

MAINTAIN THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MILITARY FORCE

A strong military is foundational to protecting Americans and preserving our Nation's standing and strength. It ensures the American people are safe and that the U.S. can keep its adversaries at bay. As other nations develop new capabilities and technological capabilities advance, it is more important than ever to have the world's best trained and most well-equipped military.

Maintaining a strong military is not exclusively about having a large top-line budget. It also requires our military to maintain a relentless focus on its core mission of deterrence and, if deterrence fails, fighting to win America's wars. In addition, our military needs strong recruitment programs, and our government must ensure that defense acquisition efforts meet our current and future evolving needs. By achieving these objectives, we will ensure that the U.S. military has the right capabilities to protect America's interests and keep Americans safe and free.

Today, the military is distracted from this core mission. The Biden Administration has imposed "woke" policies that have diverted focus from top threats while dividing and deterring America's service members. One high-profile effort by the current administration is focused on rooting out extremism from the military's ranks, which is an action driven more by politics rather than by military priorities. Some military academies have begun to focus their instruction on Critical Race Theory. Its leaders focus on historical revisionism instead of on the history of war. Eliminating divisive policies, which deter some of those seeking to enlist, will likely go a long way in repairing the military's recruitment challenges.

Key to maintaining a strong military is ensuring that America's defense budget and acquisition practices remain competitive and aligned with America's strategic

priorities. Any tax dollars spent in the name of "defense" that do not directly contribute to this mission are a diversion from it.

The challenge of maintaining a responsible and needs-based defense budget is not only one of better congressional oversight. Rather, it is part of a broader and more longstanding component of the Washington ecosystem known as the "military-industrial complex"—a symbiotic relationship between the Department of Defense (DoD) and the country's top defense companies. On one hand, this relationship has sustained a degree of trust and consistency in regards to the modernization of American military equipment. But, on the other hand, this robust relationship with a handful of companies has created a quasi-monopoly in contracting and in defining the technology DoD might need to fight the Nation's wars.

An America First approach to defense acquisition is best exemplified by an open and honest competition within the broader marketplace of ideas and beyond the traditional military-industrial complex. Myriad patriotic American start-up companies, including ones run by veterans drawing on their battlefield experience, can share a stage with the known entities in this space to describe how their services meet tomorrow's threats and add strategic effect to America's credible deterrence. Through this approach, America's military can better inform conversations about how to pursue its mission requirements and about the range of American partners, existing and emerging, with whom to do so.

THE FACTS

- ★ The U.S. has spent more than \$8 trillion on efforts to fight terrorism across 85 countries.
- ★ The Biden Administration has instigated the largest

discharge of service members in history through overly strict COVID-19 vaccination requirements – assuming they are upheld by the courts.

- ★ Almost all service members' requests for relief from the vaccination requirement have been denied, with denial rates across the service branches of 99.53% for the Air Force, 99.75% for the Army, 100% for the Navy, and 99.83% for the Marine Corps.
- ★ Real (inflation-adjusted) federal government expenditures on national defense increased by more than \$100 billion, or roughly 14%, between 2016 and 2020.
- ★ Federal national defense expenditures fell by approximately \$80 billion (-10%) between 2008 and 2016.

encouraging other countries to buy American.

- ★ Repurpose the Overseas Contingency Operations budget into research and development for new technologies and weapons systems, particularly satellites and hypersonic weapons.

THE AMERICA FIRST AGENDA

At the federal level, support policies that:

- ★ Ensure the DoD budget reflects the military's core missions of deterrence and warfighting.
 - Conduct a thorough review of all the training required of service members and ensure it meets core mission needs.
 - Eliminate non-military issues such as climate change and democracy promotion from military doctrine and defense policies.
- ★ Repair recruitment challenges by investing in service members and eliminating divisive departmental policies.
 - Review and revise DoD's definition of what constitutes "extremism."
- ★ Define what "deterrence" and "warfighting" mean in the context of the threat from Communist China and the nature of the military challenge.
 - Conduct an agency-wide review to determine the capabilities needed to prepare for and deter Communist China.
- ★ Ban Communist China's access to U.S. infrastructure and ensure that the U.S. military and law enforcement are not dependent on Chinese drones and other technologies.
- ★ Deepen ties with partner nations by continuing to focus on foreign military sales programs and

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