



September 20, 2021

NTU urges all Representatives to vote “NO” on H.R. 4350, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This bloated, \$768 billion authorization bill fails to make necessary and overdue reductions to the defense budget, instead increasing topline funding levels by five percent relative to the FY 2021 authorization. At a time of record debt and trillion-dollar deficits, lawmakers must pursue discretionary spending reductions to defense and non-defense functions. Lawmakers should reject this legislation as written and support amendments to improve the fiscal position of the bill.

Year after year, NTU warns lawmakers that they are authorizing and appropriating far too many taxpayer dollars for defense spending. This has been the case for budgets passed by Republican-controlled Congresses and Democratic-controlled Congresses, under Republican and Democratic presidents, in times of war and in times of relative peace. As the nation winds down its military presence in Afghanistan, confronts a \$28.5-trillion debt, stares down trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see, and grapples with lawmakers’ plans to spend \$4.5 trillion more on infrastructure and social programs, it is time for lawmakers to pivot away from decades away of profligacy in federal spending and begin reducing deficits. This politically challenging pivot should occur for both defense and non-defense discretionary spending, and of course lawmakers should also pursue long-term reforms for the 65 percent of spending that is effectively on autopilot as mandatory spending.

H.R. 4350, the FY 2022 NDAA, not only fails to rise to the challenge but actually provides a *major* boost to defense discretionary spending, at levels [nearly five percent higher](#) than authorized in FY 2021. Lawmakers finally did away with funds for the sham that was the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) account, which in recent years became a slush fund for spending that lawmakers and military officials could not fit under the BCA discretionary spending caps (which were already weakened by bipartisan majorities in Congress). The FY 2022 defense authorization level is more than 14 percent higher than the FY 2021 BCA cap for defense.

Lawmakers should support amendments that reduce spending authorizations in H.R. 4350 and enhance the ability of Congress and its watchdogs (like the Government Accountability Office) to study wasteful spending at the Department of Defense. Absent major reductions to the authorized levels of spending in H.R. 4350, lawmakers should reject this legislation.

Roll call votes on H.R. 4350 will be significantly weighted in NTU’s annual Rating of Congress and a “NO” vote will be considered the pro-taxpayer position.

If you have any questions, please contact NTU Director of Federal Policy Andrew Lautz at alautz@ntu.org.
