

AFT Resolution 55 in Support of Sensible Federal Government Priorities

Whereas, the biggest threats to the people of the United States are not military but are

(1) the failure to provide: living wage jobs; affordable health care, education and housing and necessary social services as human rights;

(2) the climate crisis, which is causing massive floods, severe droughts, heat domes, increasingly destructive storms, and health-threatening air quality, with disproportionate impact on frontline communities and people of color;

(3) the threat of nuclear war;

(4) systemic racism and gender discrimination.

Whereas, the US Pentagon budget increased by an average of 5.7% per year from 2001 to 2022;

Whereas, the Federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour would be \$24.84 if it had increased at the same rate as the Pentagon budget, but it has increased by an average of only 1% per year since 2001;

Whereas, the Pentagon consumes more than half of the Federal discretionary budget, and currently costs taxpayers \$877 billion per year;

Whereas, the US military expenses are higher than those of the next nine nations combined, and six of those are US allies;

Whereas, the Pentagon has failed all five attempted audits and is unable to account for 61% of its \$3.5 trillion in assets;

Whereas, military corporations routinely gouge the public, overcharge the government and inflate their profits at taxpayer expense;

Whereas, the 750 or more overseas US bases do not make us more secure, but rather become flashpoints for conflict and possible war;

Whereas, the Pentagon is the planet's largest institutional fossil fuel user and emitter of greenhouse gasses;

Whereas, we could make substantial reductions to military spending without compromising national security;

Whereas, the funds saved should be redirected to combating the climate crisis, meeting urgent social priorities, and addressing other needs of working people, the poor and the disadvantaged;

Whereas, the 2017 national AFL-CIO Convention resolved that “The AFL-CIO calls upon the president and Congress to bring the war dollars home and make our priority as a nation rebuilding the nation’s crumbling infrastructure, creating millions of living wage jobs and addressing human needs such as education, health care, housing, retirement security, and jobs”;

Whereas, Veterans for Peace urges the labor movement to join in its work of reducing bloated Pentagon spending;

Resolved, that the AFT will support legislation that significantly reduces the excessive Pentagon budget without cutting pay or benefits of those serving in the US military; one such bill is HR 1134, the People Over the Pentagon Act, introduced by Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Rep. Mark Pocan (D-WI), which would reduce the Pentagon budget by \$100 billion; and

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution shall be delivered to the Representatives and Senators within the jurisdiction covered by the AFT with a request that they co-sponsor HR 1134 and companion legislation in the Senate; and

Resolved, that AFT will inform our members of this resolution so that they may understand the importance of having our tax dollars reflect our true priorities and communicate to their Congressional Representative and Senators their support for HR 1134; and

Resolved, that AFT will urge the labor bodies with which it is affiliated to pass similar resolutions in support of sensible priorities.

Resolved, that the AFT will inform the [People Over Pentagon Campaign](#) so that its support for cutting the military budget, as proposed in H.R. 1134, can be publicly listed as an organizational endorser.

Submitted by: Faculty and Staff Federation of Community College of Philadelphia, Local 2026; Retiree Chapter of Faculty and Staff Federation of Community College of Philadelphia, Local 2026r; United University Professions, Local 2190.

Referred to the AFT Executive Council.