

Legislative Ask for September 2024

Urge Congress to Rein in Pentagon Wish Lists

After over a month at home for the August recess, Congress heads back to Washington on September 9 for a three-week legislative session. Government funding for fiscal year 2024 runs out on September 30, so their top priority will be ensuring the government is funded. The House and Senate Armed Services have proposed up to \$25 billion in spending beyond the President's \$895 billion request for the Pentagon budget, drawing in part on the Unfunded Priorities Lists (UPLs) for inspiration. This would result in a massive Pentagon budget of around \$920 billion. Now is the time to tell Congress that this is unacceptable.

In September, Advocacy Teams will raise the alarm about runaway Pentagon spending by writing letters-to-the-editor (LTE) with new framing that addresses the massive budget increases for the Pentagon. With wars raging in Gaza, Ukraine, and elsewhere, powerful Members of Congress are calling for "peace through strength": spending ever more money. A better way of achieving peace is possible. LTEs that call out these massive spending increases and propose an alternative vision for peace would be particularly impactful this month.

As you write your LTEs, talk about how we are heading towards a \$1 trillion Pentagon budget and why that is bad for your community. Propose an alternative to "peace through strength." Perhaps it is "peace through diplomacy" or "peace through meeting human needs (at home or abroad)." And end by urging your legislators by name to address runaway Pentagon spending by supporting the Streamline Pentagon Budgeting Act. For help in writing an LTE, check out [this FCNL resource](#) and these [talking points](#) from Hajar Hammado.

Advocacy Teams have published **65 LTEs** this year in newspapers across the country. These letters have caught the attention of Congress and FCNL's coalition partners, raising awareness of the dangers of runaway Pentagon spending. As Congress debates the fiscal year 2025 budget and nears a pivotal election, letters published this month will have an outsized impact.

As we focus on writing LTEs this month, we encourage Advocacy Teams who haven't lobbied a congressional office in three months to lobby House members to co-sponsor H.R. 4740 and Senate offices to reach out to Sen. Braun (Republicans) or Sen. Warren (Democrats) to share support for the Streamline the Pentagon Budgeting Act when it is reintroduced. Let us call on Congress to rein in wasteful Pentagon spending!

Read more about our ask here: fcnl.org/teamtoolkit



Action to Take in September

Write letters-to-the-editor that raise awareness of massive Pentagon spending increases and urge support for the Streamline Pentagon Budgeting Act.