



Background Materials

Presented by Peace Action and National Priorities Project



Move the Money Background Materials

All Move the Money materials are available online at:

<http://nationalpriorities.org/analysis/categories/military-security/>

Fact Sheets

- Myth — Military Spending is Going Down (NPP)
- The Discretionary Budget — Military v. Non-Military (NPP)
- U.S. Military Spending v. the World (NPP)
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- How to Talk About the Pentagon Budget (ReThink Media)
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Myth: Military Spending is Going Down

Overview

After more than a decade of sustained growth in the Pentagon's annual "base" budget – which does not include the costs of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan or nuclear weapons activities at the Department of Energy – Defense Department funding has now seen slight decreases relative to previously projected funding. This is the result of caps on discretionary spending mandated in the Budget Control Act of 2011 and the across-the-board spending cuts known as sequestration.

The Pentagon was in a good position to absorb those decreases after its base budget increased by 35 percent in the decade following 9/11. But now the Obama Administration would like to reverse those minor cuts. Not including war funding, the president proposed \$549 billion for military programs in fiscal 2015, a more than 5 percent increase relative to 2014.

Sequestration and the Military, 2013

Sequestration began on March 1, 2013. While the Budget Control Act originally slated a \$54.6 billion cut to defense accounts, that number was reduced by the American Taxpayer Relief Act (ATRA), also known as the fiscal cliff deal. The ATRA and other adjustments to the defense sequester reduced cuts down to \$37.2 billion for fiscal 2013.

In addition, the Pentagon was granted flexibility to apply part of these cuts to funds from previous budgets that had not yet been spent; these funds are known officially as "prior year unobligated balances."

Accounting for these adjustments to the defense sequester, the cuts ultimately amounted to a 5.7 percent reduction to projected pre-sequester spending in fiscal 2013, as the following table summarizes.

Adjustments to Defense Sequestration in FY2013		Source
Sequestration according to Budget Control Act	\$54.6 billion	Government Printing Office
Reduction in cuts through American Taxpayer Relief Act and other adjustments	\$17.4 billion	Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments



Quick Facts

- The Pentagon's spending "cut" is largely the result of comparing one year's long-range spending projections to more recent, lower spending projections.
- Sequestration reduced Pentagon spending by only 0.6 percent in fiscal 2014, despite claims by Pentagon officials that their funding was gutted.
- Pentagon spending grew by 35 percent in the decade after 9/11, adjusted for inflation. Over that same period, non-defense funding grew by 12 percent.

Cuts applied to "prior year unobligated balances"	\$6 billion	Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments
Actual cut to FY2013 budget	\$31.2 billion	
Actual cut as percent of pre-sequester Budget Control Act defense cap	5.7%	

Sequestration and the Military, 2014

In fiscal 2014, the Budget Control Act once again mandated a \$54.6 billion sequester cut to defense accounts. However, in December 2013, the Bipartisan Budget Act reduced the cuts by more than \$20 billion, down to \$34 billion.

Sequestration applies only to the Pentagon's "base" budget – that is, its regular operational budget, excluding war funding. War funding is known officially as "Overseas Contingency Operations" (OCO). According to the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, the Pentagon included an estimated \$20 billion in non-war funding to the OCO budget when it prepared its 2014 budget proposal, thereby mitigating the effects of sequestration by stashing base budget funding in the war budget.

Furthermore, when congressional appropriators wrote 2014 war funding into law they added an additional \$10.8 billion of non-war funding – widely referred to as a slush fund – to the budget, as the Project on Government Oversight has shown.

In total, these reductions and adjustments reduced the 2014 defense sequester down to 0.6 percent of projected pre-sequester spending, as the following tables summarizes.

Adjustments to Defense Sequestration in FY2014		Source
Sequestration according to Budget Control Act	\$54.6 billion	
Reduction in cuts through Bipartisan Budget Act	\$20.382	House Budget Committee
Non-war funding in 2014 war budget proposal, estimate	\$20 billion	Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments
Additional funds added by appropriators	\$10.8 billion	Project on Government Oversight
Actual cut to FY2014 budget	\$3.4 billion	
Actual cut as percent of pre-	0.62%	

sequester Budget Control Act defense cap		
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Looking Ahead to the Defense Sequester in 2015

News reports continue to emphasize the devastating effects of sequestration on national security, but the numbers show otherwise. Defense accounts absorbed a modest 5.6 percent cut in 2013 and, through the use of its war budget as a loophole, almost entirely avoided cuts in 2014. Yet the military could easily absorb reductions after a decade of growth following 9/11. At the same time, sequestration has reduced funding for domestic programs – from Head Start to cancer research – that did not have the flexibility to avoid cuts the way the Pentagon has.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 has already reduced the level of cuts slated for 2015, and with the release of President Obama’s 2015 budget proposal, there is reason to believe the Pentagon will continue to avoid the lion’s share of sequestration in the future, and potentially see increases instead of cuts. The president has asked for an additional \$26 billion in 2015 for military spending as part of his budget request, relative to previously projected spending levels. He’s also asking for an additional \$115 billion in military spending for fiscal years 2016 through 2019. Finally, the Pentagon is likely to continue to use the war budget as a loophole to supplement its regular funding. In fact, recent news reports indicate that the Pentagon will continue to ask for a “war” budget even after troops have left Afghanistan.

Sources and Resources

- NPP's Analysis of President Obama's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, <http://nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2014/president-obamas-fiscal-year-2015-budget/>
- NPP's "The Pentagon's Phony Budget War," <http://nationalpriorities.org/blog/2014/03/06/pentagons-phony-budget-war/>
- Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, Chaos and Uncertainty: The FY14 Defense Budget and Beyond, <http://www.csbaonline.org/publications/2013/10/chaos-and-uncertainty-the-fy-14-defense-budget-and-beyond/>
- Project on Government Oversight, "Omnibus" Information and Commentary Paper: What Did the Appropriators Really Do to Defense Spending?, <http://www.pogo.org/our-work/straus-military-reform-project/congress/2014/omnibus-information.html>

The Discretionary Budget: Military v. Non-Military

Overview

The federal budget includes two major types of spending: mandatory and discretionary, as well as a third, much smaller category: interest on the federal debt.

Mandatory spending refers to federal money that is spent based on existing laws that govern particular programs or functions. Mandatory spending includes entitlements, which are money or benefits provided directly to individuals such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and Federal Retirement. Mandatory spending is not part of the annual appropriations process. It represents roughly two-thirds of total annual federal spending.

Discretionary spending is the portion of the federal budget that the president requests and Congress appropriates every year. Congress may choose to increase or decrease spending on these programs from the amount proposed by the president.

The discretionary budget includes national defense, as well as expenditures for education, housing assistance, and many health programs. It represents roughly one-third of the total annual federal budget.

