance, USAction, U.S. PIRG, Win Without War, Women’s Action for New Directions

**National Taxpayers Union and U.S. Public Interest Research Group**  
**Toward Common Ground: Bridging the Political Divide with Deficit Reduction**  
**Recommendations for Congress, December 2013**

Reduce Spending on Military Bands	\$1.88 billion (ten years)
Cancel Ground Combat Vehicle Program	\$11.2 billion (ten years)
Consolidate Foreign Language Contracts, Uniform Designs, and Support Services at Joint Bases	\$2.23 billion (ten years)

**Taxpayers for Common Sense**  
**Real Savings, Real Deficit Reduction: Relieving Budget Caps with Common Sense Savings in Fiscal**  
**Year 2014, December 2013**

Defer Development of Next Generation Bomber	\$379 million (one year)
Eliminate Commissaries	\$1.4 billion (one year)
Cancel F-35 and purchase existing aircraft	\$4.6 billion (one year)

**The Stimson Center**  
**Strategic Agility: Strong National Defense for Today’s Global and Fiscal Realities, September 2013**

Reduce Defense Agencies	\$1 billion (one year)
Extricate Uniform Personnel from Non-Military Tasks	\$3 billion (one year)
Shift Air Force Fighters from the Active to Reserve Component	\$5 billion (one year)

**Center for a New American Security**  
**The Seven Deadly Sins of Defense Spending, June 2013**

Bring basic pay back in line with civilian pay increases	\$14 billion (ten years)
Increase pharmaceutical cost sharing	\$27 billion (ten years)

**Citizens Against Government Waste**

### **Prime Cuts Summary, February 2013**

Delay rebuilding Abrams tanks	\$3 billion (five years)
Reduce cost growth in DOD's major defense acquisition portfolio	\$14.9 billion (five years)

### **Project on Government Oversight and Taxpayers for Common Sense**

#### **Spending Even Less, Spending Even Smarter: Recommendations for National Security Savings, FY 2013 to FY 2022--Deficit Reduction: \$688 Billion, May 2012**

Cut four submarines from next-generation fleet	\$18 billion (ten years)
Cut number of aircraft carriers from 11 to 10 and Navy wings from 10 to 9	\$18.4 billion (ten years)

### **Cato Institute and the Project on Defense Alternatives**

#### **Defense Sense, Options for National Defense Savings in FY 2013, May 2012**

End Procurement of the Littoral Combat Ship	\$2 billion (one year)
Slow procurement of Virginia-class submarines	\$2 billion (one year)
Missile Defense Reform	\$2.5 billion (one year)

### **The Center for American Progress**

#### **\$100 billion in Politically Feasible Defense Cuts, December 2012**

Replace F-35Cs with a commensurate number of F/A-18E/Fs	\$17 billion (ten year)
Reduce the number of deployed nuclear weapons	\$28 billion (ten year)
Reform the Pentagon's outdated health care programs	\$40 billion (ten year)

### **RAND Corporation**

#### **A Strategy Based Framework for Accommodating Reductions in the Defense Budget, Focus on Western Pacific Scenario, October 2012**

Cut two Marine regiments and two tactical fighter squadrons	\$23-27 billion (ten year)
Reduce the size of the Navy fleet by 5%	\$35-41 billion (ten year)
Remove six Army brigades from the force	\$84-99 billion (ten year)