

Legislation Text

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Calling on the U.S. Congress and President Barack Obama to redirect military spending to fund education, public and private sector family-sustaining job creation, special protections for military sector workers, environmental and infrastructure restoration, care for veterans and their families, and the human services that our cities and states so desperately need.

WHEREAS, The severity of the ongoing economic crisis has created budget shortfalls at all levels of government and requires us to re-examine our national spending priorities; and in Philadelphia there is a current funding gap of \$60 million which will grow to \$269 million next year, causing layoffs, cutbacks and continued destruction of the public education system; and the City of Philadelphia will have a budget shortfall of \$2 billion over the next five years; and

WHEREAS, Every dollar spent on the military produces fewer jobs than spending the same dollar on education, healthcare, clean energy, or even tax cuts for household consumption; and the current unemployment rate in Philadelphia is 10.9% (68,500 people); the current Black unemployment rate is 15.8%; and the current Hispanic unemployment rate is 11%; and

WHEREAS, U.S. military spending has approximately doubled in the past decade, in real dollars and as a percentage of federal discretionary spending, and well over half of federal discretionary spending is now spent on the military, and we are spending more money on the military now than during the Cold War, the Vietnam War, or the Korean War; and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan cost Philadelphia taxpayers since 2001 well over \$5 billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. military budget could be cut by 80% and remain the largest in the world; and

WHEREAS, The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform proposed major reductions in military spending in both its Co-Chairs' proposal in November 2010 and its final report in December 2010; and the U.S. Conference of Mayors passed a resolution in June 2011 calling on Congress to redirect spending to domestic priorities; and the people of the United States, in numerous opinion polls, favor redirecting spending to domestic priorities and withdrawing the U.S. military from Afghanistan; and

WHEREAS, The United States has armed forces stationed at approximately 1,000 foreign bases in approximately 150 foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, The United States is the wealthiest nation on earth but trails many other nations in life expectancy, infant mortality, education level, housing, and environmental sustainability, as well as non-military aid to foreign nations; and there are 137,000 people without health care insurance in Philadelphia; and the crime index in Philadelphia is 9/100 (meaning the City is safer than only 9% of cities in the U.S.); and in 2010 more than one third of children in Philadelphia lived in poverty; and hunger is becoming increasingly serious (for example, in 2009-10, in the First congressional District, 49.6% of people reported a food hardship and in the Second Congressional District a food hardship of 36.6% was reported); and in 2010, 411,000 people in Philadelphia received some type of help from a food pantry; and in Philadelphia 1,640 veterans used homeless

mainstream services in 2011 and there are approximately 370 veterans homeless on any given night; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the City of Philadelphia calls on the U.S. Congress and President Barack Obama to redirect military spending to fund education, public and private sector family-sustaining job creation, special protections for military sector workers, environmental and infrastructure restoration, care for veterans and their families, and the human services that our cities and states so desperately need.