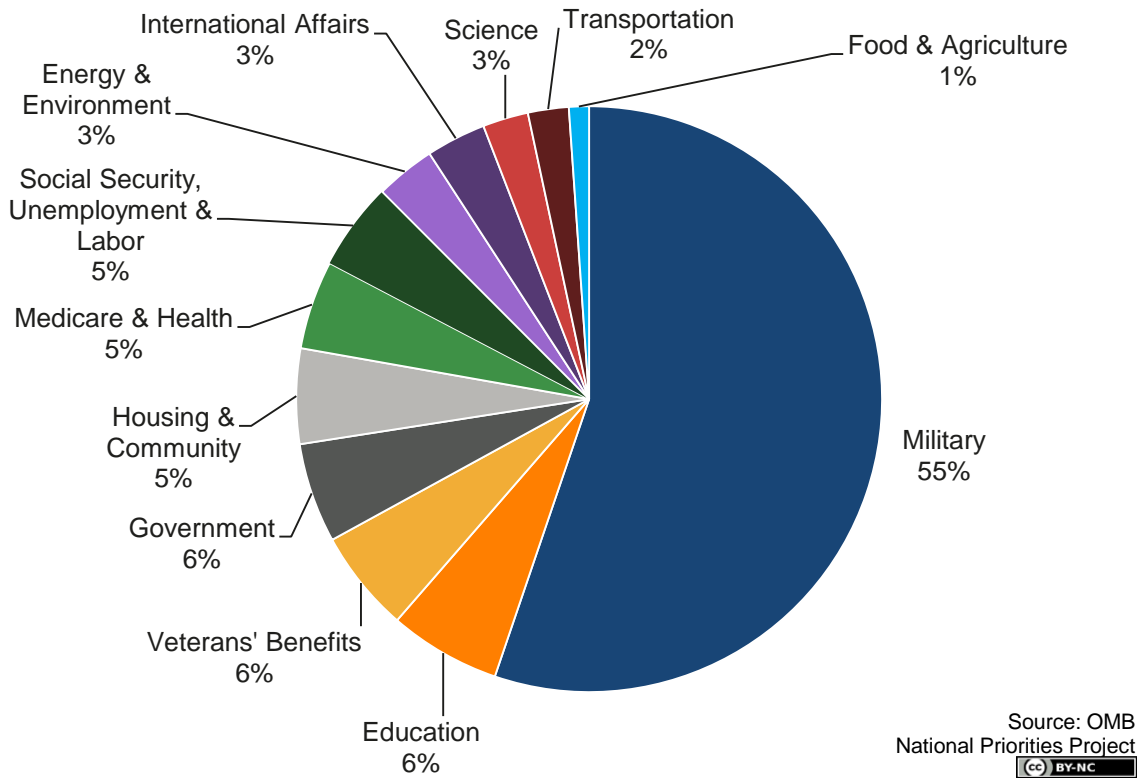
As the chart below shows, in FY2015, a proposed 55 percent of the discretionary budget is allocated to the military. This is consistent with previous budgets in which national defense has accounted for at least 50 percent, and sometimes close to 60 percent of discretionary spending.

Quick Facts



- The federal budget includes both mandatory and discretionary spending, as well as interest on the federal debt.
- Mandatory spending is federal money that is spent based on existing laws that govern particular programs.
- Discretionary budget items are those whose allocations Congress may adjust each year.
- In the FY2015 budget request, discretionary spending is 29 percent of total budget authority.
- Military spending accounts for more than 50 percent of discretionary expenditures.
- From FY2002 to FY2015, discretionary U.S. military expenditures increased by 34 percent, from \$476 billion to \$640 billion, adjusted for inflation.

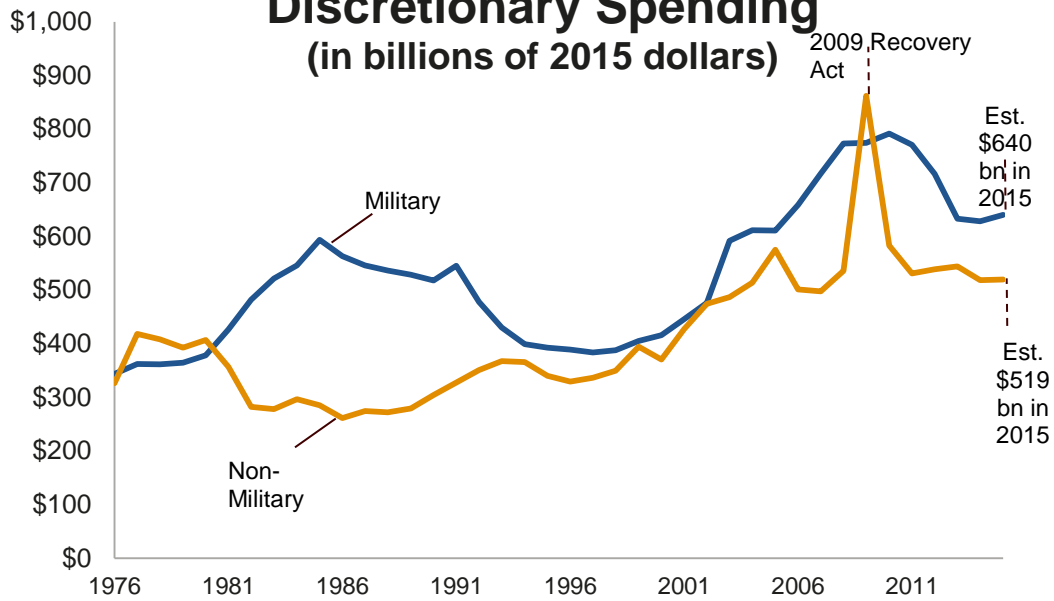
President's Proposed Discretionary Spending (Fiscal Year 2015)



The line chart below illustrates that discretionary spending for the military and war costs was on an upward trend from the late 1990s until around 2012, when war costs began to decline.

Meanwhile, in the decade following 9/11, spending for domestic discretionary programs increased by 12 percent. That compares to a 35 percent increase in military spending over that same time period.

Military and Non-Military Discretionary Spending (in billions of 2015 dollars)



Source: OMB
National Priorities Project

Sources and Resources

- NPP's Analysis of President Obama's Fiscal Year 2015 Budget, <http://nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2014/president-obamas-fiscal-year-2015-budget/>
- NPP's The President's Budget in Pictures, <http://nationalpriorities.org/analysis/2014/presidents-2015-budget-in-pictures/>
- White House Office of Management and Budget, Public Budget Database, Budget Authority Spreadsheet

U.S. Military Spending v. the World

Overview

The United States is easily the global leader in military expenditures. World military spending in 2013, the most recent year for which data is available, reached just over \$1.7 trillion. The United States accounted for 37 percent of this total. Although accurate data for 2013 is not available for some of the countries labeled as the “axis of evil” or “rogue states” it is likely that these countries — Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria — make up only about 1 percent of world military spending.

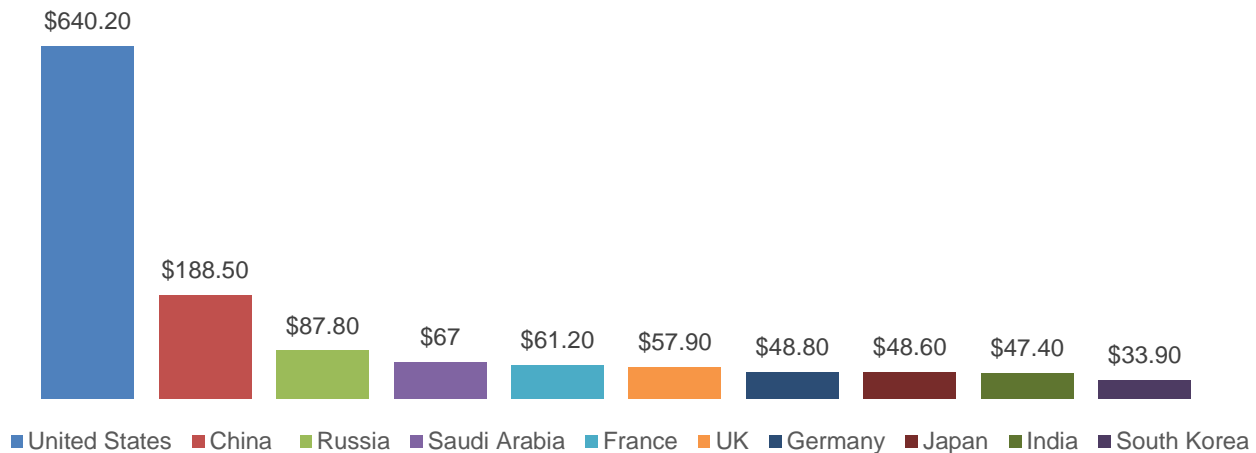
Quick Facts



- The United States ranks #1 in the world for military expenditures.
- The United States accounts for 37 percent of total global military spending.
- U.S. military spending dwarfs the budget of the #2 country — China — which it outspends by more than 3 to 1.
- The United States and both its NATO and Major Non-NATO Allies account for over half of total global military spending.
- U.S. military expenditures are nearly equal to the total expenditures of the next 10 largest countries combined.

