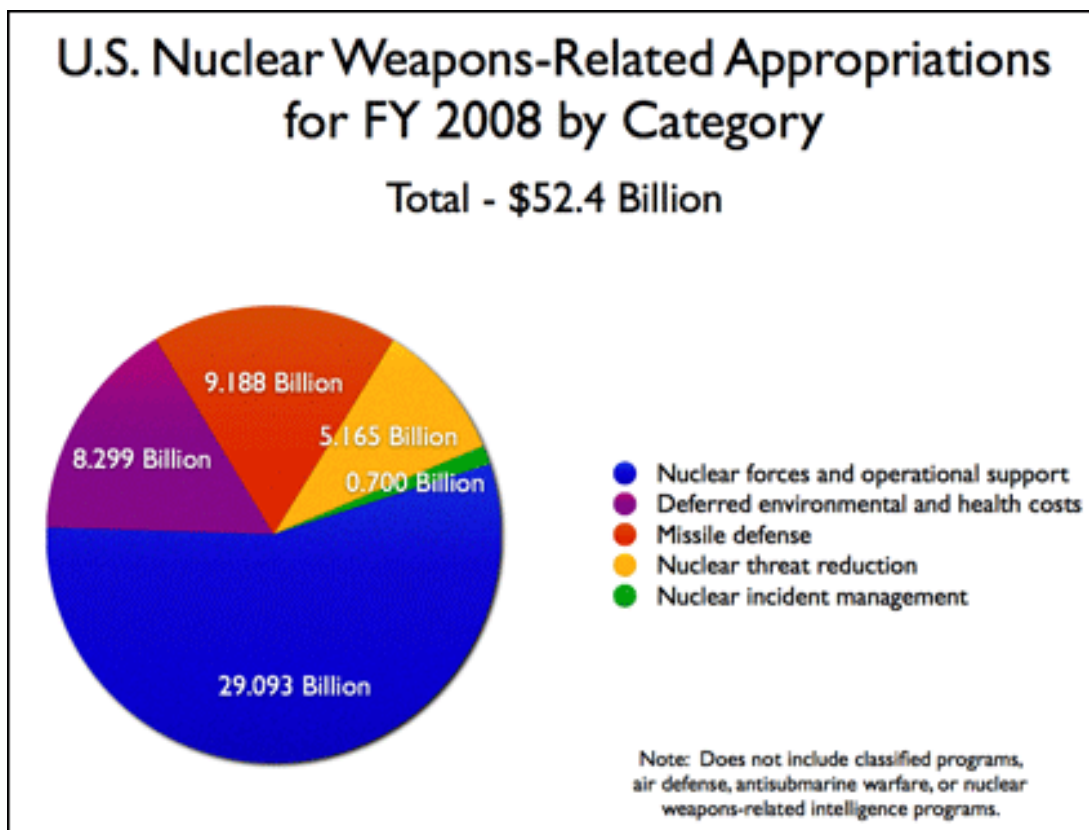


The Real Cost of Nuclear Weapons

The Annual Cost

The total annual cost of sustaining Nuclear Weapons was found to be over \$52 BILLION!¹

The \$52 billion figure far exceeds the total annual budget for international diplomacy and foreign assistance (\$39.5 billion) and comprises roughly 10% of all national defense spending.²



The Accounting Problem

Most U.S. Government spending on nuclear weapons-related programs is unclassified. But it is functionally secret since such **spending is widely dispersed across many programs in several agencies and it is not formally tracked or reported.**²

The **lack of comprehensive accounting impairs balancing of priorities** and fosters the impression that the United States is more interested in preserving and upgrading its nuclear arsenal than in reducing and eliminating the growing threats of nuclear proliferation and limited nuclear or radiological attack. **Because classified expenditures and some other relevant costs are omitted from the analysis, total actual spending is significantly higher.**¹

The Half Century Burden

From 1940 to 1998, the United States spent \$5.8 trillion on nuclear weapons programs, more than on any single program except Social Security, according to a comprehensive audit of the country's effort to build a nuclear arsenal.

Spending on nuclear weapons ranked third behind other defense spending (\$13.2 trillion) and Social Security (\$7.9 trillion). Nuclear weapons ranked just ahead of welfare payments (\$5.3 trillion) and interest on the national debt (\$4.7 trillion).

Source: 1. Walter Pincus, "US has spent 5.8 Trillion on Nuclear Weapons"

Setting Priorities Today

There is now high-level bipartisan agreement that the U.S. defense budget should be reduced in a major way over the next decade. Cuts to Nuclear Weapons programs should be a significant part of these reductions.

The main way that nuclear reductions save money is by reducing the need to buy new, expensive delivery systems. For example, a new submarine, with 12 boats at \$7 billion each, is projected to cost around \$100 billion. New bombers are projected to cost at least \$50 billion over their lifetime.

These cost estimates are likely to go up.

The Cold War has been over for 20 years, and today's top threats—terrorism, proliferation, dictators—do not lend themselves to a nuclear response. **By carefully reducing our nuclear forces and scaling back new weapon systems, the United States can save billions.**¹

Source: 1. Tom Collina, "Looking for Defense Cuts? Go Nuclear"



What You Can Do

Contact your Congresspersons and urge them to support efforts to cut wasteful Nuclear Weapons spending and properly account what we do spend. Call the Congressional Switchboard at 202-224-3121 to speak with your Congresspersons and Senators.

Write Letters to the Editor of your local media sources advocating for reductions to our Nuclear weapons budget.

Spread the word to community members by inviting a speaker on Nuclear Weapons spending (contact on right) and distributing this flyer to your contacts.

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