

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 1, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader, United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer:

We write to strongly urge you not to include funding for the Department of Defense in the American Jobs Plan. The plan is designed to create millions of good jobs, rebuild our country's infrastructure, and make extraordinary investments in the shared prosperity and well-being of our communities. It makes poor economic and security sense to use this plan to funnel more money into the Pentagon, on top of the three quarters of a trillion dollars per year that it already receives. Doing so will not provide the jobs that Americans need; build a better, greener economy; or make people in this country safer.

Specifically, as we consider how best to create well-paying jobs for the people of the United States, we must reject attempts to use the American Jobs Plan to fund military industrial facilities. While we do not deny that in some cases the need for military infrastructure modernization exists, funding for these projects should be debated and determined through the regular defense budgeting process, as it is every year. Given that spending on the Pentagon is already at one of its highest levels since World War II, there should be ample funding within the Department's budget to address any issues with military facilities by cutting waste and eliminating unnecessary weapons systems, without tapping into the administration's infrastructure plan.

In fact, funding the Pentagon in this bill will actually make our effort to create jobs more difficult, as research [shows](#) that other sectors, like health care, clean energy, and education will create far more and far better paying jobs per dollar invested than the defense industry. According to a Brown University Costs of War Project [study](#), \$1 billion invested in clean energy will create nearly twice as many jobs as \$1 billion spent on the Pentagon. Each additional dollar poured into the defense industry's coffers is another dollar stripped away from the other urgent priorities in the American Jobs Plan.

In addition to already mentioned concerns, we cannot ignore that weapons makers—some of the most profitable yet unaccountable corporations in the world—have demonstrated time and again a propensity to mismanage, squander and profiteer off the large sums of taxpayer money they receive. This was made abundantly clear during the pandemic, as weapons contractors reaped ample revenues and massive profits. If modernizing aging military infrastructure is indeed an urgent priority, the solution is for the Pentagon to adjust its large budget accordingly, instead of helping contractors to continue to inflate CEO salaries or buy back company stock to artificially inflate their value. For example, an [analysis](#) by the Project On Government Oversight found that since 2018 shipbuilder Huntington Ingalls spent \$1 billion enriching shareholders with stock buybacks. General Dynamics, which could also benefit from the funding under discussion,

spent five times more on stock buybacks than they spent improving and upgrading their facilities. This bill must not be an excuse to line defense contractors' pockets.

The American Jobs Plan can lay the foundation for a revitalized, green, people-centered economy. With this bill, we have a critical opportunity to prioritize good-paying, union jobs, especially for Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color whose needs have long been ignored in favor of corporate profits. We should not throw more money at the Pentagon or weapons companies to continue the status quo. The American Jobs Plan must focus on a just green transition for all industries and provide a foundation for working people to prosper.

Sincerely,



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



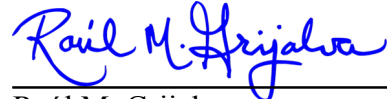
Cori Bush
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



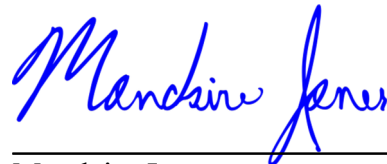
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Mondaire Jones
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



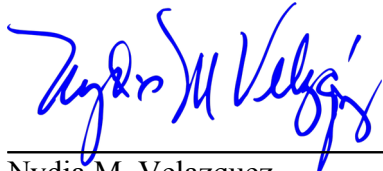
Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



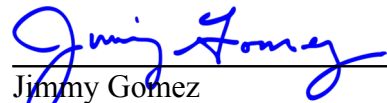
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velazquez
Member of Congress



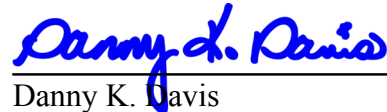
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



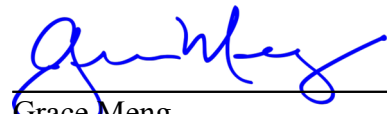
Danny K. Davis
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Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress