

# Trump's \$200 billion Iran funding request points to massive scale of war plans

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18 March 2026

The *Washington Post* reported Wednesday that the Pentagon is seeking more than \$200 billion from Congress to fund the US war of aggression against Iran, a sum that would exceed the roughly \$188 billion spent by the US on arming Ukraine over three years.

The scale of the request is a measure of the war Trump has launched. Far from being, as the president has called it, an “excursion,” the \$200 billion the Pentagon is seeking exceeds even the peak annual cost of the Iraq war, which ran to roughly \$140 billion a year at the height of the 2007 surge—when 170,000 American troops occupied the country. No ground invasion has yet taken place in Iran, and the administration is already seeking a larger appropriation than the costliest year of the eight-year Iraq occupation.

The war burned through more than \$11 billion in its first week alone.

The supplemental comes on top of the \$839 billion defense appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2026, the largest military budget in American history, which Congress passed in January. When combined with spending on intelligence agencies, the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons programs and other national security expenditures, total US military spending exceeds \$1 trillion a year.

Every leading Democrat in Congress voted for the defense appropriations bill earlier this year. In the House, it passed 341 to 88, with Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Whip Katherine Clark and Democratic Caucus Chair Pete Aguilar voting in favor. The Senate approved it 71 to 29, with Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and Minority Whip Dick Durbin on the same side. The same Democrats who now posture as critics of the war voted to fund the military machine waging it.

Even before the war began, President Donald Trump

had called for a \$1.5 trillion defense budget for the next fiscal year—a more than 50 percent increase—making clear that the administration views the Iran war as only one front in a broader military buildup directed against Russia and China.

Calls for a ground invasion are growing louder from within the US political establishment. Republican Representative Pete Sessions of Texas appeared on CNN Tuesday to advocate openly for Marines to seize Kharg Island, Iran's main oil export terminal, while claiming absurdly that an island assault would not constitute “boots on the ground.” Republican Senator Lindsey Graham posted on X: “He who controls Kharg Island, controls the destiny of this war. Semper Fi.”

The amphibious assault carrier USS Tripoli, carrying roughly 2,200 Marines of the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), was spotted Tuesday steaming through the Strait of Malacca toward the Persian Gulf—the first ground combat force headed to the theater. Some 50,000 US service members are already in the region, backed by three carrier strike groups.

On Day 19 of the war, the assassinations continued. Israel murdered Iran's intelligence minister, Esmail Khatib, in an overnight airstrike Wednesday. This is the latest in a systematic extermination campaign that has killed the supreme leader and much of the Iranian government's senior leadership since February 28. Israeli military spokesman Brigadier General Effie Defrin declared: “We will continue chasing all of the regime's senior officials. The series of assassinations will not stop.”

Wednesday also saw the most significant attack on Iranian energy infrastructure since the war began: airstrikes on the South Pars gas field, which supplies 70 percent of Iran's natural gas. Iran responded by

launching missiles at Qatar’s Ras Laffan Industrial City, home to the world’s largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility, causing what QatarEnergy described as “extensive damage.” Missiles and drones also targeted Saudi Arabia, while Iraq announced that Iranian gas imports, which account for a third of its electricity supply, had been severed entirely.

Working people are immediately paying the price for the US-Israeli war on Iran in the form of higher gas prices. Brent crude oil topped \$110 a barrel Wednesday, up more than 40 percent since February 28. Gasoline in the United States has climbed 29 percent to \$3.84 a gallon, and diesel has broken through \$5 for the first time since the 2022 inflation spike.

At the Senate Intelligence Committee’s annual worldwide threats hearing Wednesday, Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director John Ratcliffe directly contradicted Trump’s stated justification for the war—that Iran was on the verge of developing missiles capable of reaching the United States. Gabbard testified that Iran could “begin to develop” an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) “before 2035, should Tehran attempt to pursue that capability.” Ratcliffe acknowledged that Iran was “gaining experience” in longer-range missiles but refused to affirm any timeline for when they could threaten the US homeland.

Gabbard acknowledged that while the Iranian leadership had been “largely degraded” by US and Israeli attacks, the government “appears to be intact.”

At a separate House Armed Services Committee hearing, both capitalist parties framed the Iran war as one front of a three-theater confrontation with Russia, Iran and China. Democrats used the hearing to press the administration on whether the US remains committed to NATO, given Trump’s repeated public musings about withdrawing from the alliance.

The Democrats did not oppose the war in principle. Their critique amounted to an accusation that the Trump administration is insufficiently aggressive toward Russia and China—that by bungling the Iran war and threatening to abandon NATO, it is jeopardizing the broader military confrontation that both parties regard as essential. Democratic Senator Adam Schiff declared that “Russia is the problem here,” accusing the administration of “enriching our adversary, Russia,

at Ukraine’s expense,” after the White House temporarily lifted sanctions on Russian oil last week to ease soaring energy prices. Representative Ro Khanna, the ranking Democrat on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), warned that the Iran war is “stretching armed forces thin” and undermining US readiness against China.

In Iran, the human toll continued to mount. Iran’s Red Crescent Society reported at least 47,000 residential units destroyed across the country. In Lebanon, more than 960 people have been killed and at least 2,400 wounded since Israel launched its assault on March 2, with at least 110 children among the dead. Thirteen American service members have been killed since the US-Israeli attack on Iran began.



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