



November 15, 2021

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**NTU urges all Senators to vote "NO" on Senate Amendment 3867 to H.R. 4350, the fiscal year (FY) 2022 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This legislation authorizes \$768 billion in defense funding for FY 2022, a \$36.4 billion (or five percent) increase from FY 2021 levels. Though this version of the NDAA takes some small steps forward in bringing more accountability to the defense budget, such as zeroing out funds to the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) slush fund, lawmakers from both parties err in rubber-stamping a five-percent increase to the defense budget. The end of the war in Afghanistan and Budget Control Act (BCA) era caps should have been a call to action for Congress to begin trimming the defense budget -- or at least limiting spending hikes.**

Consideration of the FY 2022 NDAA and FY 2022 appropriations bills should have been a ripe opportunity for lawmakers in both parties to explore modest reductions to a defense budget that has grown much too large. After trillions of dollars in deficit-financed COVID spending, budget-busting legislative deals to blow through BCA spending caps, and the end of major U.S. military activities in Afghanistan, a more fiscally responsible Congress might have explored a grand bargain that includes overdue and sustainable reductions to defense discretionary, non-defense discretionary, and mandatory spending in the years to come.

Instead, all but one Senator on the Armed Services Committee green-lit a staggering \$25 billion increase to Department of Defense (DoD) topline proposed by Committee leaders, caving to the "wish list" demands of military branches and combatant commands that NTU has warned are wasteful and would put upward pressure on the defense budget. This likely leaves taxpayers to foot the bill for \$740 billion in DoD funding for FY 2022, \$25 billion more than the Biden administration's proposed \$715 billion budget, and a \$768 billion NDAA topline that is nearly five percent higher than FY 2021 NDAA levels.

Lawmakers in both parties have criticized some of the new spending proposed by the Biden administration in recent months, and NTU broadly shares their concerns over spending levels. However, lawmakers should extend this concern to defense spending as well, which has increased relatively unabated in recent years. It is long past time to consider modest reductions to the DoD budget, and NTU has a roadmap for lawmakers to get there. NTU urges Senators to propose and support fiscally responsible amendments that will reduce the FY 2022 NDAA topline and also reduce long-term upward pressures on the defense budget.

**Roll call votes on Senate Amendment 3867 to 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](mailto:alautz@ntu.org).*

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