

In Search of True Security: Rebalancing the Pentagon Budget

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The current United States military budget is higher than at the peaks of the Vietnams or Korean wars. It is greater than at any time since World War II, with the exception of at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹

The Pentagon and military take up more than half of the discretionary federal budget each year. Adding Homeland Security and veterans' benefits, about two thirds of the discretionary budget goes toward providing militarized security.²

But military security and law enforcement are not the only forms of security. Only one third of discretionary spending is available for housing and homeless assistance, public health and medical research, public education, ensuring clean air and water, clean energy, diplomacy, and more. Our current strategy of world military domination assures that we have the world's finest military but lag behind on other fronts.

By focusing disproportionately on military and criminal threats, we are neglecting to address very real threats from income inequality and poverty, from economic competition that requires a strong and well-educated workforce, from the health problems that are driving American life expectancy down, and from the potentially devastating consequences of unmitigated climate change. In order to address these threats, we must reexamine our use of resources.

There is precedent for a much lower Pentagon spending level. Cutting \$350 billion from the Pentagon budget would bring Pentagon spending down to about \$400 billion per year, in keeping with Pentagon spending during much of the 1970s and 1990s.

A budget in the range of \$400 billion would still leave us with clear military advantage over any and all possible adversaries. A Pentagon budget of \$400 billion would still leave the United States with a military budget larger than the budgets of China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea, combined.³

¹ "Historical Tables," Office of Management and Budget, March 2019, Table 3.1, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/historical-tables/>. Inflation adjustment by author.

² Lindsay Koshgarian, "A Militarized Budget," National Priorities Project, April 3, 2017, <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2017/militarized-budget-2017/>.

The proposed cuts total nearly \$350 billion. Some of the cuts can only be made in concert with domestic policy changes, such as the implementation of universal health care or new education spending. Some cuts would require years to implement, or the successful completion of complicated international negotiations (such as the plan to eliminate nuclear weapons). Other cuts could be made relatively quickly. With all of the proposed cuts in place, occasional and temporary spending increases would still be possible and sometimes necessary – for example, we may have enough aircraft carriers at present, but someday they will need to be replaced.

The cuts presented here are those that could produce long-term, multi-year savings. Additional short-term cuts could be made through measures like refusing to use military funds for the construction of a wall at the southern border.

And, deeper ongoing cuts may be possible in some areas. The Pentagon budget has been hijacked by powerful private interests: Pentagon contractors account for fully half of the Pentagon budget, taking in nearly \$365 billion in 2018 alone.⁴ A true realignment of security interests versus corporate interests could result in additional savings beyond what is proposed here. Similarly, the cost of overhead per military troop has roughly quadrupled in the past 40 years. We propose a 10% cut in overhead cost per troop, but additional savings could be possible with enough of the right kinds of reforms.

All of these savings would be offset to a degree by the need for new investments in diplomacy and humanitarian aid to maintain peace and security through non-military means. A 2007 report from the Institute for Policy studies called for \$34.7 billion in new investments to secure peace.⁵ In today's dollars, that amounts to a new expenditure of about \$42 billion.

All told, the proposed cuts could amount to savings of easily more than \$300 billion per year. Those savings could be reinvested to address threats that are far from hypothetical: poverty, unequal access to health care, unequal access to safe drinking water, or climate change, among many others.

³ Military expenditures for China, Russia and Iran from “SIPRI Military Expenditure Database,” Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>. North Korea expenditure from “World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers,” U.S. Department of State, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/avc/rls/rpt/wmeat/index.htm>. All figures based on 2017 spending.

⁴ USA Spending, <https://www.usaspending.gov/#/search/38645a6e0f9658cab2df48e9a8a366aa>, accessed June 16, 2019.

⁵ John Feffer et al, “Just Security: An Alternative Foreign Policy Framework,” Institute for Policy Studies, June 2007, <https://ips-dc.org/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/070608-justsecurity.pdf>.