Top 10 Countries Ranked by Military Spending, 2013

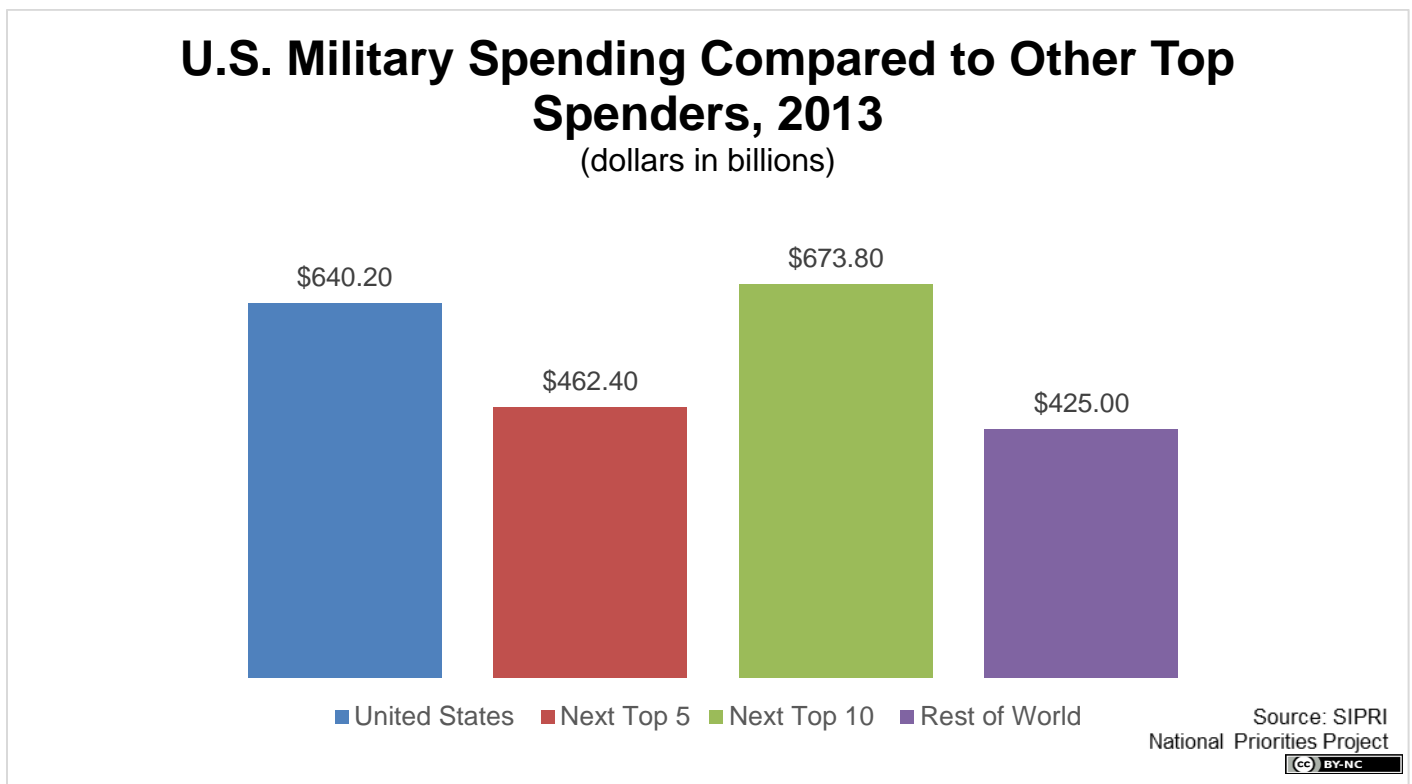
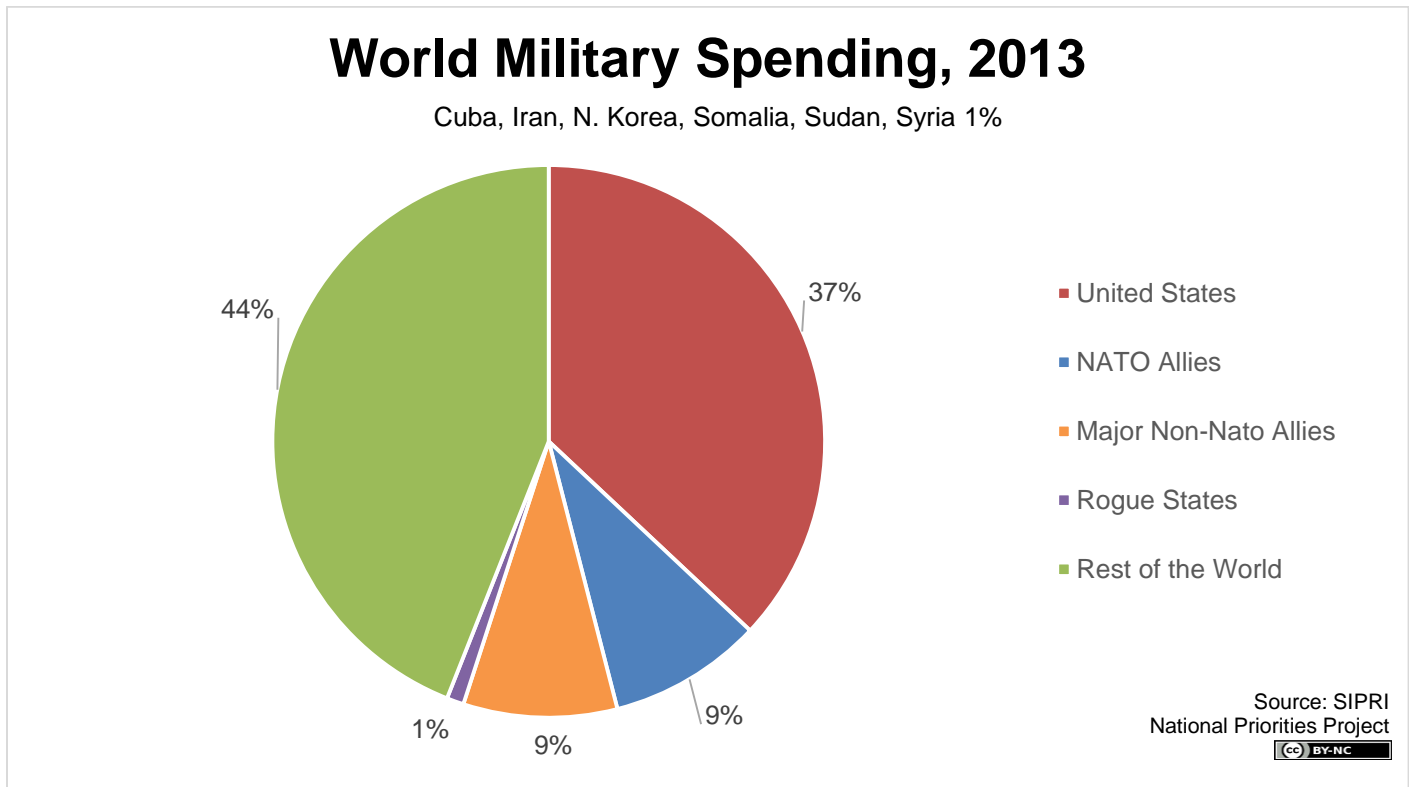
(dollars in billions)



Source: SIPRI
National Priorities Project



As the chart shows, the United States and its NATO and Major Non-NATO Allies account for over 50 percent of total global military spending.



