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### 2AC – Funding Fails

#### Funding fails---mismanagement means programs are doomed

Negin 20 (Elliott Negin, Senior writer at UCS, 9-14-2020, “It’s Time to Rein in Inflated Military Budgets”, Scientific American, accessed 6-27-2022, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/its-time-to-rein-in-inflated-military-budgets/> )//kp

THE PENTAGON WASTES YOUR MONEY

There are plenty of reasons to cut the Pentagon’s budget, but its track record of profligate spending is among the most obvious. If the Pentagon were a private corporation, gross **mismanagement would have forced** it **into** **bankruptcy** years ago. **Dysfunctional internal controls**, **aided** and abetted **by** years of **lax** congressional and administration **oversight**, have enabled it to waste tens of billions of dollars annually, and the last **20 years** are **littered** **with** a parade of overpriced, **botched** and bungled **projects**.

In just the first decade of this century, the Pentagon was forced to cancel a dozen ill-conceived, ineffective weapons programs that cost taxpayers [$46 billion](https://www.military.com/defensetech/2011/07/19/46-billion-worth-of-cancelled-programs). They included the [Future Combat Systems program](https://www.defensenews.com/30th-annivesary/2016/10/25/30-years-future-combat-systems-acquisition-gone-wrong/), a fleet of networked high-tech vehicles that did not work; the [Comanche helicopter](https://nation.time.com/2012/05/25/real-lessons-from-an-unreal-helicopter/), which—after 22 years in development—was never built; and the 40-ton [Crusader artillery gun](https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/bs-xpm-2002-05-09-0205090111-story.html), which never even made it to the prototype stage.

To put this example of managerial malfeasance in context, these canceled programs collectively cost more than the federal government [spent](https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/budget) on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over the last five years.

At least the Pentagon killed those projects before they wasted any more money. All too often, it does not know when to pull the plug. The Army’s attempt to replace its outmoded Bradley tank is a case in point. Over the last 17 years, it has blown an estimated [$22.9 billion](https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/army-decided-replace-bradley-fighting-vehicles-17-years-22b-ago-ncna1136141) on three flawed prototypes, but in February—just three weeks after rejecting the third failed design—it issued yet another request for proposals from defense contractors.

Then there are programs the **Pentagon** continues to **green-light with zero** **assurance they will** ever **perform as advertised**. Exhibit A: The Pentagon has wasted more than [$67 billion](https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/692136.pdf) since the late 1990s on a ballistic missile defense system that [has never been demonstrated to work](https://blog.ucsusa.org/elliott-negin/missile-defense-risks) in a real-world situation. A spawn of Ronald Reagan’s Star Wars fantasy, the system—based in Alaska and California—will never be able to defend the continental United States from a limited nuclear attack. Any country capable of launching a ballistic missile could easily foil the system with [decoys and other countermeasures](https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/decoys-used-missile-defense-intercept-tests).

Another prime example is the [F-35 Joint Strike Fighter](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/21/magazine/f35-joint-strike-fighter-program.html). Expected to cost [$1.5 trillion](https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/f35-fighter-jet-pentagon/) over its lifespan, it has the dubious distinction of being the Department of Defense’s most expensive weapons program of all time. The 490 **F-35s** built since the **first prototype** flew **20 years ago** continue to be [**plagued**](https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/aviation/a30718538/f-35-flaws/)**by** a **dozen** serious **flaws** and **nearly 900 software defects**, and roughly half of the fleet in 2017 and 2018 was grounded for maintenance. Regardless, the Pentagon still plans to buy [2,400 more](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/f-35-takes-flak-but-still-flying-high) F-35s over the next 25 years.

The F-35 is just one of the malfunctioning weapons systems on the Pentagon’s current [$1.8-trillion](https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-20-439#summary) shopping list of overpriced aircraft, missiles, ships, satellites and tanks. Other poor performers include the $22-billion [Zumwalt destroyer](https://nationalinterest.org/blog/reboot/after-sinking-billions-its-stealth-destroyers-navy-needs-more-money-keep-them-afloat), a warship without a mission; the $30-billion [littoral combat ship](https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/navy-spent-30b-16-years-fight-iran-littoral-combat-ship-ncna1031806), which the Navy is already mothballing because it is virtually unusable; and the Air Force’s problem-plagued $43-billion [KC-46 refueling tanker](https://www.defensenews.com/air/2020/06/09/the-air-force-delays-a-full-rate-production-decision-for-the-kc-46/), which offers little improvement over current refuelers.