The Proposed Savings

Close 60% of foreign bases - \$90 billion

The U.S. operates 800 bases in 90 countries, ten times more than the rest of the world combined. Germany alone has 194 base sites, while Japan has 121, South Korea has 83, and Italy has 44.⁶

These bases are not all necessary for our safety or that of our allies. In fact, they may even make the world more dangerous. For example, far from fulfilling their purported mission of guarding the safety of Europe, U.S. bases in Germany have directly enabled our wars in the Middle East and elsewhere by serving as a transit and refueling site for drones and other military aircraft⁷, a way station for wounded U.S. troops⁸, and even the home of the relatively new U.S. Africa Command.⁹ Since 1980, U.S. bases have been used at least 23 times to launch wars of choice or military interventions in 14 countries in the greater Middle East.¹⁰

The very existence of our bases harms local people and undermines democracy. Our establishment of bases in other nations has displaced at least 20 local and indigenous peoples since 1898, and our bases in at least 40 countries with authoritarian regimes grant legitimacy to their leaders. Our bases dump hazardous materials that poison the air and water for locals and our own troops.¹¹ In many places, local people oppose the presence of the United States military. For instance, in February 2019, voters in Okinawa, Japan, voted by more than a 70 percent majority against the opening of a new base location near a sensitive coastal area. But the vote is non-binding, and plans to open the new location remain on track.¹²

The United States maintains these 800 bases at an annual cost of roughly \$150 billion, including infrastructure, maintenance and personnel. But the United States does not need to maintain nearly 200,000 troops permanently on bases all over the world. Closing up to sixty percent of our bases around the world would reduce the ease with which United States leaders engage in wars of choice and other

⁶ "U.S. Military Bases Overseas: The Facts," Overseas Base Realignment and Closure Coalition, <https://www.overseasbases.net/fact-sheet.html>.

⁷ Marcus Kloeckner, "German Court says potentially illegal drone strikes aided by Ramstein, despite USAF denials," Stars and Stripes, March 19, 2019, <https://www.stripes.com/news/german-court-says-potentially-illegal-drone-strikes-aided-by-ramstein-despite-usaf-denials-1.573291>.

⁸ Chad Garland, "Fourth servicemember dies of wounds from deadly Afghanistan bombing," Stars and Stripes, December 3, 2018, <https://www.stripes.com/news/fourth-servicemember-dies-of-wounds-from-deadly-afghanistan-bombing-1.559062>.

⁹ "About the Command," United States Africa Command, <https://www.africom.mil/about-the-command>.

¹⁰ "U.S. Military Bases Overseas," Overseas Base Realignment and Closure Coalition.

¹¹ Tara Copp, "DoD: At least 126 bases report water contaminants linked to cancer, birth defects," Military Times, April 26, 2018, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2018/04/26/dod-126-bases-report-water-contaminants-harmful-to-infant-development-tied-to-cancers/>

¹² Eric Johnston, "More than 70% in Okinawa vote no to relocation of U.S. Futenma base to Henoko," Japan Times, February 24, 2019, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/02/24/national/politics-diplomacy/okinawa-residents-head-polls-referendum-relocation-u-s-futenma-base-henoko/#.XQFbgBZKi70>.

destructive military engagements, without seriously compromising the military's ability to move forces anywhere in the world when truly needed.¹³

With roughly 170,000 troops permanently stationed overseas (not including temporary combat deployments), a 60% reduction would require a troop reduction of roughly 100,000 personnel. Closure at this level would still leave the United States with more than 300 overseas bases, still many times more than any other country, so additional closures may be warranted over time. Troop reductions of this scale could be accomplished over several years through voluntary retirement and attrition. The Department of Defense has estimated that between 230,000 and 245,000 active duty and reserve personnel would leave the military each year through 2019.¹⁴ At that rate, allowing for the fact that troops are not all interchangeable, a complete reduction of 100,000 troops and bases could still be achievable through retirement and attrition over a period of several years. This would also allow time for the orderly closing of bases and for negotiation of ongoing security partnerships in allied nations where bases are closed.

End wars and war funding – \$66 billion

The United States has been continuously at war since 2001, and today has ground troops deployed in at least 14 countries.¹⁵ Far from making the world a safer place, our wars have sown regional instability and have resulted in the deaths of 480,000 people, including 244,000 civilians, and the displacement of 21 million people.¹⁶

The United States has spent or committed to spending \$5.9 trillion on wars since 2001.¹⁷ The fiscal year 2020 Department of Defense budget request calls for \$173.8 billion in funding for its Overseas Contingency Operations and emergency requirements accounts. Of that amount, the Pentagon disclosed that \$97.9 billion is for basic Pentagon funding (not related to current wars), and \$66.7 billion

¹³ "Department of Defense Infrastructure Capacity," Department of Defense, October 2017, <https://fas.org/man/eprint/infrastructure.pdf>.

¹⁴ Anna Zogas, "US Military Veterans' Difficult Transitions Back to Civilian Life and the VA's Response," Costs of War, Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, February 2017, https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2017/Zogas_Veterans%27%20Transitions_CoW_2.1.17.pdf.

¹⁵ Stephanie Savell, "Where We Fight," Costs of War project at Brown University and 5W Infographics, January 2019, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2019/US%20Counterterror%20War%20Locations%2C%202017-18%2C%20with%20Smithsonian%20and%20CoW%20attributions.pdf>.

¹⁶ Neta Crawford, "Human Cost of the Post-9/11 Wars: Lethality and the Need for Transparency," Costs of War at Brown University, November 2018, <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2018/Human%20Costs%2C%20Nov%208%202018%20CoW.pdf>.

¹⁷ Neta Crawford, "United States Budgetary Costs of the Post-9/11 Wars Through FY 2019: \$5.9 Trillion Spent and Obligated," Costs of War at Brown University, November 14, 2018, https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2018/Crawford_Costs%20of%20War%20Estimates%20Through%20FY2019.pdf.

for direct combat requirements and related “enduring requirements.”¹⁸ The wars should be ended, which would save around \$66.7 billion per year.

Cut unnecessary weapons - \$57.9 billion

The United States military has far more weapons than it needs to establish safety. Driven in part by the profit motives of the powerful contractors that draw more than half of the Pentagon budget each year, the United States continuously churns out multi-billion dollar weapons systems. These systems are largely geared toward world-war-like scenarios and address the Pentagon’s mandate to be ready to fight two major ground wars at the same time. They serve to stoke arms races between the United States and potential adversaries, both by their production and their consistent deployment around the world. Any scenario in which these weapons would be used on the scale we produce them would be utterly devastating to the planet, the world economy, and the world’s people.

Below is an itemization of some of the weapons systems that are obsolete, dangerous, or excessive. We propose cuts to acquisition of new weapons systems, and retiring some current systems.

- **Aircraft carriers & carrier wings:** The United States has 11 aircraft carriers and plans to fund a 12th. No other country has more than two. Six aircraft carriers would be enough to more than match any adversary. We could reduce carrier wings proportionally.¹⁹
- **Destroyers:** Reduce the number of DDG-51 naval destroyers to the 2010 level of 62 (from 66 today).²⁰
- **F-35 jet fighter:** The F-35 jet fighter is a decade behind schedule, billions over budget, plagued by major flaws and safety issues,²¹ and is ill-suited for the type of conflicts the U.S. is likely to face. We would cut existing F-35 squadrons by one-third and stop new production.
- **F-22 jet fighter:** Production of the F-22 was previously canceled at the insistence of then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, with side acknowledgement that it existed largely as

¹⁸ “U.S. Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request,” Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, March 2019,

https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2020/fy2020_Budget_Request.pdf

¹⁹ A 2010 proposal called for cutting back to eight aircraft carriers and noted that this would be more than sufficient to respond to threats. This proposal aims to get closer to “enough.” Benjamin H. Friedman and Christopher Preble, “Budgetary Savings from Military Restraint,” Cato Institute, September 23, 2010, <https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/PA667.pdf>.

²⁰ “United States Navy Fact File,” Department of the Navy, January 23, 2019, https://www.navy.mil/navydata/fact_display.asp?cid=4200&tid=900&ct=4.

²¹ Valerie Insinna, “The Pentagon is battling the clock to fix serious, unreported F-35 problems,” Defense News, June 12, 2019, <https://www.defensenews.com/air/2019/06/12/the-pentagon-is-battling-the-clock-to-fix-serious-unreported-f-35-problems/>.

a jobs creation program²². The Congressional Budget Office estimated annual savings of retiring the F-22 and letting the F-35 and other aircraft fill its role.²³

- **F-15 jet fighter:** The Air Force has made it clear that they do not want these planes, and yet the Pentagon called for producing more of them.²⁴ Notably, the F-15 is made by Boeing, the former long-term employer of acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan.
- **Attack submarines:** Allow the number of attack submarines to decline from 51 to 40.²⁵

Today's nonstop production of major weapons systems is extremely lucrative for contractors, who make themselves indispensable by spreading jobs around to hundreds of congressional districts. But producing weapons cannot be the answer to our economic needs. Cutting Pentagon contracts and reinvesting in needs ranging from health care, to education and clean energy would create more jobs than investing in the military,²⁶ and meet other urgent needs at home.

