

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2022

The Hon. Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

Thank you for your leadership during this difficult time as the nation and the world confront the atrocities Russia is committing in Ukraine. We applaud your active efforts to avoid a World War and your personal commitment to not pledging American troops to military action. We support your strategic response to Russia so far, and we look forward to continuing to work with you in the pursuit of peace in the region. As you prepare your fiscal year 2023 budget request, we know some Members of Congress will seek an increase in defense spending. Respectfully, we ask that you do everything in your power to resist such increases.

The Trump Administration's last enacted defense spending level was \$740.5 billion. You resisted calls for historic increases above that amount in your first budget, and you requested \$753 billion in defense spending. The U.S. House of Representatives more than doubled your desired increase and included \$768.2 billion in the House-passed National Defense Authorization Act. Ultimately, in the omnibus appropriation legislation signed into law earlier this week, the new enacted defense spending level is \$782 billion – more than ten times the amount provided for the Department of Education (\$76.4 billion), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$53.7 billion), or the National Institutes for Health (\$45 billion).

Some of our colleagues will continue to seek virtually unlimited amounts of funding for the Department of Defense, no matter the Department's own assessments of its needs for the coming fiscal year. This mission creep is dangerous to peace-seeking efforts, and it will continue to starve our domestic priorities of needed funding. Diplomacy and international aid will suffer, as will our response to the largest threats currently facing the nation, the ongoing global pandemic and climate change. We encourage you to prioritize federal spending in response to these threats; and, again, we thank you for your steadfast leadership during this uncertain time. We look forward to continuing to partner with you in your efforts to seek peace first, always.

Sincerely,



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress