

# OUR BUDGET

# OUR PRIORITIES



**WiLL**  
WOMEN LEGISLATORS' LOBBY



To all U.S. Senators and Representatives:

As you work on the upcoming appropriations decisions this year, we, the undersigned women state legislators, encourage you to consider the profound impact these decisions will have on our ability to balance state budgets, meet the needs of our residents, and invest in the future. We strongly urge you to reject excessive Pentagon spending and prioritize programs that will make our communities stronger. The wealth of our economy and the health of the American people are the bedrock on which national security stands, and Congress must realign our national spending priorities to reinforce this truth.

We are deeply concerned by the President's budget request that would provide \$750 billion worth of defense spending, even after two years of substantial increases in both FY18 and FY19. Despite failing its first-ever audit and persistent reports of waste, fraud, and abuse, the Pentagon continues to receive dramatic increases in funding far above the rate of inflation year after year. This budget cycle presents a particularly egregious misuse of funds by calling for an artificial adherence to the \$576 billion defense budget cap mandated in the Bipartisan Budget Control Act of 2018--while simultaneously asking for [over \\$165 billion](#) worth of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds.

The President's budget request is full of varied and unprioritized national security objectives. The FY20 budget represents the beginning of many long-term funding projects that could derail one another or create a need for untenably high defense budgets without sufficient oversight and guidance from Congress. Nuclear modernization [will cost](#) over \$1.2 trillion dollars total, the 355-ship Navy [will cost](#) more than \$100 billion per year, all while [overhauling](#) the Air Force, expanding the active-duty Army, and [establishing](#) a Space Force. It is unacceptable that Congress continues to increase the Pentagon budget without serious debate over the feasibility, sustainability, and dividends from this investment of taxpayer dollars.

As state legislators, we are committed to creating good jobs that are essential to our districts, and ensuring that our shared constituents, especially our veterans, thrive in our communities. By investing some of the billions that go to waste at the Pentagon in other sectors of our economy, you would help us generate more jobs at home. Economists at Brown University's [Costs of War Project](#) found that public dollars invested in clean energy, health care, and education all create significantly more jobs--in some cases as many as [double the jobs](#)--in our local economies when compared to investing an equivalent amount in the military sector.

We need to stop spending on excess, unnecessary weapons and instead ensure that we invest in programs that keep us secure and help us prosper -- first responders, teachers, bridges, roads, rails, and clean water. This will ensure the safety, security, and prosperity of generations of Americans. We urge you to responsibly reshape the Pentagon budget to find significant cost savings and ensure that the federal budget reflects our responsibility to strengthen American communities.

Sincerely, The Undersigned State Legislators



## Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Letter to Congress Topline Talking Points

The [WiLL budget letter](#) conveys strong support for a federal budget that invests in our states and communities. It urges Congress to reject President Trump's Fiscal Year 2020 budget which proposes increasing funding to the Pentagon, nuclear weapons, and to overseas military operations at the cost of departments and programs that promote economic stability and growth. WiLL rejects the proposed budget for the following reasons:

- It's unsustainable. [Since 1998](#) the Department of Defense, nuclear weapons, and war spending have received well over half of the discretionary spending that Congress appropriates each year. The United States already spends more on the military than the [next seven countries spends on the military combined](#)-- most of whom are allies and contribute to our collective defense.
- Dollars sent to the Pentagon are starving domestic investment. The dollars that fund a wide array of crucial investments in programs like Head Start, food safety, veterans' benefits, environmental protection, repairing roads and bridges and much more are being cut to stay within mandatory budget caps. [Roughly one third](#) of these dollars flow into the states to fund jobs for teachers, police officers, and firefighters.
- It provides increased spending to the Pentagon that isn't based on common sense or need. Last year the Pentagon completed--[but failed](#)--its first-ever audit. This year the Pentagon had so much money left over that in an end-of-year use-it-or-lose-it-spreet it spent [\\$4.6 million](#) on crab and lobster and \$9,000 on a single chair.
- It's self-defeating. We cannot afford another war on the nation's credit card. With the federal debt hitting [a record high of \\$22 trillion](#) this past February, government spending should reflect efforts to save costs--not prepare for more unnecessary wars. Right now the federal government should be looking to establish stability by investing in the State Department and USAID, not more wasteful [F-35s](#) and [more tactical nuclear weapons](#).
- It will stymie economic growth and shift costs to the states. By diverting domestic programs to pay for a \$750 billion defense budget that is larger than President Reagan's at the height of the Cold War—we would be sacrificing opportunities for sustainable economic growth. Public dollars invested in clean energy, health care, and education create significantly more jobs--in some cases [as many as double the jobs](#)--in our local economies when compared to investing an equivalent amount in the military sector.



Media Kit: WiLL Budget Letter FY20  
Our Budget, Our Priorities  
Legislators Edition

## Twitter Posts

### [Social Media Graphics](#)

## Twitter Posts

- We, the state legislators of @WomenLegisLobby, penned an open letter to Congress regarding the FY20 President's budget. Read it below.
- We just called on U.S. senators and representatives to think about how federal cuts impact state and local budgets' ability to fulfill local needs. Read our letter here.
- Dollars sent to the Pentagon are starving domestic investment. This money can go into improving education, healthcare, and infrastructure. But instead, it is being used to fund weapons of mass destruction.
- This past fiscal year, the Pentagon had so much money leftover that in a use-it-or-lose-it-spree it spent [\\$4.6 MILLION](#) spent on crab and lobster.
- We should be investing U.S. dollars in areas that need more funding — such as first responders, teachers, bridges, roads, rails, and clean water.
- We're urging Congress to reshape the Pentagon budget to find significant cost savings and ensure that the federal budget reflects initiatives to strengthen American communities.
- We are calling on Congress to reject the inflated budget request from President Trump, and to start redirecting these dollars to areas of need in our country.
- Every dollar that goes to the Pentagon's excessive budget is a dollar taken away from the people of the United States. We are calling on Congress to stop this exorbitant practice that has gone on for too long.
- By investing some of the billions that go to waste at the Pentagon in other sectors of our economy, Congress can help us generate more jobs at home. We're asking Congress to take a step in the right direction now.



## Social Media Graphics



“It is unacceptable that Congress continues to increase the Pentagon budget without serious debate over the feasibility, sustainability, and dividends from this investment of taxpayer dollars.”

**Will Legislators**  
on the FY20 Federal Budget



“Despite failing its first-ever audit and persistent reports of waste, fraud, and abuse, the Pentagon continues to receive dramatic increases in funding far above the rate of inflation year after year.”

**Will Legislators**  
on the FY20 Federal Budget





“We need to stop spending on excess, unnecessary weapons and instead ensure that we invest in programs that keep us secure and help us prosper.”

**Will Legislators**  
on the FY20 Federal Budget



“The wealth of our economy and the health of the American people are the bedrock on which national security stands, and Congress must realign our national spending priorities to reinforce this truth.”

**Will Legislators**  
on the FY20 Federal Budget



“We are deeply concerned by the President’s budget request that would provide \$750 BILLION worth of defense spending, even after two years of substantial increases in both FY18 and FY19.”

**Will Legislators**  
on the FY20 Federal Budget