Table 1. Unnecessary Weapons Annual Savings (Billions of Dollars)²⁷

Unnecessary Weapons	Operating Costs	Procurement	Total
Aircraft carriers	7.5	2.6	10.1
Aircraft carrier wings	5.1	2.0	7.1
Navy destroyers	2.3	5.8	8.1
F-35 jet fighter	3.5	11.2	14.7
F-22 jet fighter	3.1	0.8	3.9
F-15 jet fighter	0.0	2.1	2.1
Attack submarines	1.7	10.2	11.9
Total	23.3	34.7	57.9

Cancel nuclear modernization and Ban nuclear weapons – \$42.8

Current plans developed over multiple administrations call for modernizing the United States nuclear arsenal at a cost of more than \$1 trillion over thirty years. Based on analysis by the Congressional

²² <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2009/07/the-remarkable-vote-to-kill-the-f-22-and-what-it-means-for-america-s-military-future.html>

²³ "Reduce the Size of the Fighter Force by Retiring the F-22," Congressional Budget Office, December 13, 2018, <https://www.cbo.gov/budget-options/2018/54765>.

²⁴ Gen. John Michael Loh, "Buying new F-15X fighters for the US Air Force is unsolicited and unwise," Defense News, March 4, 2019, <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/03/04/buying-new-f-15x-fighters-for-the-us-air-force-is-unsolicited-and-unwise/>.

²⁵ "Budgetary Savings from Military Restraint," <https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/PA667.pdf>.

²⁶ Heidi Garrett-Peltier, "Job Opportunity Cost of War," Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, May 25, 2017, <https://www.peri.umass.edu/component/k2/item/995-job-opportunity-cost-of-war>.

²⁷ Operating costs from "CBO's Interactive Force Structure Tool," Congressional Budget Office, August 15, 2018, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/54351>. Procurement costs from "Program Acquisition Cost by Weapon System," Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, March 2019, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2020/fy2020_Weapons.pdf.

Budget Office, we assume that the near-term savings from canceling the nuclear modernization would be roughly \$20 billion per year.²⁸

But canceling modernization does not address the existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to the world. Seventy countries have signed on to a U.N. ban on nuclear weapons to eliminate the threat of nuclear war.²⁹ The United States has agreed to a ban on chemical and biological weapons, and it should pursue a nuclear ban as well.

Achieving a complete nuclear ban is not a short-term goal. It would require the negotiation of major new treaties. Nonetheless, it is the safest policy and therefore should be a goal. Once a ban took effect, the United States would save \$14 billion in Department of Defense costs for delivery and command systems,³⁰ and \$12.8 billion for weapons programs at the Department of Energy.³¹ We assume that implementing nuclear disarmament would cost \$4 billion per year, so that net savings would be \$42.8 billion.

Cut overhead by 10% - \$27 billion

Military overhead increased from \$57,400 per active duty service member to \$152,300 in 2015 (in 2015 dollars). According to a Congressional Budget Office analysis, major causes of the cost increase included health care costs, rising administrative costs, and fossil fuel consumption. The same analysis suggests that during that time frame, the Pentagon increasingly relied on contractors not only for weapons development and manufacturing, but also for maintenance and other services.³²

Minimizing health care costs while protecting health care access can only be done through larger reforms, discussed below. But through a combination of administrative streamlining, reduced use of fossil fuels, and reduced reliance on private, for-profit contractors, we could achieve overhead cost savings of ten percent per troop. Accounting for the reduced force size we are proposing (that is, applying the 10% savings to fewer troops), this could save \$27 billion per year.³³

²⁸ "Projected Costs of U.S. Nuclear Forces, 2019-2028," Congressional Budget Office, January 24, 2019, <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2019-01/54914-NuclearForces.pdf>.

²⁹ "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons," United Nations, <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/tpnw> <http://disarmament.un.org/treaties/t/tpnw>.

³⁰ "Defense Budget Overview: United States Department of Defense Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request," Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, March 2019, https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2020/fy2020_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf.

³¹ "Department of Energy FY 2019 Congressional Budget Request," Department of Energy, March 2018, vol. 1, <https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2018/03/f49/FY-2019-Volume-1.pdf>.

³² "Trends in Spending by the Department of Defense for Operations and Maintenance," Congressional Budget Office, January 2017, <https://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/115th-congress-2017-2018/reports/52156-omchartbook.pdf>. Analysis of CBO data by author.

³³ Troop reduction calculation based on a troop reduction of 294,000, bringing the 2020 end strength from 1,339,500 (per the Department of Defense 2020 budget request) to 1,045,460. The reduction of 294,000 is based

End Foreign Military Financing Program - \$14 billion

The United States gives away roughly \$14 billion per year³⁴ in military foreign aid in 2017, much of which enabled authoritarian governments and human rights abuses and increases killing and violence. This money would be better spent on diplomacy and humanitarian aid at the request of local peoples and governments.

Reduce research and development (R&D) by 10% - \$10.4 billion

The 2018 military research and development budget increased by 11% since 2015 (adjusting for inflation).³⁵ This reduction brings R&D back to roughly the 2015 level and reflects the fact that a smaller military would also need less R&D.

Replace military personnel in support positions with civilians - \$3 billion

Roughly 340,000 active duty personnel are now in positions that could be filled more cost-effectively by civilians, such as finance and accounting positions and transportation jobs.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that by transitioning up to 80,000 military positions providing support and administrative functions to civilian employment, the Pentagon could save \$3 billion per year.³⁶

Close unneeded domestic bases: \$2 billion

In recent years, the Pentagon has asked to begin a process to close domestic bases it says it doesn't need. Closing unneeded domestic bases could save \$2 billion per year.³⁷

Convert Military Health System into a universal health system - \$33 billion³⁸

This option should only be exercised in the event that the country implements universal health care that would provide medical care to troops and their families, and allow current funding for military health

on a 60% reduction in troops stationed permanently overseas according to estimates from the Defense Manpower Commission (170,000*0.60), plus personnel reductions estimated by the Congressional Budget Office for the weapons systems reductions we propose, from "CBO's Interactive Force Structure Tool," Congressional Budget Office, August 15, 2018, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/54351>. The overhead cost reduction is based on a 10% reduction from the per-troop overhead level in the DoD 2020 Budget Request, or \$218,508 (calculated by dividing the end force strength by the total operations and maintenance budget).

³⁴ "Foreign Aid Explorer," USAID, <https://explorer.usaid.gov/>, accessed May 16, 2019.

³⁵ "Public Budget Database," Office of Management and Budget, March 2019, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/supplemental-materials/>.

³⁶ "Replacing Military Personnel in Support Positions with Civilian Employees," Congressional Budget Office, December 2, 2015, <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/51012>.

³⁷ Scott Maucione, "DoD skips BRAC request in 2020 budget," Federal News Network, February 13, 2018, <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/defense/2018/02/dod-skips-brac-request-in-2019-budget/>.

³⁸ "Public Budget Database," Office of Management and Budget, March 2019, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/supplemental-materials/>.

care to be funneled into that system. A universal, consolidated health care system would save hundreds of billions of dollars per year, according to a study by the University of Massachusetts that found that implementation of Medicare for All that estimated system-wide health care savings of approximately \$310 billion per year.³⁹ The study assumed that current sources of federal funding for health care, including military health care, would be redirected to fund the new system.

Cancel the Space Force - \$400 million

President Trump has suggested creation of an independent sixth military branch, the Space Force, that would spur international arms races and threaten our national and global security. It would also ultimately cost billions of dollars. We propose cutting the initial budget for the Space Force, budgeted at \$400 million over five years for new personnel (with additional resources to be redirected from other forces).⁴⁰

Cut military construction by 10% - \$2 billion

With a smaller military, the Pentagon would need a commensurately smaller construction budget. A 10% cut would save approximately \$2 billion per year based on recent spending.⁴¹ This spending would be cut entirely from the reduced need for infrastructure on closed bases and the like. Additional savings should be redirected to construction and maintenance of military housing, which has been plagued by reports of mold, infestations and other unsuitable conditions.⁴²

Reinvest in public schools

The United States military runs a system of schools both abroad and in the United States through the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA). In the United States, the operation of DoDEA schools is generally justified by an assessment that local schools provide an inadequate education,⁴³ and DoDEA schools are disproportionately located in the Southeastern United States.