Sources and Resources

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) "Military Expenditure Database" using constant (\$2010) prices.

NOTE: As in most years, the figures used by SIPRI for U.S. military spending shown here do not match official Defense Department figures. They are used so that comparisons between U.S. military spending and that of other [states are determined according to the same methodology].

Tools of Influence: The Military-Industrial Complex at Work

By William Hartung

Director, Arms and Security Project, Center for International Policy

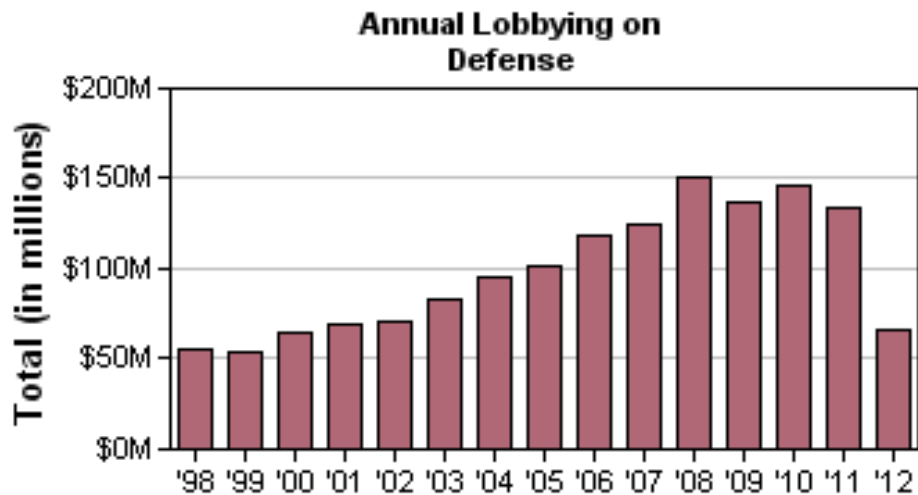
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Introduction

On January 17, 1961, President Dwight D. Eisenhower gave his famous speech in which he warned of the danger of “unwarranted influence” wielded by the military-industrial complex.

Today that danger is even greater than it was when Eisenhower made his remarks. Military spending is over 60 percent higher than it was 50 years ago, and Pentagon contractors receive hundreds of billions of dollars in funding from the federal government every year. Lockheed Martin alone receives nearly twice as much as the operating budget of the entire Department of State.

As the debate grows over how best to reduce the federal budget deficit, the Pentagon, the arms industry, and key members of Congress are using every tool at their disposal to maintain Pentagon spending at the highest possible levels. The largest beneficiaries of this process are military contractors that receive billions of dollars in government funding while their executives receive millions in compensation — all paid for with our tax dollars. This is the military-industrial complex at work.



Tools of Influence

The weapons industry has numerous tools of influence that it can use to get its way in battles over Pentagon spending and military policy.

- **Campaign Cash:** Pentagon contractors spent \$25 million in political contributions in the 2008 and 2010 election cycles, targeting key members like House Armed Services Committee Chair Howard P. “Buck” McKeon, who has received \$750,000 in contributions from the arms industry since 2009.

- **Lobbying and the Revolving Door:** The defense industry employs almost 1,000 lobbyists — nearly two for each member of Congress. Over two-thirds of these lobbyists passed through the revolving door. This means that they moved from jobs in Congress, the Pentagon, or the uniformed military to work for the same Pentagon contractors that they were in charge of regulating while they were in government. This process gives weapons makers the inside track in battles over government spending and defense policy.
- **Pork Barrel Politics:** Pentagon contractors often work hand-in-glove with key members of Congress to steer funds to key districts in support of military bases or weapons projects. For many weapons systems these contracts are spread across dozens of states and scores of Congressional Districts, thereby giving many members a vested political interest in supporting these projects. Members whose districts benefit from particular programs form caucuses to promote them, including groups that support the F-35 fighter, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, and Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs).
- **The Jobs Card:** Contractors frequently argue that cutting back Pentagon spending will eliminate large numbers of jobs and undermine economic growth. While reductions in any form of spending will displace some workers, the arms industry fails to note that military spending is virtually the worst way to create jobs compared to any other use of the same money. A tax cut, or spending on education, infrastructure, health, or alternative energy all create more jobs than Pentagon spending.
- **Advisory Panels — Defining the Threat:** Current or former employees of the same firms that benefit from high Pentagon budgets are often placed on government advisory panels, where they help shape major policy decisions on issues like procurement reform, arms export policy, missile defense or the future of stealth technology. By helping to define the threats that the Pentagon budget is supposed to address, these firms help expand the market for their own products.
- **Funding Think Tanks — Shaping the Public Debate:** Arms contractors like Boeing and Lockheed Martin frequently contribute to think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, the Center for Security Policy and the Lexington Institute. These organizations then turn around and make the case for higher military budgets, looser regulations over Pentagon contractors, and a more aggressive foreign policy — all positions that ultimately benefit these companies' bottom lines.
- **Beyond Campaign Spending — Currying Favor with Key Politicians:** In addition to campaign spending and lobbying activities, Pentagon contractors seek other ways to gain influence over key members of Congress. For example, when Patricia McKeon, the wife of House Armed Services Committee chairman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, decided to run for the state legislature in California, major contractors like Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman immediately gave donations in support of her campaign.
- **Advertising:** When funding for a given project is threatened with budget cuts, weapons contractors often turn to advertising to make their case. The ads are usually placed in specialty industry or political publications and web sites that are read by Congressional staffers and key Executive Branch officials, but at times they make placements in mainstream publications as well. For example, when the Obama administration was trying to terminate the F-22 fighter plane program, Lockheed Martin and its partners in the project took out so many full-page ads in the *Washington Post* that one reporter there joked the ads were the only thing keeping the paper afloat.

The Bottom Line: The Arms Lobby is *Not* All-Powerful

The most important part of President Eisenhower's military-industrial complex speech is his call for an "alert and knowledgeable citizenry" to take action to blunt the influence of the weapons lobby. Despite all of the tools of influence at the arms industry's disposal, over the years citizen's movements have won major victories in helping to reduce nuclear arsenals, end unnecessary projects like the F-22 fighter plane, and force the Pentagon to scale back its ambitious spending plans. Much more needs to be done, but there is ample evidence to suggest that citizen action can make a difference. Understanding how the military-industrial complex works can serve as an important element of public education campaigns designed to rein in runaway Pentagon spending and promote more sensible budget priorities.

Sources and Resources

- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SPIRI) "Military Expenditure Database" using constant (\$2010) prices.
- The Center for Responsive Politics (CRP): CRP maintains a comprehensive data base on campaign and lobbying expenditures and the revolving door. It can be used to find information on specific weapons contractors and key members of Congress: <http://www.opensecrets.org/>
- The Project on Government Oversight (POGO): POGO's web site provides information on corruption, conflicts-of-interest, and cost overruns in weapons contracting: <http://www.pogo.org/>
- Taxpayers for Common Sense (TCS): An excellent source of data on issues like how members of Congress and weapons contractors collude to add military projects to the budget that go beyond even what the Pentagon has requested: www.taxpayer.net
- William D. Hartung, *Prophets of War: Lockheed Martin and the Making of the Military-Industrial Complex* (Nation Books): for more information see www.prophetsofwar.com. For a summary of some of the issues raised by the book, see William Hartung, "Pentagon Contractors and Congress: Defending Special Interests or Promoting the Public Interest?," *Huffington Post*, July 17, 2012, available at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-hartung/pentagon-contractors-and-_b_1680068.html.

How to Talk About the Pentagon Budget

Rethink Media

Why do we have a Pentagon budget in the first place?

Most Americans believe the Pentagon budget makes our country *SAFER* and *STRONGER*. They believe that the goal of the Pentagon budget is to prevent an attack on the American people and strengthen America's role in the world. Understanding these two primary values is key as we discuss the Pentagon budget. Arguments that imply a reduced level of security or a trade-off between security and fiscal health are unpersuasive. All of our arguments should emphasize these two values: that a refocused Pentagon budget will make America *SAFER* and *STRONGER*.

Talking about the Pentagon Budget

1. **Troops, troops, troops:** One of the public's greatest concerns, as evidenced in polling data, is that any talk of cuts to the military budget is perceived as negatively impacting troops. Americans understand the tides of war are receding, but they want to make sure our troops are taken care of.

INSTEAD OF: "It's time for us to cut the military budget."

SAY: "We need to refocus money away from the bloated programs that don't make us any safer and put it toward the troops and veterans who have protected us."

2. **How to refer to the budget:** Whenever possible, we suggest using the phrase "Pentagon budget". The "military budget" connotes troops — and as we see above, the majority of Americans do not want to cut funding to soldiers. The "defense budget" connotes safety and security — cutting the "defense budget" implies that the country will be less safe. The "Pentagon budget" connotes bureaucracy, corruption, and out of date programs. Polling data shows that voters are twice as likely to support Pentagon budget cuts over military budget cuts or defense budget cuts.

INSTEAD OF: "The military budget doesn't keep us safe. It's time to cut it."

SAY: "We need a Pentagon budget that addresses 21st century threats."

3. **Reshape the budget, not just cut it across the board:** The majority of American voters are split on whether they support cutting the Pentagon budget outright. Instead, the majority of Americans agree that it's time to refocus the budget on actual national security threats and make the budget more effective — even if that costs more money. Emphasize the importance of a budget that reflects our national security goals.

INSTEAD OF: "We need to make serious budget cuts."

SAY: "We need to re-shift the budget to address our actual security needs and eliminate the waste."

4. **Partisan attacks fall flat:** Voters want a nonpartisan solution to our Pentagon budget problems instead of mudslinging. When discussing the Pentagon budget, emphasize that our side wants a practical, real solution instead of excuses. Cite unexpected allies who support a realigned, more effective Pentagon budget.

INSTEAD OF: “Republicans are responsible for this defense budget and they should fix it.”

SAY: “Secretary of Defense Panetta agrees that it’s time for all of us to come to the table with a practical solution to our bloated Pentagon budget.”

5. **Emphasize the existing negative feelings about Congress and defense lobbyists:** Voters resent the influence defense lobbyists have had on Congress and also believe Congress has been using the Pentagon budget as a political tool. Whenever possible, highlight the detrimental effects of lobbying efforts and “playing politics” with our national security.

INSTEAD OF: “The defense industry may lose some jobs, but it would be better off for us in the long run.”

SAY: “Our military budget today is determined by politicians and the lobbyists and special interests, not safety. Decisions should be made based on what’s best for our military, not politics and profits for special interests.”

6. **It’s not enough to cut the Pentagon budget to solve the deficit:** Voters are less convinced that we should cut the Pentagon to resolve the deficit. Instead, arguments about deficit reduction and Pentagon spending should emphasize the importance of American economic strength as the foundation for our national security.

INSTEAD OF: “The country is in debt and we need to cut the military budget to get back on track.”

SAY: “Our economic security is the foundation for our national security. These enormous Pentagon budgets actually hurt us by adding to the deficit, weakening the economy, and making us less of a competitive player in the world market.”

REMEMBER:

- People remember stories, not numbers.
- Get “inside the circle” with your audience. Share things about yourself that make you both relatable and trustworthy to the people you’re connecting with.
- Don’t try to fit all seven points into an op-ed or an interview. Pick two or three that you feel most comfortable speaking on and go back to those points again and again.
- Use metaphors and similes to explain your points. (“Our Pentagon budget has been coasting with no one at the wheel.”)
- Frame a choice for your audience. (“We can either avoid tough decisions or get our Pentagon budget back on track.”)

Federal Grants Available To Help Cities and Towns Adjust to Defense Cuts

The writing is on the wall: due to a combination of factors including the end of two multi-year wars and a national focus on reducing deficits, Pentagon spending is sure to decline.

Communities across the country will be affected. For the most part we don't know which ones. But economic development professionals agree on one thing: *getting ahead of the curve is critical to a successful economic strategy.*

Is as much as 2-3% of your city's economy dependent on defense contracts? Then ***you are eligible to get federal help*** to prepare an adjustment strategy.

Accessing these funds doesn't mean you're unconcerned about your existing jobs base. It just means you're doing what you can to have a Plan B in place if that base takes a hit.

New Federal "Plan B" money available

The Office of Economic Adjustment in the Pentagon (oea.gov) has one mission: to help communities affected by defense downsizings, either from base closings or defense industry contract losses, with transition planning grants and technical assistance (see program guidelines at [1](#) and [2](#) and below).

The Obama administration is ramping up and fast tracking this assistance.

Who is eligible?

Defense-dependent communities, regions and states. Dependency has a low threshold—only about 2-3% of a community's workforce need be employed in the defense industry to qualify.

How does the process work?

Mayors and other public officials take the lead in securing these funds and then involving economic development professionals and community, worker and business stakeholders in planning an economic transition.

Whereas before OEA couldn't offer assistance until a contract cancellation had been announced, those rules have changed. **Now OEA supports advance planning—before the job losses hit.**

In addition to supporting transition planning—financially and with hands-on technical assistance—OEA will help connect communities to support from other federal agencies to implement the economic transition plans they construct using OEA planning funds.

Capitalizing on this challenge and opportunity

Adjusting to the defense downsizing will be a challenge for communities across the country. State and community leaders need to seize the chance to turn this challenge into the proverbial opportunity: to help their communities chart a path to new economic activity not dependent on wartime levels of military spending.

Public officials can contact OEA directly to open a dialogue on getting the process started, at 703-697-2130. I am also available to answer questions and offer suggestions. Contact Miriam Pemberton: Miriam@ips-dc.org or 202-787-5214.

See OEA Defense Industry Adjustment program guidelines at:

<https://www.cfda.gov/?s=program&mode=form&tab=step1&id=d789a8ba0a42a998d6bb68193b7f978>.



<https://www.cfda.gov/?s=program&mode=form&tab=step1&id=905e9d27307ef8c49ec2f3b9df7df7d3b41>.

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New Tools for Postwar Defense Transition: A Status Report

As we begin our postwar defense downsizing, some states and localities are taking steps to help their defense-dependent communities, workers and businesses adjust.

The strategies are generally taking one of three forms. **First**, a few states are setting up commissions to develop plans to reduce their vulnerability to defense cuts. **Second**, defense-dependent states and localities are accessing federal planning grant money and technical assistance to develop economic transition plans. **Third**, states are setting up dedicated funds and programs of their own to ease the transition.

The orientations of these strategies vary, and fall roughly into these three types:

1. **Conversion/Diversification:** Some put the focus on developing alternative civilian economic activity to replace vulnerable defense work.
2. **Both/And Strategy:** Others are looking both at ways to preserve and diversify defense work and ways to expand civilian work.
3. **Expand Defense:** A third group is focusing on preserving and expanding defense work.

State Commissions

- **Connecticut:** Law creating “Commission on Connecticut’s Future” passed May 28, 2013.

A broad-based commission including representatives of business, labor, relevant committees of the legislature, peace and environmental organizations, and state economic development and education agencies. Charged with preparing a report outlining state strategies to restore and grow the state’s manufacturing base and convert or diversify businesses heavily dependent on military contracts into civilian production, with an emphasis on environmentally-sustainable manufacturing.

- **Maryland:** “Commission on Connecticut’s Future” **defeated** in legislature January 2014.

Would have focused intensively on diversification to reduce Maryland’s defense dependency. Following state elections this year, the bill will be reintroduced to a reconfigured legislature.

- Bills creating similar commissions will be introduced in several other states this year.

Federally-funded diversification planning for defense-dependent localities and states

The **Office of Economic Adjustment** (OEA) within the Department of Defense offers planning grants and technical assistance to communities vulnerable to base closures and defense contract cancellations. Also serves as gateway to implementation funds from a variety of other federal agencies.

- **Oshkosh, WI**
\$800,000 grant to the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission in response to the layoff of 950 workers from the Oshkosh Corporation’s Defense Division. Grant will underwrite the development of a plan to grow and expand new industry clusters “which are less reliant on federal defense contracts.”
- **State of Connecticut**

\$1.25 million grant to the Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology and the Department of Economic and Community Development to study the impact of defense cuts on the state economy and strengthen the state defense industry's position, "to make certain," in Sen. Blumenthal's words, "that Connecticut maintains its competitive advantage as an innovator and leader in the industry."

- **Texarkana, TX**

\$400,000 to identify the region's comparative advantages and opportunities to diversify local economic activity to create jobs for 1,200 workers laid off from the Red River Army Depot.

In addition to OEA, the Department of Labor offers **National Emergency Grants** to assist in the retraining and placement of laid-off defense workers. For example, \$2.2 million was awarded in September 2013 to help workers laid off at Boeing in Seattle.

Direct state funding and programs to implement diversification plans

- In 2012 **Florida** set up a \$850,000 Defense Reinvestment Grant program. The funds were to support the operations of state military bases or to "help defense-dependent communities develop strategies for expanding their non-defense economy." In practice nearly all the money was spent on lobbying against closure of state military bases and for more defense contracts.
- **Maine** has created a Regional Economic Development Revolving Loan Program to provide businesses with financial assistance to create or retain jobs. Eligible businesses include those converting from defense dependency.
- **Virginia** has set up a \$2 million "Going Global Defense Initiative" fund to help the state's defense businesses respond to the drawdown by expanding their exports—mostly arms exports.
- In 2011 **Arizona** established a defense contractor restructuring assistance program to 1) help state defense contractors maintain "the maximum share of available contracts" and 2) to encourage these contractors to diversify into commercial markets.

The Takeaway: We have a historic opportunity to shift our economic base to one less dependent on Pentagon spending. The strategies above are tools that *can* be used to facilitate that result. But as the foregoing makes clear, it is not inevitable that they *will be* used for this purpose. It is not enough to set these processes in motion. Hard work—vigilance, monitoring, advocacy, involvement in the transition planning itself—will be necessary to push them in the right direction, and to pushback against those who would use them as tools to solidify a militarized economy.

Miriam Pemberton, Institute for Policy Studies, Miriam@ips-dc.org, 202-787-5214.

How to Train a Bird-Dog

Courtesy of New Hampshire Peace Action

Introductions (5-10 Minutes)

Current Political Landscape (5 Minutes)

Define Bird-Dogging and Why It Is Important (5 Minutes)

- A bird dog's job in hunting, is to find hiding birds, and scare them into flight, or "flush them out" so that they are in the open and vulnerable. Similarly, a political bird-dog forces candidates out into the open, and exposes their stance on issues.
- Bird-Dogging should be employed on both parties, and all candidates, it serves three distinct purposes.
 1. **Educate the Public:** Bird-Dogging gives activists a public stage – frequently the media is present at candidate events, and at the very least, there will be a group of people listening to the candidate. When you ask a question, you can include facts that some of those folks don't know, and you can challenge them to think about the issue in a new light. The right question to the right candidate can make national news: EG: NH Peace Action volunteer bird-dog Dave Tiffany asked presidential candidate John McCain the question that elicited his statement that he wanted to keep troops in Iraq for another hundred years.
 2. **Educate the Candidate:** You will have the ear of a potential future decision maker; maybe you can tell them something they don't already know.
 3. **Make Candidates articulate their position:** Good politicians are masters of rhetoric, but never actually say where they stand on an issue, form questions that are specific enough to force a yes or no, and politicians have to take a stand.

How to Get a Chance to Ask a Question (5-10 Minutes)

- **Arrive Early**, and **sit close** to the candidate
- **Look like a supporter:** dress up how you imagine a supporter might dress
- Have your **hand up first:** when it sounds like the candidate is wrapping up their stump speech, and about to take questions, get your hand in the air, fast movement catches eyes, and the first hand up almost always gets called
- **Smile:** throughout the presentation, stare adoringly, and smile; candidates pick up on body language and facial expressions, and will intentionally pick folks they think are friendly to their positions
- **Don't give up:** Every candidate has to leave, if you don't get a chance to ask your question, **position yourself along their egress**, and **shake their hand. Don't let go of that hand until you have asked your question**, walk them to their car holding their hand if you have to

Role Play One: Street Walk (15 Minutes)

Without preparation, have the group stand up, and move to an open area, give them a basic candidate briefing (e.g.: My name is George Haddock, I am running as a republican, and associate with the Tea Party. My key issues are taxation and cutting domestic spending)

Trainer is a candidate, and he/she is walking down Main Street. Have each person shake the candidate's hand. The candidate will keep it brief if possible, and dodge taking a position on any given issue.

After the candidate has shaken everyone's hand; break character and talk about what questions if any were asked, and how the candidate responded; now take a few minutes to write down a question. Repeat the exercise now that everyone has prepared to meet the candidate.

Break down and analyze the effectiveness of different questions, have the group cross critique.

Handout and Discussion: How to Bird Dog: the 12 Steps of Bird Dogging (10 Minutes) Courtesy of NH Citizens Alliance for Action

Role Play Two: Town Hall (15 Minutes)

Give a few moments to prepare questions, then go back into role play, where facilitator is playing role of candidate; afterwards critique.

- Were hands up quickly?
- Did participants smile?
- Were questions specific?
- Did they have too much or too little preface and framing?
- How did the way the question was frame affect the way the candidate responded?
- How would you adjust your approach to asking a question based on the form? (event, coffee shop, radio talk show, town meeting, street, house party)
- How would you adjust your approach based on the candidate's views?
- How would you anticipate bird-dogging would change over the course of the campaign?

