|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Metatag Type |  |
| Title | Trump's budget overhaul: domestic programs slashed to fund military |
| Source | The Guardian |
| Author(s) | Guardian Staff and agencies (unspecified) |
| Published/Uploaded | 1:20 AM ET, Thursday March 16, 2017 |
| URL | <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/mar/15/trump-budget-proposal-cuts-epa-military-mexico-wall> |
| Total Images | 4 |
| Total Videos | 0 |
| Total Ext. Links | 3 |
| Total Items Comprising the Sample | 1 |
| Total Word Count | 594 (revised for submission), 984 unedited |
| Contributor | JML |

Donald Trump unveiled a $1.15tn budget on Thursday, a far-reaching overhaul of federal government spending that would slash many domestic programs to finance a significant increase in the military and make a down payment on a US-Mexico border wall.

Trump’s proposal seeks to upend Washington with cuts to long-promised campaign targets like foreign aid and the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as strong congressional favorites such as medical research, help for homeless veterans and community development grants.

“A budget that puts America first must make the safety of our people its number one priority because without safety, there can be no prosperity,” Trump said in a message accompanying his proposed budget, whose title, America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again, borrows a phrase denounced by the Anti-Defamation League for its links to 1940s Nazi sympathizers.

The $54bn boost for the military is the largest since Ronald Reagan’s Pentagon buildup in the 1980s, promising immediate money for troop readiness, the fight against Islamic State militants and procurement of new ships, fighter jets and other weapons. The 10% Pentagon boost is financed by $54bn in cuts to foreign aid and domestic agencies that had been protected by Barack Obama.

The budget goes after the frequent targets of the party’s staunchest conservatives, eliminating the National Endowment for the Arts, legal aid for the poor, low-income heating assistance and the AmeriCorps national service program established by Bill Clinton.

“This is a hard power budget, not a soft power budget,” said the White House budget director, Mick Mulvaney.

Such programs were the focus of lengthy battles dating to the GOP takeover of Congress in 1995 and have survived prior attempts to eliminate them.

Lawmakers will have the final say on Trump’s proposal in the arduous budget process, and many of the cuts will be deemed dead on arrival.

“The administration’s budget isn’t going to be the budget,” said Senator Marco Rubio. “We do the budget here. The administration makes recommendations, but Congress does budgets.”

Mulvaney acknowledged to reporters that passing the cuts could be an uphill struggle and said the administration would negotiate over replacement cuts.

“This is not a take-it-or-leave-it budget,” Mulvaney said.

Law enforcement agencies such as the FBI would be spared, while the border wall would receive an immediate $1.4bn infusion in the ongoing fiscal year, with another $2.6bn planned for the 2018 budget year starting 1 October.

Trump repeatedly claimed during the campaign that Mexico would pay for the wall when, in fact, US taxpayers are almost certain to foot the bill.

Twelve of the government’s 15 cabinet agencies would absorb cuts under the president’s proposal. The biggest losers are agriculture, labor, state and the cabinet-level EPA. The defense department, Department of Homeland Security and Department of Veterans Affairs are the winners.

More than 3,000 EPA workers would lose their jobs and programs such as Obama’s Clean Power Plan, which would tighten regulations on emissions from power plants seen as contributing to global warming, would be eliminated. Popular EPA grants for state and local drinking and wastewater projects would be preserved, however, even as research into climate change would be eliminated.

Trump’s proposal covers only roughly one-fourth of the approximately $4tn federal budget, the discretionary portion that Congress passes each year. It doesn’t address taxes, social security, Medicare and Medicaid, or make predictions about deficits and the economy. Those big-picture details are due in mid-May, and are sure to show large probably permanent budget deficits. Trump has vowed not to cut social security and Medicare and is dead set against raising taxes.