³⁹ Pollin et al., "Economic Analysis of Medicare for All," Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, November 30, 2018, <https://www.peri.umass.edu/publication/item/1127-economic-analysis-of-medicare-for-all>.

⁴⁰ "Defense Budget Overview,"

https://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2020/fy2020_Budget_Request_Overview_Book.pdf.

⁴¹ "Public Budget Database," Office of Management and Budget, March 2019,

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/supplemental-materials/>. Calculation based on 10% of FY 2018 military construction.

⁴² Leo Shane III, "Are the military's housing problems fixed or just covered up for now?" Military Times, April 4, 2019, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2019/04/04/are-the-militarys-housing-problems-fixed-or-just-covered-up-for-now/>.

⁴³ Michael Goodman et al., "The Performance of Hawaii's Military Impacted Public Schools: A Comparative Perspective," University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute, December 16, 2010, <https://www.dodea.edu/Partnership/upload/Performance-of-Hawaii-s-Public-Schools-2011.pdf>.

All children, no matter their family background or parents' occupations, deserve a quality education. The Pentagon accommodation for inadequate public schools should be remedied by improving public schools so that they can adequately serve all children, not by creating a two-tiered system for military families and other local children. Converting U.S.-based military elementary and secondary schools to public schools could free up approximately \$746 million to transfer to local school systems.⁴⁴

Table 2. Total Pentagon Cuts: \$349.6 billion per year

Total Possible Military Savings (Billions of Dollars)	\$ 349.6
Close 60% of foreign bases - The U.S. operates 800 bases in 90 countries, ten times more than the rest of the world combined. Allow corresponding troop reductions primarily by attrition & retirement, not including troops deployed for combat (see next item).	\$ 90.0
End wars and war funding - End wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere, and bring our troops home.	\$ 66.0
Cut unnecessary weapons - Cancel new procurement and reduce use of weapons systems that are obsolete, ineffective, or in excess of reasonable security needs.	\$ 57.9
Dismantle nuclear weapons - Seventy countries have signed on to a U.N. ban on nuclear weapons to eliminate the threat of nuclear war. Develop new treaties for complete nuclear disarmament, destroy U.S. nuclear stockpiles (includes a \$4 billion annual budget for implementation), cancel nuclear delivery systems (bombers, submarines), and cancel planned nuclear upgrades.	\$ 42.8
Convert Military Health System into a universal health system - A system of universal health care in the United States would provide medical care to troops and their families and allow separate funding for military health care to be funneled into that system.	\$ 33.3
Cut overhead by 10% - Military overhead increased from \$57,400 per active duty service member to \$152,300 in 2015 (in 2015 dollars). A 10% reduction could be achieved primarily through a reduced reliance on for-profit contractors and reduced use of fossil fuels.	\$ 27.0
End Foreign Military Financing Program - End military foreign aid that enables authoritarian governments and human rights abuses, and increases killing and violence, and instead invest in diplomacy and economic and humanitarian aid.	\$ 14.0
Reduce research and development (R&D) by 10% - The 2018 military research and development budget increased by 11% since 2015 (adjusting for inflation). This reduction brings R&D back to roughly the 2015 level and reflects the fact that a smaller military would also need less R&D.	\$ 10.4
Replace military personnel in support positions with civilians - Transition up to 80,000 military positions providing support and administrative functions to civilian employment	\$ 3.0
Close unneeded domestic bases: The Pentagon has requested a process to close domestic bases it says it doesn't need. Closing unneeded domestic bases could save \$2 billion per year.	\$ 2.0
Other: Cancel the Space Force; cut military construction by 10% to meet needs of smaller military; convert U.S.-based military elementary and secondary schools to public schools	\$ 3.1

⁴⁴ This is a rough calculation based on the share of DoDEA schools located in the United States, applied to the total DoDEA budget. "FY 2017 Enacted Budget," Department of Defense Education Activity, <https://www.dodea.edu/aboutDoDEA/budget.cfm>.