

# Military Spending and National (In)Security

On March 11, 2024, the Biden administration **submitted its FY2025 budget request to Congress**. This request includes a whopping \$895.2 billion for the military. About \$849.8 billion is for the Department of Defense while the remaining \$45.4 billion funds military-related matters covered by other government departments, such as the Department of Energy, which has jurisdiction over nuclear weapons.

**U.S. military spending far outpaces that of any other country**, including Russia and China. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the U.S. spends more on the military than the next ten countries (China, Russia, India, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom, Germany, France, South Korea, Japan and Ukraine) combined.

Nevertheless, in **a recent article published on the TomDispatch website**, retired lieutenant colonel (USAF) and professor of history William J. Astore raises serious questions about the impact of massive military spending. He notes that “economic vitality matters so much more, as does the availability and affordability of health care, education, housing, and other crucial aspects of life unrelated to weaponry and war.”

Astore goes on to provide some valuable historical perspective. He notes that, unlike today, our political leaders were not always willing to bend to the will of the Pentagon. He closes by saying, "Today's generation of 'leaders' seems not yet to have had their fill of war, hate, and oppression. That tragic fact—not China, not Russia, not any foreign power—is now the greatest threat to this country's 'national security.' And it's a threat only aggravated by ever more colossal Pentagon budgets still being rubber-stamped by a spinelessly complicit Congress."