

Caucus4Priorities is a 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to shifting America's federal budget priorities by eliminating government waste in the Pentagon and redirecting the savings to more productive public investments. Learn more about us at www.Caucus4priorities.org.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower used the occasion of his farewell address in 1961 to warn prophetically against what he called the "military-industrial complex," which he believed could become so successful at exerting its political might that it would squeeze out the legitimate needs of the American people. That's just what has come to pass.

Yet polling shows that the American people yearn for leadership that will stand up to this powerful special interest and promote the public interest.¹ Caucus4priorities has been successful organizing citizens to attend candidate events across Iowa and recruiting 10,000 Iowans to caucus for the Sensible Priorities candidate because we struck a vein of public sentiment. Candidates have the opportunity as well to tap into that public demand and benefit politically through earning the endorsement of Caucus4priorities as the most Sensible of Priorities candidates.

Part I: Trimming the Pentagon Budget

We propose eliminating Pentagon waste identified by Lawrence J. Korb, Assistant Secretary of Defense under President Ronald Reagan, in his report, "The Korb Report: A Realistic Defense for America." View it on our website: http://www.sensiblepriorities.org/pdf/korb_report_Finalb.pdf.

The background information on defense issues provided in this questionnaire, including all the Pentagon budget figures, are based on Dr. Korb's analysis.

President George W. Bush proposed a base defense budget of \$463 billion. This is more than defense spending at the height of the Reagan buildup and does not include the supplemental funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This money goes to a department built on an outdated Cold War posture that overly relies on nuclear weapons and expensive weapons systems designed to fight the defunct Soviet superpower.

Waste and Inefficiency

By various estimates, the Pentagon wastes more than \$20 billion a year through the procurement process and business operations and \$1 billion a year on duplication alone. These amounts do not include the billions that are spent on pork-barrel projects and unnecessary earmarks.

1. How would you reform the Pentagon budget to reduce waste, earmarks, and inefficiency by at least \$7 billion?

I believe in a strong national defense, confronting the growing threat of terrorism, and doing more for the brave men and women who have served and sacrificed on behalf of our country. I also believe we owe it to taxpayers to closely scrutinize our military budget, ask tough questions, root out waste and abuse, and transform our force structure to address the threats of the post-Cold War era. Every day, school boards across America go over their budgets, line by line, and make hard choices. It is time we asked the Pentagon to do the same thing.

Of course, the most obvious and tragic example of military waste today is the war in Iraq. The war has cost us dearly – in dollars, in credibility America once had, and in the lives of courageous and honorable men

¹ A survey of the voting age populations in Iowa and New Hampshire found strong and growing support for reducing the Pentagon budget and increasing federal funds for healthcare, education, job training, and energy independence. Read more at http://www.sensiblepriorities.org/pdf/Iowa_NH_Survey.pdf.

and women who have been lost. As president, I will end the war and bring our troops home to the heroes' welcome they deserve.

Beyond ending the war, I believe we need to fundamentally reform our Pentagon budget. We need to eliminate rampant overruns in the cost of many weapons programs and end the cronyism we see today under President Bush. As president, I will direct my Secretary of Defense to launch a comprehensive, tough review of fraud, waste, and abuse—and put an end to it. This review will be unbiased and comprehensive, and will benefit from the full range of military and civilian expert opinions – both inside and outside of the Pentagon. To find the waste and cut the fat, we will go over the entire military budget line by line – including every weapons system you have identified and many more.

As president, I will also fundamentally reform our privatization policies. Almost half of Defense Department contracts are now awarded on a noncompetitive basis, giving companies like Halliburton billions of dollars. The appalling abuses by Blackwater are just the latest example of how the Bush Administration has outsourced our national security to politically-connected contractors, costing taxpayers dearly and tarnishing our image in the world. I will direct my Secretary of Defense to overhaul the rules governing privatization, to punish mismanagement, hold contractors accountable, and save taxpayers money. We will also reform DOD bonus policies to reward performance.

I will also challenge the military to continue to modernize for a new century. We need to ensure that the U.S. military is the most modern and capable fighting force on the planet. Modernization will also have other benefits. “Greening the military” will reduce vulnerable supply lines, increase innovation, save millions of dollars, and help America lead the fight against global warming.

I will also create a consolidated National Security Budget that will include all security activities by the Pentagon and the Department of Energy, and our homeland security, intelligence, and foreign affairs agencies. This will allow more oversight and will also allow us to more carefully tailor our expenditures to our missions. Today, literally dozens of agencies have overlapping responsibilities, missions, tasks and programs. We don't link these efforts together nearly enough. We have nuclear proliferation programs in the Defense, State, and the Energy departments. We also have more than 15 different security assistance programs, running out of both the State Department and the Defense Department.

Finally, for the sake of our own security and to assure a safer world for our grandchildren, I believe America must lead a global effort to eliminate nuclear weapons. The cost of inaction is just too steep: in an instant, a dispute over land in Kashmir or the Middle East could become a flashpoint for nuclear conflict that would cost millions of lives. A single warhead falling into the hands of terrorists could devastate a city and spread radiation across a country.

Less than half a percent of total defense spending is devoted to reducing the nuclear threat. As president, I refocus our priorities and lead an aggressive effort to secure and account for nuclear weapons and other WMD. We must lead by our own example and put an end to any further testing or development of nuclear weapons, and begin to reduce our nuclear arsenal -- which could save us billions of dollars per year.

Then, we must begin a far-reaching, international diplomatic effort to end proliferation and, over time, dismantle this grave threat to the peace and security of the world.

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Nuclear Weapons

The United States maintains a nuclear arsenal of approximately 10,000 warheads at various stages of readiness. Experts insist that America could deter any potential state adversary with no more than 1,000 warheads—600 deployed and 400 in reserve.

2. Will you reduce our nuclear arsenal to no more than 1,000 warheads?

Yes

No

2a. If not, what is the acceptable nuclear posture for the United States?

While I have not set a specific number or timeline for the reduction of our nuclear arsenal, I believe our ultimate goal should go even further than this question suggests. As president, I will lead an international diplomatic effort to rid the planet of nuclear weapons. Instead of the Bush Administration’s “do as I say, not as I do” approach, under my administration America will lead by example. No more nuclear tests. No more nuclear weapons development. We will start reducing our weapons stockpile – saving taxpayers billions – and use robust and aggressive diplomacy to encourage other nations to do the same.

The recent agreement with North Korea to shut down their nuclear programs in exchange for the release of frozen assets is long overdue, but encouraging. We are fortunate that – just this once – the Bush Administration made a surprising exception to its general practice of avoiding diplomacy at all costs.

As president, I will create a Global Nuclear Compact to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would support peaceful nuclear programs, improve security for existing stocks of nuclear materials, and ensure more frequent verification that materials are not being diverted and facilities are not being misused. It will provide a framework for an international effort to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

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The president's budget for FY 2008 included funds of \$9.4 billion for nuclear weapons activities, including the development of a new generation of nuclear weapons through items such as the Reliable Replacement Warhead and a new nuclear production facility as part of the Complex 2030 program.

2b. Do you oppose new nuclear weapons and would you cut the funding for such programs, including the Reliable Replacement Warhead?

Yes

No

As part of the international diplomatic effort I have described above to rid the planet of nuclear weapons should ultimately include an end to the testing and development of all nuclear weapons. As President, I will reduce the size of our arsenal and work with other countries to help them do the same.

Unlike George Bush, I will engage with America's allies -- instead of alienating them -- so that we can work together to secure and eliminate stockpiles of nuclear warheads around the world that could fall into the hands of terrorists.

Ridding the planet of nuclear weapons is possible within our lifetime -- but only if we have a President with the courage to lead, and who can restore our image in the world as a force for good. In the last century, America led the free world to victory against Nazism and won the Cold War. Now, we must provide the moral leadership to end this grave threat to humanity.

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Missile Defense

The president's budget requested approximately \$11 billion for missile defense programs, which have still failed to prove their operational reliability. Missile defense has cost the US \$160 billion over the course of its history and has strained relations with our allies and treaty partners. Cutting this annual spending to \$3 billion would preserve funding for Theater Missile Defense (TMD), such as the PATRIOT Advanced Capacity 3, and further research and development for National Missile Defense.

3. As president, will you limit funding for national missile defense to research and development?

Yes

No

If no, explain:

As president, I will save taxpayers billions of dollars that are being wasted on missile defense. I agree that we should limit funding for national missile defense to research and development only.

For all the billions America has already spent on this program, we could have lifted millions of our citizens out of poverty and helped a generation of low-income students attend college. Even with those

investments, we would've had money left over for other priorities -- including things the Bush Administration might regard as extravagant, like building an adequate levee system in New Orleans.

Not only is missile defense unlikely to work -- as shown by all the tests it has failed -- but the program also has serious geopolitical implications, such as the hostilities with Russia that have recently occurred over the placement of missile sites in the Czech Republic and Poland.

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Space-based weapons

4. Will you, as president, oppose space-based offensive weapons and cut funding to these programs?

Yes

No

If no, explain:

We can – and should – save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars a year that are being wasted in the development of offensive space-based weapons. These weapons could escalate the global arms race into space and the programs should be stopped.

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Cutting Unnecessary Investment Programs

The following is a list of Cold War weapons and big investment programs. Some of these systems, such as the Virginia class submarine, are simply unnecessary. Others, such as the DDG-1000 destroyer and the F-22 fighter jet, use cutting-edge technologies that are not suitable for today's threats. Some are beset with major technical problems, such as the C-130J transport plane and the V-22 Osprey—and in the case of the Osprey, these problems have already proved deadly for 23 Marines in test flights.

All of these systems, however, are plagued by cost overruns and skyrocketing budgets. Their stated missions can be done by other new or existing systems at a reduced cost to taxpayers.

5. Will you cut funding for the following weapons systems:

- **5a. The V-22 Osprey?**

Yes **No**

- **5b. The F-22 Raptor fighter jet?**

Yes **No**

- **5c. The DDG-1000 Zumwalt class destroyer?** **Yes** **No**

- **5d. The C-130J Hercules transport plane?** **Yes** **No**

- **5e. The SSN-74 Virginia-class submarine?** **Yes** **No**

If no, explain:

I agree there are billions of dollars being wasted on weapons we don't need and weapons that don't work -- not to mention extravagant no-bid contracts to Halliburton, Blackwater and other conglomerates that have traded campaign contributions for influence in the procurement process.

However, I believe it would be premature for a presidential candidate to make judgments on the campaign trail about the military value of certain weapons systems without the benefit of a full review by military and civilian experts, including classified material available to a commander-in-chief, and an assessment of the threat environment that will exist on Inauguration Day.

All of the programs listed here along with many others need to be – and will be -- reevaluated as part of the comprehensive review I will order my Secretary of Defense to perform during my first year as president. For every dime we spend, every contract, every weapons system, we'll ask these questions:

Is it necessary?

Does it work?

Does it make us safer against today's threats ... or is it designed for a threat we faced 20 years ago?

And is it in the best interests of American taxpayers?

If the answer is no, it will be cut – or outright eliminated.

Members of Iowans for Sensible Priorities have attended dozens of town hall meetings I have held across the state, and I've always enjoyed taking your questions. You've raised important questions about each one of these weapons systems. I've heard some of the same concerns raised by military experts I have consulted, including particularly serious concerns about the V-22 Osprey and F-22 Raptor jet programs.

