

In the City Council, November 2, 2017

Upon the recommendation of Councilor Dennis P. Bidwell, Councilor William H. Dwight, and Councilor Alisa F. Klein

## **R-17.415**

### **A RESOLUTION**

### **CALLING UPON CONGRESS TO REALLOCATE RESOURCES FROM THE MILITARY**

Whereas, President Trump has proposed to move \$54 billion from spending on social services, education and environmental programs at home and abroad to military spending[i], bringing military spending to well over 60% of federal discretionary spending[ii]; and

Whereas, polling has found the U.S. public to favor a \$41 billion reduction in military spending, representing \$95 billion less in military spending than what has been proposed by President Trump; and

Whereas, the “nuclear modernization” program, also known as the “Trillion Dollar Triad,” will cost taxpayers over \$1,000,000,000,000 (one trillion dollars) in the next several decades, to create more powerful and destructive nuclear weaponry, thus violating the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to which the United States is a signatory; and

Whereas, one way to alleviate the refugee crisis would be ending, not escalating, wars that create refugees[iii]; and

Whereas, President Trump has admitted that the enormous military spending of the past 16 years has been disastrous and made us less safe, not safer[iv]; and

Whereas, fractions of the proposed military budget could provide free, top-quality education from pre-school through college[v], end hunger and starvation on earth[vi], convert the U.S. to clean energy[vii], provide clean drinking water everywhere it is needed on the planet[viii], build fast trains between all major U.S. cities[ix], and double non-military U.S. foreign aid rather than cutting it[x]; and

Whereas, 121 retired U.S. generals have written a letter opposing cutting foreign aid[xi]; and

Whereas, a December 2014 Gallup poll of 65 nations found that the United States was far and away the country considered the largest threat to peace in the world[xii]; and

Whereas, a United States responsible for providing clean drinking water, schools, medicine, and solar panels to others would be more secure and provoke far less hostility around the world; and

Whereas, our environmental and human needs are desperate and urgent, and opposing military spending is the single most sustainable action we can take; and

Whereas, the military is the greatest consumer of petroleum in the United States[xiii]; and

Whereas, economists at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst have documented that military spending is an economic drain rather than a jobs program[xiv].

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Northampton, Massachusetts urges the United States Congress to move our tax dollars in exactly the opposite direction proposed by the President, from militarism to human and environmental needs.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City of Northampton reaffirms its membership in the Mayors for Peace program, that “strives to raise international public awareness regarding the need to abolish nuclear weapons,” and includes 7,417 cities across the world.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Council of Northampton calls on Congress to appropriate no further funding for the development or production of new nuclear weapons.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to U.S. Congressman James McGovern, U.S. Senator Edward J. Markey, U.S. Senator Elizabeth A. Warren and President Donald J. Trump.

[i] “Trump to Seek \$54 Billion Increase in Military Spending,” *The New York Times*, February 27, 2017, [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/27/us/politics/trump-budget-military.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/27/us/politics/trump-budget-military.html?_r=0)

[ii] This does not include another 6 percent for the discretionary portion of veterans’ care. For a breakdown of discretionary spending in the 2015 budget from the National Priorities Project, see <https://www.nationalpriorities.org/campaigns/military-spending-united-states>

[iii] “43 Million People Kicked Out of Their Homes,” *World Beyond War*, <http://worldbeyondwar.org/43-million-people-kicked-homes> / “Europe’s Refugee Crisis Was Made in America,” *The Nation*, <https://www.thenation.com/article/europes-refugee-crisis-was-made-in-america>

[iv] On February 27, 2017, Trump said, “Almost 17 years of fighting in the Middle East . . . \$6 trillion we’ve spent in the Middle East . . . and we’re nowhere, actually if you think about it we’re less than nowhere, the Middle East is far worse than it was 16, 17 years ago, there’s not even a contest . . . we have a hornet’s nest...”  
[http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2017/02/27/trump\\_we\\_spent\\_6\\_trillion\\_in\\_middle\\_east\\_and\\_we\\_are\\_less\\_than\\_nowhere\\_far\\_worse\\_than\\_16\\_years\\_ago.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2017/02/27/trump_we_spent_6_trillion_in_middle_east_and_we_are_less_than_nowhere_far_worse_than_16_years_ago.html)

[v] “Free College: We Can Afford It,” *The Washington Post*, May 1, 2012, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/free-college-we-can-afford-it/2012/05/01/q1QAeFeltT\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.9cc6fea3d693](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/free-college-we-can-afford-it/2012/05/01/q1QAeFeltT_story.html?utm_term=.9cc6fea3d693)

[vi] “The World Only Needs 30 Billion Dollars a Year to Eradicate the Scourge of Hunger,” Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, <http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2008/1000853/index.html>

[vii] “Clean Energy Transition Is A \$25 Trillion Free Lunch,” Clean Technica, <https://cleantechnica.com/2015/11/03/clean-energy-transition-is-a-25-trillion-free-lunch>. See also: <http://www.solutionaryrail.org>

[viii] “Clean Water for a Healthy World,” UN Environment Program, [http://www.unwater.org/wwd10/downloads/WWD2010\\_LOWRES\\_BROCHURE\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unwater.org/wwd10/downloads/WWD2010_LOWRES_BROCHURE_EN.pdf)

[ix] “Cost of High Speed Rail in China One Third Lower than in Other Countries,” The World Bank, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2014/07/10/cost-of-high-speed-rail-in-china-one-third-lower-than-in-other-countries>

[x] Non-military U.S. foreign aid is approximately \$25 billion, meaning that President Trump would need to cut it by over 200% to find the \$54 billion he proposes to add to military spending

[xi] Letter to Congressional leaders, February 27, 2017  
[http://www.usglc.org/downloads/2017/02/FY18 International Affairs Budget House Senate.pdf](http://www.usglc.org/downloads/2017/02/FY18%20International%20Affairs%20Budget%20House%20Senate.pdf)

[xii] See [http://www.wingia.com/en/services/about the end of year survey/global results/7/33](http://www.wingia.com/en/services/about_the_end_of_year_survey/global_results/7/33)

[xiii] "Fight Climate Change, Not Wars," Naomi Klein, <http://www.naomiklein.org/articles/2009/12/fight-climate-change-not-wars>

[xiv] "The U.S. Employment Effects of Military and Domestic Spending Priorities: 2011 Update," Political Economy Research Institute, <https://www.peri.umass.edu/publication/item/449-the-u-s-employment-effects-of-military-and-domestic-spending-priorities-2011-update>