

# ‘Atrocious’: 188 Democrats Join GOP to Hand Trump \$738 Billion Military Budget that Includes ‘Space Force’

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*“It is Orwellian for Congress to hand over billions of dollars worth of weapons and bombs to a president waging a horrific, unconstitutional war in Yemen—and call that progressive.”*

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More than 180 House Democrats joined a nearly united Republican caucus Wednesday night to pass a sweeping \$738 billion military spending bill that gives President Donald Trump his long-sought “Space Force,” free rein to wage endless wars, and a green light to continue fueling the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen.

Just 48 members of the House, including 41 Democrats, voted against the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which increases the Pentagon budget by \$22 billion. The final vote was [377-48](#).

“This NDAA is atrocious, and it’s very depressing that only 48 members of congress voted against it,” [tweeted](#) anti-war group CodePink.

In a floor speech ahead of Wednesday’s vote, Rep. Ro Khanna (D-Calif.), the most vocal opponent of the NDAA in the House, said “there are many things you can call the bill, but it’s Orwellian to call it progressive.” Khanna was [standing across the aisle](#) from Rep. Adam Smith (D-Wash.), who [hailed](#) the measure as “the most progressive defense bill we have passed in decades.”

“Let’s speak in facts,” said Khanna. “This defense budget is \$120 billion more than what Obama left us with. That could fund free public college for every American. It could fund access to high-speed, affordable internet for every American. But it’s worse. The bipartisan amendment to stop the war in Yemen: stripped by the White House. The bipartisan amendment to stop the war in Iran: stripped by the White House.”

My friend [@RepRoKhanna](#) is right: it is Orwellian for Congress to hand over billions of dollars worth of weapons and bombs to a president waging a horrific, unconstitutional war in Yemen—and call that progressive. [pic.twitter.com/6SUMUUhv3q](https://pic.twitter.com/6SUMUUhv3q)

— Bernie Sanders (@SenSanders) [December 11, 2019](#)

[According to](#) the *New York Times*, Smith—chairman of the House Armed Services Committee—negotiated several provisions of the NDAA directly with Jared Kushner, Trump’s son-in-law and senior adviser.

“It was Mr. Kushner who helped broker a deal to create the Space Force, a chief priority of the president’s, in exchange for the paid parental leave [for federal employees],” the *Times* reported Wednesday. “It was also Mr. Kushner who intervened on measures targeting Saudi Arabia that would have prohibited arms sales or military assistance to the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen. He said they were nonstarters for the White House.”

Sen. Bernie Sanders’ (I-Vt.) foreign policy adviser Matt Duss expressed outrage that Democrats allowed Kushner—who has close ties to Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman—to kill an amendment that would have helped end U.S. complicity in the world’s worst humanitarian crisis.

Congrats to Democratic leadership on getting outnegotiated by JARED KUSHNER. On a provision that was already passed by bipartisan majorities in Congress. To end US support for a war that has created to the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe.

Great goddam job. <https://t.co/JmYd57lgds>

— Matt Duss (@mattduss) [December 11, 2019](#)

Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), who voted against the NDAA, noted in a statement that the final version also stripped out her House-passed amendment that would have repealed the 2002 Iraq Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF).

“With the release of the Afghanistan Papers, it is especially imperative that we take a hard look at our military spending and authorizations,” said Lee, the only member of Congress to vote against the war in Afghanistan in 2001. “I can tell you: it is an appalling, but not shocking read for those of us who have been working to stop endless war. It’s past time to end the longest war in United States history, withdraw our troops, and bring our servicemembers home.”

The 2020 NDAA now heads to the Republican-controlled Senate, where it is expected to pass. In a [tweet](#) ahead of the House vote on Wednesday, Trump praised the bill and said he would sign it into law “immediately.”

“New rule: Every member of Congress who voted to give the most corrupt, unhinged, and unstable president in history \$738 billion to fight endless wars, fund a bogus space force, and put our troops at risk must never tell us that we cannot afford Medicare for All or a Green New Deal,” Warren Gunnels, Sanders’ senior adviser, [tweeted](#) Wednesday night. “Ever.”

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