

Record US military spending bill continues expansion of US nuclear arsenal

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The US House of Representatives approved the largest annual military spending bill in US history on Wednesday, allocating another \$895 billion to wage war all over the world and expand the US nuclear arsenal.

The 2025 spending bill is 45 percent larger than it was a decade ago, following years of massive military spending increases under the Obama, Trump and Biden administrations. This year's National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) is \$53 billion larger than the 2024 bill and \$122 billion more than the 2023 bill.

The bill is expected to be fast-tracked through the Senate before being signed by US President Joe Biden by the end of the month.

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson said Tuesday that the bill “ensures our military has the resources and capabilities needed to remain the most powerful fighting force on the planet.”

Critically, the bill continues the multitrillion-dollar nuclear modernization program, initiated under the Obama administration, that replaces every part of the US nuclear arsenal, from intercontinental ballistic missiles to nuclear submarines and nuclear-capable aircraft, with newer and deadlier versions.

The bill authorizes the Air Force to restore the nuclear capability of the B-52 bomber and expand its capabilities for delivering long-range nuclear standoff weapons. It prohibits, according to the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, “reducing the number of deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles below 400.”

The bill authorizes the construction of new nuclear-powered submarines and guided missile destroyers as part of a \$33.5 billion expansion of shipbuilding, alongside the construction of 92 new fighter aircraft.

As happens every year, both parties voted

overwhelmingly in favor of the bill, despite some Democrats objecting to it over issues related to gender-affirming care. Even those sections of the “progressive” wing of the Democratic Party who criticized the bill for being “wasteful” did so from the standpoint of making the US military more efficient at waging war all over the world.

“I want the US to have the greatest military in the world and the resources to counter increasingly sophisticated threats from our adversaries,” declared “progressive” Democratic Representative Ro Khanna, who voted against the bill.

The far-right Heritage Foundation praised it, declaring, “The FY25 NDAA takes an important step toward a defense budget that flows from strategy and directs DOD to become as lethal as possible.”

The Heritage Foundation continues, “The bill ... supports military construction in the Indo-Pacific and shipbuilding, including a third Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, and incremental funding for a second Virginia-class submarine.”

A major focus of the bill is the further military buildup against China, through the expansion of the so-called Pacific Deterrence Initiative, which is funded to the tune of \$15.6 billion.

But even this massive, nearly \$1 trillion budget is just a baseline, with further “emergency” allocations for the war in Ukraine against Russia, for Israel's war throughout the Middle East and for the militarization of the Pacific to be expected. Since February 2022 the US has provided Ukraine with \$61 billion in weapons. Over the past year, the US has given over \$18 billion in weapons to Israel for use in the Gaza genocide and war throughout the Middle East.

Commenting on the vast fortunes to be made from the expansion of military spending by the US and its allies,

Barron's published a column titled "Military Spending Is Ready to Surge. Here's How to Invest."

It noted, "The West, along with its allies, is now growing its armories with munitions, tanks, and other war materiel. After decades of complacency from some countries, the spending surge could continue for the foreseeable future, experts say."

Barron's noted that the \$625 million Future of Defense exchange-traded fund (ETF), "which tracks a wide basket of defense stocks based in member countries of NATO," has "returned 34% for the year through Dec. 9."

It added, "An alternative is the iShares US Aerospace & Defense ETF (ITA), which tracks a bundle of defense stocks and aerospace companies. These include military contractors Northrop Grumman, L3Harris Technologies, and General Dynamics. The fund has returned 19% this year."

The surge in military spending is mirrored across the Atlantic, where the US's NATO allies are massively expanding their military spending.

In his first speech since taking office, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte on Thursday called on European countries to spend more than their current target of 2 percent of GDP on their militaries.

"It is time to shift to a wartime mindset," Rutte said. "And turbo-charge our defense production and defense spending."

He added, "During the Cold War, Europeans spent far more than 3 percent of their GDP on defense," adding that a target "considerably more than 2 percent" is needed.

This massive expansion of military spending—which will come at the expense of social programs and the living standards of the working class—comes amid the rampant escalation of the US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine. Earlier this month, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said that the outgoing Biden administration is planning a "massive surge" of weapons to Ukraine in the weeks until the next administration takes office.

Last month, US President Joe Biden authorized Ukraine to use US-made ATACMS long-range missiles to strike deep inside Russia. Later that week, the UK did the same with its Storm Shadow cruise missiles, with both weapons systems being used to strike deep inside Russia within days of the announcement.

On November 21, *the New York Times* wrote the Biden administration is discussing allowing Ukraine to deploy nuclear weapons. The *Times* wrote, "Several officials even suggested that Mr. Biden could allow Ukraine to have nuclear weapons again, as it did before the fall of the Soviet Union."



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