

Senate Democratic leadership votes to fund Trump's wars abroad and at home

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On Friday, the Senate Democratic leadership—including Minority Leader Chuck Schumer of New York, Minority Whip Dick Durbin of Illinois, and Vice Chair of the Conference Mark Warner of Virginia—voted to fund the Trump administration's military through September 30. The 71-29 vote on the \$839 billion defense appropriations bill included 23 Democratic senators voting in favor, joining 48 Republicans.

The funding package, announced Thursday, also includes a two-week continuing resolution for the Department of Homeland Security—which includes Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

The military funding bill passed just days after federal agents shot and killed Alex Pretti, a 37-year-old protester, in Minneapolis on January 24. He was killed by CBP and ICE agents while filming an immigration raid. Two and a half weeks earlier, an ICE agent murdered Renée Nicole Good, also 37, in the same city. In both cases, the Trump administration blamed the victims and declared the killers would face no consequences.

The military the Democrats voted to fund had been repeatedly deployed against American cities. Since taking office, Trump has sent thousands of National Guard and active-duty troops into Los Angeles, Washington D.C. and New Orleans—at a cost of nearly \$500 million in 2025 alone. “It’s a war from within,” Trump declared in explaining the deployments. “I told Pete, we should use some of these cities as training grounds for our military.”

The vote exposes the fraud that the Democratic Party opposes the Trump administration's reign of terror in Minneapolis or anywhere else. They refuse to use the power of the purse to rein in the administration because they speak for the same financial oligarchs who gathered at Trump's inauguration—the billionaires and Wall Street executives who seek war abroad and repression at home.

Neither Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont nor

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York publicly criticized the vote by the Senate Democratic leaders to fund the military or even issued a statement about it.

The Democrats are not an opposition party. They support the same policies and priorities as Trump, with only minor tactical differences. They serve as a safety valve, channeling popular anger into harmless posturing while ensuring the machinery of war and repression continues to function. The Senate vote follows the January 22 House vote of 341-88 to advance the defense funding package, with the a majority of Democrats voting in favor.

The military appropriations bill passed Friday comes as the Trump administration threatens war against Iran. The USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group is currently steaming toward the Persian Gulf, leading what Trump has called an “armada” of warships. In recent days, the administration has issued a series of ultimatums to Tehran, demanding the dismantling of its nuclear program and threatening devastating military strikes if Iran does not comply.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio warned ominously that longtime adversary Cuba “is in trouble,” while Trump has refused to rule out military operations against Colombia. The administration's National Security Strategy declares the goal of “restoring American preeminence in the Western Hemisphere,” effectively asserting US control over two continents.

This military buildup comes less than four weeks after the US military illegally kidnapped Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, taking them out of the country to face fabricated drug trafficking charges. The abduction—an unprecedented act of imperialist aggression—was greeted with bipartisan support or at least acquiescence in Congress.

Meanwhile, the Israeli military this week officially

accepted the Gaza Health Ministry’s death toll of 70,000 Palestinians killed since October 2023. For over two years, the Biden administration, the US Congress and the Western media dismissed these figures as “ Hamas propaganda.” Since October 2023, the United States has provided at least \$22 billion in military aid to Israel—nearly three times the average annual amount under the existing memorandum of understanding. The Democrats voted for every weapons shipment, every supplemental appropriation, every measure that armed and funded this slaughter.

The \$839 billion defense appropriations bill includes an \$8 billion increase over the Pentagon’s request, funding for the 3.8 percent pay raise service members received this month, and \$897 million for military medical research. It allocates \$400 million for the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative over the administration’s objection—revealing that the Democratic “opposition” mainly concerns his turn away from all-out support for the NATO-backed war against Russia.

But this appropriations bill is only part of the picture. Combined with the \$156 billion in additional military funding contained in Trump’s “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” passed last July, total Pentagon spending for 2026 approaches \$1 trillion—the largest military budget in American history.

Trump has already announced he will seek \$1.5 trillion for the military in fiscal 2027.

The Democrats’ support for this military build-up exposes the bipartisan character of American imperialism. Both parties represent the interests of the same ruling class. The working class cannot pressure the Democratic Party to defend its interests against war and dictatorship. It must take the road of an independent political struggle against imperialist war and for socialism.



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