

WITH SEQUESTER LOOMING, GROUPS CALL FOR SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL PROGRAMS, CUTTING PENTAGON WASTE INSTEAD OF CUTS ON MAIN STREET

Charleston WV — As part of a National Day of Action across the U.S., local social service and justice groups gathered for a roundtable discussion at City Hall with representatives from Senator Rockefeller's and Manchin's office to call for continued support for essential programs that help the needy and to look to the ever-expanding Pentagon Budget for cuts.

"Pull the Pork from the Pentagon," the National Day of Action, is taking place as Congress faces a series of deadlines on our country's budget priorities, including possible automatic spending cuts scheduled to take place beginning Friday.

Rev Jim Lewis of WV Patriots for Peace moderated the roundtable, "The money (federal block grants) has to hit the streets here to keep these programs going. We are shooting ourselves in the foot if we make these cuts."

Helen Allen, Director of Covenant House explained how housing fit into the equation, "In our state there are over 13,000 families in homes through the use of federal Housing Choice Vouchers. These families are at risk of homelessness without this support."

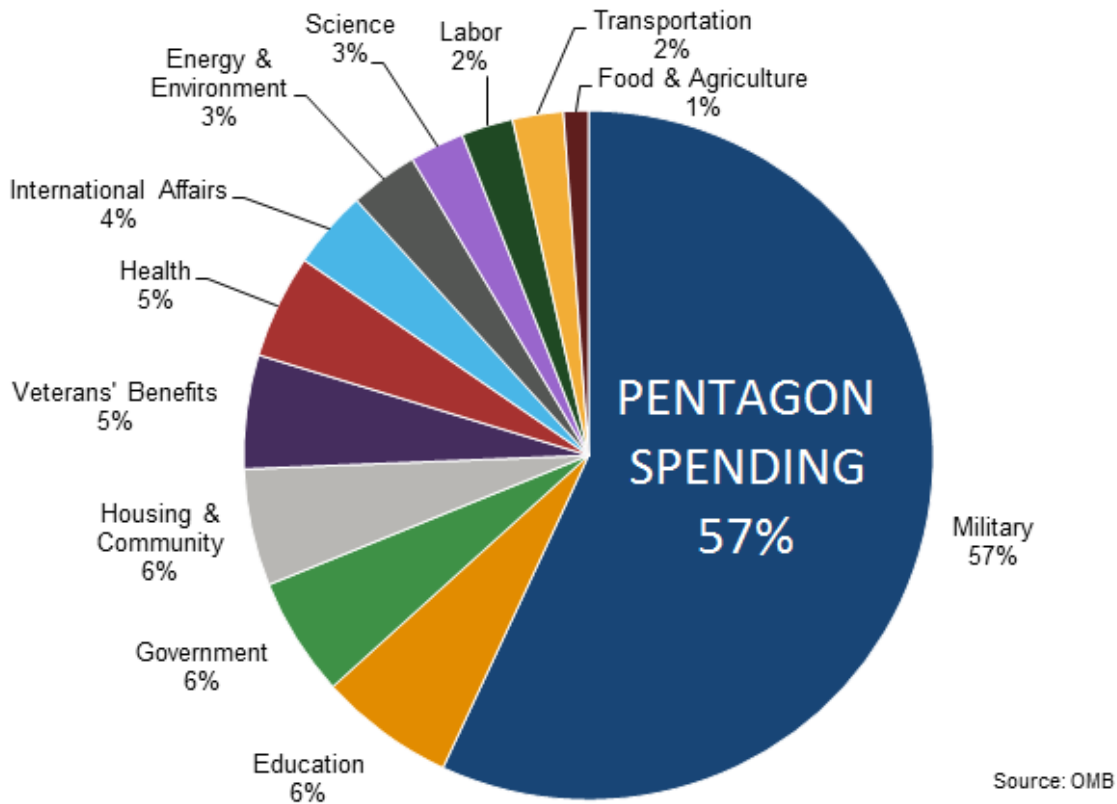
Jean Simpson, Director of Manna Meal shared that they feed about 380 people a day 365 days a year, "Sixty five percent are employed but making poverty wages. We're seeing a rise in seniors coming in now. We encourage them to come in and eat so they can save money for housing. Our government funding is now only half of what it was just seven years ago and we want to be able to continue serving."

Pat White, Director of Charleston Health Right serves many working folks who can't afford insurance, "We leverage every dollar we get into \$22 of donated medical services. Much of the funding we receive goes to consumable supplies such as insulin that keeps patients from ending up in the emergency room."

"We have to stop paying for the things we can't afford so that we can afford the things our families need," said Gary Zuckett, Director of WV Citizen Action, "This includes these local programs and Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, & food stamps. And it includes discretionary domestic programs such as Head Start, nutrition aid, job training, education and cancer screening, just to name a few."

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President's Proposed Discretionary Spending (FY 2013)



PENTAGON SPENDING:

- **SPENDING:** Currently, the Pentagon spends \$718 billion a year, not including benefits for our veterans. Even at the peak of war spending in Iraq in 2007, the Pentagon's base budget was just \$431 billion, with \$132 billion added for the war in Iraq and \$34 billion for Afghanistan — for a total of \$597 billion.
- **GROWTH:** The defense budget has gone up for an unprecedented 13 straight years, and has grown by 48% over the last decade. We're spending well above the Cold War average, even without adding in the funding for the Iraq and Afghan wars.
- **DRAWDOWNS:** After the Korean War, Pentagon spending was reduced by 43%. After the Vietnam War, it was reduced by 33%, and after the Cold War it was reduced by 36%. There is a clear precedent for reductions

CONSENSUS ON REDUCTIONS:

A consensus has emerged across the political spectrum, from military leaders, policy organizations, and even forward thinking defense contractors that Pentagon reductions offer our military with a unique opportunity to adapt to 21st century priorities. **Supporters include, but are in no way limited to:** Gen. Colin Powell, Former National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey, William Swanson, head of Raytheon, Fmr. Joint Chiefs Chairman Adm. Mike Mullen, and Rep. Mick Mulvaney (R) and Rep. Keith Ellison (D)

DEFENSE CONTRACTOR FACTS:

- Between 2006 and 2011, defense contractors enjoyed a 10% increase in taxpayer dollars from the federal government, from \$101 billion to \$113 billion
- Between 2006 and 2011, the top five defense contractors, collectively, cut 3% of their jobs while being awarded 10% more in taxpayer dollars
- The head of Northrop Grumman makes \$26 million a year, followed by the heads of Lockheed Martin (\$25.4 million) and Boeing (\$23 million)

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