Coordinating a Bird Dog Campaign

Some tips for coordinating:

- Always go in with a partner; but don't stand together, you don't want to be easily identifiable, and if you are split up, you are more likely to have one of you get called on.
- Report back to whoever you are working with, this way you can adjust your questions to account for what the candidate said last time, and keep a central record of progress.

How to Bird-Dog the Candidates

Courtesy of the NH Citizens Alliance for Action

The term "bird-dog" comes from hunting; the bird-dog's job is to flush the birds out of the bushes and into the open. Politicians are like the birds — they try to keep their positions hidden behind vague rhetoric. Using tightly crafted questions, the successful bird-dog forces candidates to reveal their position on an issue.

Here are some tips on preparing for your bird-dog mission. Most of these are adapted from the Presidential Primary Project of NH's best bird-dogs, our friends at the American Friends Service Committee's NH project.

1. **Find out where the candidate will be and when.** If you are interested in a particular candidate, plan ahead by calling his or her NH campaign office. The phone number is usually available on the campaign Web site.
2. **Know the candidate's position.** Ask a question that shows you know something about the candidate's position (e.g.: "You have said you'd like to increase the use of technology in public schools ..."), and link it to a budget priorities question (" ... would you eliminate wasteful spending in the Pentagon budget to pay for classroom computers?").
3. **Have your question ready.** Make sure your question is brief, fact-based and direct. Practice asking your question to yourself and with family or friends until you can do it without notes and in your regular cadence. It's good to have a second question ready, in case someone asks yours before you have a chance to.
4. **Arrive early.** This is especially important if the candidate is very popular, leading in the polls, or if it is late in the primary season. If there is a question-and-answer session you'll want to be close enough for the candidate to see you and call on you.
 - o Be forewarned: Campaign schedules change quickly, and it is a rare candidate who arrives on time for an event, so build in some extra time.
5. **Ask your question early.** When candidates invite questions, most people will not immediately raise their hands. If you do, you are more likely to be called upon.
6. **Be calm and reasonable.** Maintaining a respectful tone will get a more positive response from the candidate, their staff and the news media. People who are angry, sarcastic or emotional will be ignored. You can even start your question by praising something the candidate has just said in her or his prepared remarks (e.g.: "Senator, I really appreciate your call for a strong national defense. A group of military experts believes wasteful Pentagon spending actually weakens our defense ...")
7. **Be in the candidate's path.** Many candidates want to shake hands and meet as many people as possible at these events — that's part of what they like about coming to New Hampshire. The informal, unscripted contacts are extra opportunities to ask your questions. Position yourself in the candidate's path, and ask your question as you're gripping his or her hand.
8. **Bring other people with you.** Since bird-dogging can make some people nervous, it is good to go in teams of two or more people. Not standing together will also improve the odds that more

than one of you will get to ask the question. Be prepared to ask a follow up question if you feel the candidate dodged your question or if you want more details.

9. **Take notes.** The only way to track the responses of candidates is to have a record of what they said. It is also helpful to have notes if you are trying to frame a follow-up question. If you have a friend with you, each of you can write down the response to the other's question.
10. **Be prepared to speak to the media.** Journalists often like to talk to someone who has asked the candidate a question. Remember to stay on message and talk to the reporter about the issue you asked about. (e.g.: Reporter asks, "What did you think of Senator Loosenuke?" Your response could be: "The Senator says he wants to eliminate government waste. I'd like to know if he's willing to cut the \$60 billion the Pentagon wastes on obsolete Cold War weapons and excessive nuclear weapons to help pay for the things American families and communities really need.")
11. **Be creative and improvise when necessary.** Being a bird-dog is not just about asking questions. Use other ways to raise public and candidate awareness.
12. **Share what you have learned.** Back in your car, or at home, take a few moments to jot down what you asked the candidate and what her or his response was.

Bird-dogging and the News Media

By New Hampshire Citizen Alliance

Over thirty years of fighting for social, economic, and political justice for all

Reporters at a candidate event have a job to do.

Usually, they are reporting generally on the event — what the candidate says and how people react — or they are preparing a more detailed story on a specific issue or the campaign. But regardless of what the reporter’s assignment is ...

Bird-dogs at a candidate event have a job to do.

Your job is to ask the candidate a focused question on your issue AND get your position into the reporting on the candidate or the event. There are a variety of ways bird-dogs can get their issue into the news coverage.

Before the Event

Prepare a quote for reporters just like you prepared your question. The statement should include the issue(s) you are raising and what position you think the politician should take, and why.

Before the candidate arrives identify the reporters in the room. Journalists often — but not always — arrive with the candidate’s entourage. Before the candidate arrives, look for people with notepads. If you see news photographers, ask them if a reporter is covering the event with them. Don’t assume a reporter will pick you out of the crowd to talk to, but if you **introduce yourself** in a friendly way, chances are they’ll be interested in why you’re there and what you have to say. Tell them your name and what town you’re from. Chat with them by asking what their assignment is — the answer may give you valuable clues about how to get your issue into their story.

- If the reporter is writing generally about the event, use your prepared quote (above) to tell him/her about the issue you hope to explore, the question you hope to ask and what you know, if anything, about the candidate’s position.
- If the reporter is writing about an issue other than yours, use your conversation to link the two. For example, if you are bird-dogging on federal budget priorities and the reporter is writing about the candidate’s health care platform, you can tell him or her that the Priorities campaign would help pay for children’s health care by shifting to human needs the \$60 billion the Pentagon wastes each year.

Remember that your agenda is probably different from the reporter’s. **Stick to what YOU want to say.** If you’re asked, “What did you think about what Governor Stuffsuit said yesterday about gas prices?” change the subject by saying “What’s important to me is whether he/she will have the guts to stand up to Congress and the military contractors who are wasting our tax dollars.” Give the reporters your phone numbers and let them know they can call you with any questions.

When the Candidate Is Finished

Reporters often like to interview people who questioned the candidate about what they thought of the answer. Again, if they don't approach you, **seek them out**, introduce yourself and tell them what you thought of what the candidate said. This is a great **opportunity to push the candidate** to take a stronger position — the candidate's staff will definitely read the coverage of the event to see what "real people" said about him/her. A citizen quoted as saying "I'm still not sure what Gov. Stuffsuit's priorities will be. He didn't answer the question" or "I don't think Gov. Stuffsuit knows much about the issue" will really get their attention. You might even get a phone call from the campaign seeking more information.

After the Event

The Letters page is among the most read sections of any newspaper. If the reporter didn't include you in the article, you can still **make your point through a letter to the editor** describing your exchange with the candidate (or the issue you wish he/she would have addressed) and giving your opinion of the candidate's views. Be concise and as factual as possible and chances are your letter will be published and will be read by more people than was the original article.

If you have given your phone number out to a reporter, **answer your phone and return missed calls!** Reporters have strange deadlines (when they must have their story finished) — some at midnight, some early the following morning. A missed call from a reporter is a missed opportunity to insert your information, or to clarify misinformation.

How to Organize a Town Hall Meeting

Courtesy of Upper Hudson Peace Action NYS

A town hall meeting is a large public meeting where community members are allowed to share their views with their elected representatives present. Elected representatives have the opportunity to hear from their constituents and to share their own views and positions in return.

The following is a suggestion on how to organize a town hall meeting. You will want to modify it to fit your circumstances.

