



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

Talking Points on the Proposed US Military Budget

By Ray Acheson, [Reaching Critical Will](#)

- Always use the term "military budget" rather than "defense budget"
- Increasing military spending, as the proposed 2010 Department of Defense budget does, is not a reasonable response to the financial crisis.
- In fact, spending more money on the military is counterproductive in terms of job creation and sustainable economic growth in the United States.
- The military budget is not a jobs program or a useful form of economic stimulus.
- If employment is the aim, it makes more sense to cut defense spending and use the money in programs that do it better: A [2007 study by the University of Massachusetts, Amherst](#) (pdf), shows that health care or home weatherization creates about 1.5 times as many jobs as defense spending, education 2.07 times as many, and mass transit 2.31 times as many. Total wages and benefits are also higher.
- While the proposed military budget cuts a few specific weapon systems, overall spending continues to go up, from \$515.4 billion in 2009 to \$534 billion in 2010. (These figures do not include the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, veteran affairs, or nuclear weapons research, maintenance, or production.)
- The proposed 2010 military budget actually increased stock value of the country's top military contractors, including Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, and General Dynamics.
- The proposed military budget, rather than being a "massive overhaul," continues to assume that the United States has a need and a right to develop and use offensive weapon systems against other countries.
- It is unfortunate that even those in support of arms control and disarmament have recommended the military stop wasting money on weapon systems they don't use and spend it on weapons they do use.
- Critiques of the military budget need to distinguish between offensive and non-offensive defense, the latter focusing on defense systems that protect a state rather than on armed attack against other states.
- Missile "defense" is offensive, not defensive. All funding for all anti-missile programs should be cut, as these technologies destabilize international relations, especially with Russia; do not work; waste billions of taxpayer dollars; and have no legitimate "threat" to "defend" against.