But it is not only exorbitant hardware that picks taxpayer pockets. Pentagon administrative costs are also out of control. A January 2015 report by a federal advisory panel found that the **Pentagon could save**[**$125 billion**](https://www.defensenews.com/2015/01/23/dod-business-panel-proposes-125b-in-savings/) in administrative waste by **streamlining** its **bloated bureaucracy**. That sum alone is 15 times more than the [$8.3 billion](https://thehill.com/policy/finance/488521-trump-reverses-on-request-to-cut-cdc-niaid-funding) the Trump administration proposes to spend in the next fiscal year to fund the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention during one of the worst pandemics in modern history.

#### More funds exacerbate existing ineffectiveness

Manjoo 1/13 (Farhad Manjoo, New York Times columnist, 1-13-2022, “We Must Stop Showering the Military With Money”, The New York Times, accessed 6-22-2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/13/opinion/military-budget-build-back-better.html> )//kp

Last month, Senator Joe Manchin, the West Virginia Democrat who has frustrated much of President Biden’s policy agenda, released [a statement](https://www.manchin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/manchin-statement-on-build-back-better-act) confirming what he’d been hinting for weeks. He [would not vote](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/19/us/politics/manchin-build-back-better.html) for the Build Back Better Act, the Democrats’ $2.2 trillion 10-year plan to address climate change and invest in child care, health care and education. Manchin argued it would increase inflation, harm the electricity grid and hamper national security and was simply just too “mammoth” and “sweeping” to support.

“I have always said, ‘If I can’t go back home and explain it, I can’t vote for it,’” he [said](https://www.manchin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/manchin-statement-on-build-back-better-act).

I don’t doubt the political wisdom of Manchin’s pledge to support only what he can explain. I do wonder, though, how he applies his maxim to a far more mammoth, more sweeping piece of the federal budget: the nearly three-quarters of a trillion dollars that we are spending this year on a military that has become the [epitome of governmental dysfunction](https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2021/11/the-pentagons-yearly-blank-check/), [self-dealing](https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2022/01/the-bunker-the-pentagons-revolting-door/) and overspending.

Of course, I’m only kidding. I don’t actually wonder about Manchin’s stance on showering the Department of Defense with more money than it asks for, even [more than it seems to know what to do with](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-05-25/pentagon-has-returned-unused-128-billion-to-the-u-s-since-2009). Right around the time he was bayoneting Build Back Better, [Manchin](https://www.manchin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/manchin-applauds-senate-passage-of-national-defense-authorization-act-secures-west-virginia-priorities) joined 87 other senators — Democrats and Republicans — in rubber-stamping another [gargantuan budget](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/us/politics/defense-spending-bill.html) for the Pentagon. They allocated $768 billion for the military in 2022, roughly $24 billion more than the White House requested from Congress.

Given all the challenges we face at home, does it make any sense to keep spending so many hundreds of billions on the Pentagon? And even just in terms of fighting wars, can anyone be satisfied with the way the military is managing its funds? The Pentagon has never passed an audit and says it may not be [able to until 2028](https://www.npr.org/2021/05/19/997961646/the-pentagon-has-never-passed-an-audit-some-senators-want-to-change-that).

In 2020 the U.S. military’s budget accounted for [almost 40 percent](https://sipri.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/fs_2104_milex_0.pdf) of the world’s military expenditures. This level of spending has long been excessive, but after a pandemic that has claimed the lives of more Americans than [any](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/12/02/covid-19-has-killed-more-americans-than-civil-war-how-do-we-memorialize-them/) [war we fought](https://www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf), continuing tothrow money at the military is an act of willful disregard for the most urgent threats we face.

According to a [projection by the Congressional Budget Office](https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2021-02/56970-Outlook.pdf#page=10), Congress is projected to spend about $8.5 trillion for the military over the next decade — about half a trillion more than is budgeted for all nonmilitary discretionary programs combined (a category that [includes](https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/non-defense-discretionary-programs) federal spending on education, public health, scientific research, infrastructure, national parks and forests, environmental protection, law enforcement, courts, tax collection, foreign aid, homeland security and health care for veterans).

You don’t have to be a pacifist to wonder if this imbalance between military and nonmilitary spending makes sense. When we face so many other major challenges — from climate disasters to political instability and insurrection — shouldn’t we ask whether it remains wise to keep handing the military what is effectively a blank check? Are such lavish resources even good for national defense, or might the Pentagon’s near-bottomless access to funds have encouraged a [culture of waste](https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2016/01/millions-of-dollars-wasted-in-afghan-extractives-program/) and indulgence that made it easier to blunder into Iraq and contributed to its failures in [Afghanistan](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/09/world/middleeast/afghanistan-war-cost.html)?

This gets to what’s most frustrating about the Pentagon’s enormous budget: the halo of protection it enjoys in our political culture. Despite the Pentagon’s numerous missteps, our representatives too rarely ask how much money for the military may be way too much money for the military. We have long national debates about [whether it makes sense to spend on things like parental leave](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/11/23/paid-family-leave-how-lawmakers-could-compromise-on-build-back-better.html) or college tuition, but lawmakers seldom expect such rigor from the Defense Department. For example, why should we [keep building aircraft carriers](https://sgp.fas.org/crs/weapons/RS20643.pdf) — each of which costs [about $1.5 billion a year to operate](https://www.cbo.gov/system/files?file=2021-05/57088-AppendixA.pdf) — when we’ve already got most of the world’s fleet of active aircraft carriers? (We’ve got 11; no other nation has more than two, though China may be [launching a third](https://www.csis.org/analysis/signs-point-chinas-third-aircraft-carrier-launching-soon) soon.)

There is ample evidence that Congress’s reluctance to ask basic questions of the Pentagon has harmed, rather than helped, the military’s effectiveness. Consider the boondoggle that is the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program — the plan the Pentagon conceived [in the 1990s](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/21/magazine/f35-joint-strike-fighter-program.html) to build a new plane, which is expected to cost taxpayers [more than $1 trillion](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/12/opinion/f-35-fighter-jet-cost.html) over its 60-year life span. A [recent audit](https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-226) from the Government Accountability Office found that even the Pentagon’s extended timeline for when the plane might finally go into full production is “not achievable,” and there were more than 850 “open deficiencies” in the project as of November 2020. I wonder if Manchin could explain to his constituents how tolerating such a level of mismanagement is good for our security.

I also wonder if Manchin could explain the staggering size and top-heaviness of the Pentagon’s **staffing** — why the [ratio of enlisted troops to officers is declining](https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2021/12/the-bunker-star-creep/) across the U.S. forces, [cluttering the chain of command](https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Publications/Article/1325984/are-there-too-many-general-officers-for-todays-military/) with layers of bureaucracy. A 2015 internal study found that the Pentagon [employed](https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/pentagon-buries-evidence-of-125-billion-in-bureaucratic-waste/2016/12/05/e0668c76-9af6-11e6-a0ed-ab0774c1eaa5_story.html?utm_term=.b4f9548f160e) (or hired contractors to employ) nearly as many deskbound, back-office people as it had active-duty troops. The report found that it could save $125 billion a year by, among other measures, reducing overstaffing through retirements and attrition. The Pentagon buried that report, [according to The Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/pentagon-buries-evidence-of-125-billion-in-bureaucratic-waste/2016/12/05/e0668c76-9af6-11e6-a0ed-ab0774c1eaa5_story.html?utm_term=.b4f9548f160e).

Not only do lawmakers give the Pentagon a free pass on its budget; sometimes they even force the agency to keep the little fat it’s trying to trim. The Air Force says that it’s ready to retire its fleet of A-10 Warthogs, fighter airplanes that date back to the 1970s. Congress [forbade](https://www.defensenews.com/congress/budget/2021/07/23/senate-policy-bill-rejects-air-force-request-to-send-some-a-10s-in-the-boneyard/) [any such reduction](https://breakingdefense.com/2021/12/congress-approves-retirement-of-160-air-force-planes-with-one-notable-exception/) in 2022.

Starting in 2017, Congress even required each military service to submit [an annual wish list of “unfunded priorities”](https://www.ntu.org/publications/detail/congress-should-do-away-with-dod-unfunded-priorities-lists-a-multibillion-dollar-wish-list-boondoggle) — that is, goodies that the services might want but that the White House had not requested in its budget. It has since become routine for Congress to not only give the Pentagon [much of what it asks for](https://responsiblestatecraft.org/2021/07/29/lawmakers-cave-to-wish-lists-and-give-the-pentagon-money-it-doesnt-need/) but also ladle on [extras](https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-05-07/congress-should-end-the-military-s-wish-lists?sref=B3uFyqJT).

The reasons such spending persists aren’t a big mystery. [The military-industrial complex is every bit as politically powerful as Dwight Eisenhower warned](https://www.pogo.org/analysis/2021/11/afghanistan-proved-eisenhower-correct/) it would be. (A recent Wall Street Journal headline [captured the situation well](https://www.wsj.com/articles/who-won-in-afghanistan-private-contractors-troops-withdrawal-war-pentagon-11640988154): “Who Won in Afghanistan? Private Contractors.”) In another trick, the military spreads its contracts to a [large number of congressional districts](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/01/the-tragedy-of-the-american-military/383516/), giving every lawmaker a reason to celebrate excessive military spending. ([Manchin put out a statement](https://www.manchin.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/manchin-applauds-senate-passage-of-national-defense-authorization-act-secures-west-virginia-priorities) taking credit for all the benefits the new defense appropriation will bring to West Virginia.)

And finally, there is plain patriotic posturing: Because every dollar to the Pentagon can be defended as protecting the troops and the nation’s security, no politician will ever get in trouble for giving too much money to the military.

Mandy Smithberger, who studies Pentagon excess at the Project on Government Oversight, a nonpartisan independent group, told me that while she has hopes that younger generations will begin to question the military’s excessive spending, the situation is unlikely to change anytime soon.

“It’s going to take members of Congress to really step up,” she said. That seems about as likely as pigs flying — or, more aptly, F-35s.

#### More spending fails---the military sucks

De Rugy 3/10 (Veronique de Rugy, senior research fellow at George Mason University, 3-10-2022, “More Defense Spending Does Not Equal More Safety”, Reason, accessed 6-28-2022, <https://reason.com/2022/03/10/more-defense-spending-does-not-equal-more-safety/> )//kp

The brutal invasion of Ukraine by Russia has renewed conservatives' calls for large increases of our defense budget. The extra money, we are told, would fund more weapons to better prepare us to respond to aggression in a world that looks increasingly dangerous. As compelling as these arguments can be in a stressful time, it's not quite so simple.

Providing military defense is a valid function of the federal government. However, that doesn't give license to Congress to simply pile on more spending, even when there are dangers out there. Nor does it mean that more spending will result in a completely safe world for us Americans. That's in part because that world doesn't exist. There's only so much safety money can buy.

While I certainly don't pretend to know what the optimal budget for our military is, we are already spending a large amount on national security and on the Pentagon. In fiscal year 2023, the United States is expected to spend more than $770 billion on national defense, with $729 billion of this amount being for the Department of Defense's military operations. This enormous sum is **more than the next 10 countries spend combined**. Russia, for instance, spends close to $62 billion. France and Germany spend almost $53 billion each. Assuming China's numbers are accurate, it spends $252 billion.

When considering how much more money we think is worth spending, we must keep in mind that not **every additional dollar** of military spending will result in enhanced national security. That's because government intentions **do not equal results**. Elected officials and **bureaucrats** **have weak incentives to** sensibly **manage** tax **dollars**. They are not rewarded for maximizing taxpayer value, nor are they usually punished for unnecessary risks. In addition, interest groups often drive political decisions that run counter to the best interest of the public.

Military spending is not immune from these forces any more than the entitlement and welfare parts of the budget. Just look at the **arms-industry lobbying** machine, which in 2021 alone spent $117 million in lobbying expenditures and used 763 lobbyists, likely **pushing** **for** as much **Pentagon spending** as they can get. This explains why Congress continues to allocate funds to produce weapons that the Pentagon itself says it doesn't need. It also explains the **endless** saga of its **cost overruns**, as well as **delays and malfunctions** such as those of the F-35. The Defense Department has been allowed to fail its audits repeatedly, meaning **no one really knows where** some of that **money** **goes**. The result is a less-than-optimal allocation of our large defense budget.

These facts alone don't mean there are no grounds for the argument that the military is underfunded to do everything Congress demands of it. In 2017, the American Enterprise Institute's Mackenzie Eaglen argued for more military spending because "the United States now fields a military that could not meet even the requirements of a benign Clinton-era world," and that "while the United States continues to field the best military personnel in the world, policy makers have asked them to do too much with too little for too long."

I have no reason to doubt Eaglen's claim. However, unless the political system that produced these poor outcomes is reformed, one should remain skeptical about the effectiveness of even more spending.

What about the idea that we should annually spend four percent of our GDP on defense, as opposed to the three percent we are now spending? I find this argument lacking. As a measure of economic activity, GDP has very little to do with our ability to defend ourselves. There's no reason for three percent, four percent, or any other portion of GDP to be considered the right number.

If the defense-spending-to-GDP measurement reflects anything, it's affordability. That brings us to our enormous budget deficits and resulting growing debt. Unless Congress cuts non-defense spending significantly, growing the military budget would grow the deficit. However, if additional defense spending is deficit-financed, then we can expect slower growth, as Harvard economist Robert Barro and I demonstrated in a study back in 2013. That reduces, not increases, the affordability of our defense budget.

In other words, let's make sure we're asking the right questions before rushing to jack up the defense budget.