- Decide who the sponsoring organization(s) should be. To draw a large group it may be good to invite other organizations to co-sponsor.
- Decide on a choice of 3 or 4 possible dates for the town hall meeting.
- Call potential co-sponsoring organizations to solicit their interest. Explain that each co-sponsor can give testimony of 3-5 minutes. Each co-sponsoring group should commit to bringing 10 people to the town hall meeting (or whatever number of people you decide.) When you know who will be sponsoring the event call the appropriate legislators in your area to see if they will participate and what dates would work for them.
- If you can't get elected officials to attend this time, you could turn the event into a Community Teach-In.
- Secure a location to hold the town hall meeting. If you think you will be able to recruit 100 people to come to the meeting, don't pick a room that holds more than 100. If you expect a big crowd arrange for a sound system.
- Decide which topics you want covered in testimony. For example:
 1. Reasons all troops should be brought back from Iraq and Afghanistan.
 2. Testimony on the cost of the war and its impact on the community.
 3. Description of the bills or actions you want the legislators to take. (This works best if accompanied by a written handout that people can take away with them.)
- Invite people you want to testify. If there are victims, invite victims to testify. Co-sponsoring groups can also divide up topics to cover. Based on previous experience it's important to be realistic about the time you have and don't invite too many people to speak. (The entire town meeting, including questions and discussion, should not last more than 2 hours.)
- Carry out publicity for the Town Hall meeting. You need to get enough people to come. A poorly attended meeting can communicate to the elected officials that our cause has little support.
 1. Produce and distribute a poster.
 2. Send e-mail and postal mailings, making use of listservs.
 3. Make phone calls.
 4. Get listed in community calendars
 5. Send out a press advisory. Follow up with calls to ask the media to cover the event.
- Select a moderator, who has the skill to move the town hall meeting along; who can cut off long winded testimony; who can deal with hecklers or opponents who might show up; and who can

adjust the times depending on how much testimony there is. Also provide a timekeeper to assist the moderator.

- Prepare the program for the event:
 1. Welcome and introduction of event and elected official(s) **5 minutes**
 2. Prepared Testimony **40 minutes**
 3. Audience Testimony open mike with each person limited to 2 minutes **40 minutes**
 4. Elected official testimony **20 minutes**
 5. Closing summary of the meeting and next steps in the campaign **5min**

- On the night of the town meeting, set up with a large banner with your meeting theme. Have a registration table for people to sign in; set up a literature table. Start the meeting on time.

How to Write a Letter to the Editor

Courtesy of Upper Hudson Peace Action NYS

The Letters to the Editor section is one of the most widely read sections of the newspaper, and can help shape the opinions of both the public and policy makers. Remember, most papers have a word limit of 150-200 words, so short and sweet is best!

Four Steps to a Great Letter

Step 1. What was recently in the news that prompted you to write this letter, and what about it moved you to take action? If you appreciate the paper's coverage, say so. Say it in as few words as you can.

Step 2. Choose the one, single most important point you want to make. Make it succinctly, carefully choosing facts or anecdotes as supporting evidence.

Step 3. Include 1-2 facts, observations or personal statements that back up your main point. Personal anecdotes, when relevant, can work great here.

Step 4. In conclusion, drive your point home. You can call for a specific change, from the paper, from a policymaker, from other readers, or some other audience.

More Tips:

- Remember your audience. Do they lean progressive or conservative, or are they somewhere in the middle? Your letter will be far more persuasive if you keep your audience in mind when you choose which points you would like to make.
- Keep it short, and you boost your shot at getting published. Every paper is different, so check your paper's word limit on the letters it publishes. A typical cap on length is 150-200 words.
- Use legislators' names. If your printed letter mentions a representative or senator by name, be sure to clip it out and send it to them or email it to their staff.
- Don't rant (not that you would). Hard-hitting criticism is a big plus, but rants are less likely to get published.
- Get to know the tone and style of letters selected by your paper.
- Use statistics and personal stories when you have them.
- Your letter should be signed and must include your address and telephone number or it won't be published. The paper may call to verify that you wrote the letter.
- Be persistent. It may take you several tries to get a letter published, but even unpublished letters have an impact. The more you submit, the more likely you'll get in.
- Work with friends or groups. Letter writing is a great group or volunteer activity, and the more unique letters on a given subject, the greater the chance that one or more will be published.
- Submit unique letters. It's great to get inspiration from friends for letters, but if editors see that your language is too similar or identical to another writers, they probably won't publish it.

Passing Local Resolutions on National Issues:

Why is it important?

Peace Action

What is sometimes called “municipal foreign policy” is the practice of local communities and state governments taking on matters of national and global import through the passage of non-binding resolutions. Some people mock such resolutions as being a waste of time on the part of elected officials and, since local governments have no direct budgetary or legal authority over the issue addressed, outside their purview.

We disagree. In fact, we believe that taking positions on key national issues is a fundamental responsibility of local governments and that resolutions serve a critical democratic function.

Here’s why:

LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CONVEY CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE TO OTHER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT.

Municipal, county and state elected officials have much closer relationships to the people than do Federal representatives—local officials are the most accessible. It is not surprising, then, that from the earliest days of the Republic, local governments have served as a key conduit for the people to express their views, and resolutions have been the mechanism of choice. Local government is the bridge between the people and their national government.

LOCAL CONSTITUENTS ARE DEEPLY AFFECTED BY NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICIES.

By connecting national policies to neighborhood outcomes, local elected officials can fully represent and stand up for their constituents. Often, local officials are profoundly constrained in what they can achieve for their community as a result of actions taken at the national level. Articulating these constraints and explaining why they exist is a service to constituents.

AN EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SERVANT USES ALL THE LEVERS OF POWER AT HIS OR HER DISPOSAL TO INFLUENCE THE DEBATE AND REPRESENT THE PEOPLE.

Power is not exerted solely through the passage of legislation or of budgets. It is exerted in a variety of ways. Congress, for example, frequently passes non-binding resolutions on issues over which the president—not Congress—has final authority. Such resolutions are never criticized as actions that are outside the purview of Congress. Why should a local resolution be viewed any differently?

RESOLUTIONS ARE POLITICALLY POWERFUL.

Contrary to the view that resolutions are a waste of time in that they do not *directly* alter law or budget, resolutions can, in fact, help to change national policies—and the local outcomes that result from these policies. A resolution, discussed and voted on during a public meeting, becomes part of the official record. By including details that link the issue to the local community, a

resolution can be an accessible document that brings great forcefulness to a particular position. Representing the collective voice of an entire community, resolutions send a strong message to Congress and the President.

Far from being a distraction from the more critical work that a local governing body must do, as some claim, resolutions by local government are arguably one of their key responsibilities. Resolutions provide the pulse of the people to other levels of government, and they clarify the impact of national policies on a locale. They strengthen democracy by giving citizens more of a say in their government. And resolutions can be a powerful force for change regarding issues of great substance, issues that the constituents of local officials often care deeply about.

National and International Issues

1798	Virginia and Kentucky state legislatures adopted the words of James Madison and Thomas Jefferson regarding federal policies concerning France
1800s	Local governments passed resolutions in opposition to slavery
1960s	Many local governments passed resolutions in opposition to the war in Vietnam and to nuclear weapons
1980s	Local divestment campaigns opposed apartheid in South Africa, ramping up pressure on Congress and helping push to victory the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986
2000s	Local resolutions were passed by many cities in opposition to the Iraq War

In the mid-term, expect to see the federal government begin to respond to the bubbling up of local innovation and pressure. In the long-term, hope to see the triumph of greater local democracy and a more accountable federal government.