

The 25% Solution: Fund our Communities - Reduce Military Spending

The recession is increasing demand for services in our communities while sapping the funding they need. Where are we going to find a permanent, reliable source of funding for the human and other services our constituents need?

Congressman Barney Frank has identified an ample funding source: unnecessary military spending. “The math is compelling,” he wrote in *The Nation* on March 2, 2009. “[I]f we do not make reductions approximating 25 percent of the military budget starting fairly soon, it will be impossible to continue to fund an adequate level of domestic activity.”

US military spending amounts to more than \$700 billion a year if the off-the-books wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, nuclear weapons programs in the Department of Energy, and other agencies’ military line items are added to the Pentagon’s budget. The \$175 billion that would result from a 25% cut could be redirected to veterans’ services, housing and family support for current military personnel, and social services – community health, mental health, education, community safety, to name a few – that are urgently needed in the recession and on an ongoing basis.

Withdraw in a timely fashion from Iraq	\$105 billion in year one
Withdraw from Afghanistan	25 billion
Eliminate wasteful weapons systems	33 billion
Reduce active nuclear warheads	16 billion
Close half of US overseas military bases	51 billion
Trim unused air wings and sea forces	5 billion
Eliminate waste in procurement and operations	20 billion

“[W]e are developing weapons... that lack not only a current military need but even a plausible use in any foreseeable future,” wrote Congressman Frank. “If we do not reduce the military budget... we do severe harm to our ability to improve the quality of our lives.” Now is the moment to add our voices and demand a shift in our nation’s priorities.

What you can do:

- Endorse the call for a 25% cut in military spending to fund our communities’ needs.
- Call your congressman and urge him to join Barney Frank’s call for a 25% cut.
- Spread the word to community organizations and others who will be interested.

For more information contact The 25% Solution, a taskforce of the United for Justice with Peace Coalition, 25percentsolution@gmail.com.

¹ R. Jeffrey Smith and Ellen Nakashima, “Pentagon’s Unwanted Projects in Earmarks: Democrats Press Backyard Spending,” *Washington Post*, March 8, 2009. Obama’s Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel told “Meet the Press” in January that “in the defense area...On an annual basis we have about \$300 billion in cost overruns. That must be addressed, and we will be addressing it.” (Voters for Peace Action Alert, February 11, 2009)