

Dear Senator,

As you consider S.2943, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017, the undersigned groups urge you to oppose Senator McCain's amendment, No. 4229, to increase funding for the Pentagon by \$18 billion. This amendment would break the Bipartisan Budget Agreement of 2015, which provided budget parity to domestic and defense spending, in spirit if not in letter.

Although the NDAA provides more than \$600 billion for the Pentagon, Senator McCain's amendment would add an additional \$18 billion that the Pentagon did not request. Yet the Pentagon is the only federal department that cannot conduct an audit and account for how it spends and often wastes huge sums of money. Adding billions more to the Pentagon budget for programs that it doesn't need and did not request without equal increases for domestic needs prioritizes weapons contractors and war over needed investments for important domestic programs such as education, childcare, roads, rails, bridges, disaster preparedness and response, food assistance, healthcare, and more.

The \$18 billion proposed by the McCain amendment could be used to fund many domestic programs in need of support, such as the HUD proposal to end family homelessness (\$11 billion over 10 years) which would provide subsidies to 550,000 more families; Zika prevention (\$1.9 billion); HHS' program for the treatment of prescription drug/heroin abuse (\$1 billion 2-year initiative); the original Stabenow/Peters proposal to assist Flint and other communities with lead contamination in their water supply (\$600 million); and the initiative for summer and year round employment and training for 1 million 16-24 year olds (\$5.5 billion). Meanwhile, current levels of Pentagon spending are already higher than at most times in modern history even though war spending is down, and billions are wasted on malfunctioning weapons systems.

We must not sacrifice our domestic needs to further pad the Pentagon budget and defense contractors' pockets. Please oppose this or any amendment that would add money to the Pentagon without providing equal increases to domestic needs.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women

Center for International Policy

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Church of the Brethren, Office of Public Witness

Coalition on Human Needs

Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Franciscan Action Network

Just Foreign Policy

Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

National Association of Social Workers

National Low Income Housing Coalition

National Priorities Project

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

Pax Christi International

Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities Coalition

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries

Win Without War

Women's Action for New Directions