One particular weapons system that Iowans for Sensible Priorities members have asked me about during town hall events is the Virginia Class Submarine, which was designed to allow the United States to quickly adapt our submarine technology and keep an edge over our competitors in the post-Cold War environment. Some of its functions, however, can be performed more cheaply by reconfigured Trident submarines. On the other hand, some military experts have told me that the program offers certain military advantages. This is exactly why I want a thorough, thoughtful review of each and every one of these weapons systems so we can make a determination about whether it makes sense to continue our investment in the program.

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F-35 Joint Strike Fighter

The F-35 is a product of the Joint Strike Fighter program, which seeks to develop a multi-purpose, joint aircraft for the different services. Producing these planes on a single production line for the different military branches will eventually yield a cost savings. However, technical challenges, the absence of a major threat from a peer competitor, and a skyrocketing cost of over \$100 million per plane cast doubt on the need for rushing production. Development of the F-35 could proceed with half the requested amount for FY 2008 and save taxpayers \$3 billion annually.

6. Will you slow production of the F-35 JSF?

Yes

No

If no, explain:

I will order my Secretary of Defense to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the F-35 JSF as part of the comprehensive review described above. This review could result in a slowing of the program.

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Future Combat Systems (FCS)

The Army is developing a family of 18 major systems as part of its Future Combat Systems (FCS). Although this program is necessary for the Army's modernization and transformation, current timelines hope to make systems operational that rely on unproven technologies. The FCS could be funded at \$1 billion a year, instead of the \$3.7 billion requested for FY 2008, and bring this ambitious schedule within reasonable limits.

7. Will you slow development of the Future Combat Systems?

Yes

No

If no, explain:

I will order my Secretary of Defense to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Future Combat Systems as part of the comprehensive review described above. This review could result in a slowing of the program. To learn more, visit www.johnedwards.com/priorities.

Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E)

The Pentagon is spending 50 percent more on Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) than it did in 2001 and \$20 billion more than at the height of the Reagan buildup in 1985.

8. Will you support a cut of \$5 billion in annual spending for RDT&E?

Yes

No

8a. If not, what is the appropriate amount of investment in RDT&E?

As president, I will lead an effort to root out waste and inefficiency throughout our budget, with a special focus on areas that can become sink-holes for taxpayer dollars. One area that deserves a particularly close look is research, development, test and evaluation. Billions of dollars of this spending is earmarked by members of Congress for certain constituencies.

I am proud to be the only candidate who has never taken a dime from Washington lobbyists and PACs because I am committed to being a voice for regular American. Nowhere is the corrosive and unseemly influence of lobbyists more evident than in our defense budget. As president, I will not only fight to ban contributions by lobbyists for defense contractors – and from all Washington lobbyists – but I will impose strict new rules to prevent undue political influence from lobbyists and government contractors.

I will close the door for lobbyists. Cashing in on government connections has become a new retirement plan for Washington politicians. Nearly 250 former members of Congress and agency heads registered as federal lobbyists between 1998 and 2004. I will close the lobbyist revolving door by restoring the Clinton-era executive order barring appointees from lobbying their former colleagues for five years, created by President Clinton but rescinded in his last days. I will also limit lobbyists going into top government jobs.

In today's Washington, corporate lobbyists don't just lobby public officials, they often become them. I will bar individuals who acted as federal lobbyists in the preceding two years from taking senior executive jobs with responsibility for the subject areas on which they lobbied. I will finally expose lobbyist contacts to sunlight. Recent legislation expands disclosures of lobbying activity, but still delays information by three months and doesn't provide enough detail to expose the real chains of influence. I will require lobbyists to disclose within 48 hours which federal office candidates, members, staff and executive officials they met with, which legislative or regulatory items they discussed, and any contributions made or raised for that official. Lobbyists will also have to disclose prior employment by the government or a contractor and any close relationship to a current member of Congress, staff member, or executive branch employee.

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Force Structure

The Air Force, Navy, and Marines have more than 5,000 tactical combat planes and 1,800 armed helicopters.

9. Will you support eliminating two Air Force Wings and one carrier battle group to save \$5 billion?

Yes

No

9a. If not, what is the appropriate force structure for the US military?

I will order my Secretary of Defense to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the force structure in all of our services, including the Air Force, as part of the comprehensive review described above.

As I mentioned, I believe we need to retool our military to meet the threats of the post-Cold War era. We need a faster, more flexible force capable of rooting out terrorist cells, preventing genocide, for example. We need to reduce – and eventually eliminate – our nuclear weapons stockpile as part of a global effort to rid the plane of nuclear weapons. We also need to reexamine our conventional forces to make sure they are structured to meet the threats we face today – not threats we face 20 years ago.

We also need to abandon the Bush Administration mentality that diplomacy is a last resort when military action has failed. America can far more effectively advance our national interests and the cause of human rights by using all of the financial and diplomatic tools at our disposal.

To learn more, visit www.johndwards.com/priorities.

Part II: Spending Priorities

Trimming the Pentagon budget, as proposed by Dr. Korb and outlined in the questions above, would save \$60 billion annually.

10. Would you transfer any of the Pentagon savings to non-defense needs?

Yes – if there are resources remaining after we have met our national security needs and our obligations to our troops, veterans, and military families.

No

10a. How would you spend savings that you've generated, if any, by affirmative answers to the questions above?

From multi-billion dollar, anything-goes no-bid contracts for Halliburton to dangerous, ill-conceived ventures like space-based missiles, there are billions in wasteful Pentagon spending. At the same time, our country is facing large challenges, including an overtaxed military that is not ready for another crisis, a broken health care system, global warming, and tens of thousands of struggling schools. We need to be honest about the costs of addressing those problems.

As president, I will pay for new investments in health care, energy, education, and other areas and still reduce the deficit by repealing the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, collecting unpaid taxes and cutting excessive spending. We need to make hard choices about government spending, make our government more efficient, and apply a little common sense to projects like the infamous \$223 million "bridge to nowhere."

As president, I will set a national goal to end poverty within 30 years and launch an aggressive effort to achieve that goal through investments in our communities, our infrastructure, and our citizens. I will radically overhaul the No Child Left Behind Act and give struggling schools the help they need. I will invest in better pay for teachers, smaller class sizes, and paying for the first year of college for any student in America willing to work while going to school. And I will confront the challenge of global warming by capping carbon emissions, banning new coal power plants that cannot capture their emissions, and investing in a new energy economy that relies on renewable fuels while creating at least a million new jobs.

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Common Sense Budget Act (CSBA)

Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-CA) has introduced legislation transferring these funds from the Pentagon to other priorities, including health care for children, energy efficiency, job training, and more. (Click here to read Rep. Woolsey's bill, called the Common Sense Budget Act, <http://www.caucus4priorities.org/csba/>)

11. Will you endorse the Common Sense Budget Act?

Yes

No

If no, explain:

I believe we need more sensible priorities in Washington. How long will we continue to waste billions of dollars on weapons that don't work, that we don't need, while ignoring the 47 million Americans who have no health care, 35 million who live in poverty, and millions of schoolchildren who've been left behind?

The investments proposed by the Common Sense Budget Act – in areas such as health care for children, energy efficiency and renewable energy, and global poverty – will be some of my highest priorities as president. I have presented comprehensive plans to reform our health care, educational, environmental, and global aid

systems, which would paid for not only eliminating wasteful spending in the Pentagon and other agencies, but also by ending George Bush's tax cuts for the wealthy.

To learn more, visit www.johnedwards.com/priorities.

Video Response: A Candidate for Sensible Priorities**12. Why are you the best candidate for Caucus4Priorities?**

Create a 2-minute video making your best case about why your candidate should be the one endorsed. Please post the video submission to YouTube.com and return the URL with completed questionnaire.

If you choose not to or are unable to submit a video please answer question 12 below:

The video response is available online at www.johnedwards.com/priorities.