

CODEPINK

CODEPINK: Women For Peace
578 Washington Blvd. #395
Marina Del Rey, CA 90292

17 October 2022

President Biden & Members of the United States Congress,

We, the undersigned organizations from around the world, are calling for a cancellation of the F-35 program, an end to F-35 training in residential areas like South Burlington, Vermont and Madison, Wisconsin, and a reinvestment of the project's funds to life-affirming programs. We are making these demands based on the harm caused abroad, cost of the program to the taxpayer, inefficiencies and failures, the environmental impact of F-35s, and the effects training has on local communities.

HARM CAUSED THROUGH MILITARISM

We primarily stand firmly against the F-35 as a weapon of war. Although not ready for full-scale production, the U.S. intends on producing countless F-35s to sell around the world that will without a doubt be used to harm people living in the Global South. F-35s have the capacity to carry nuclear weapons, and the deployment of these jets only aids nuclear proliferation. The U.S. already makes up 40% of the global arms trade, aiding and abetting war crimes all over the world. Israel is procuring F-35's from the United States which have already been used to launch airstrikes on Gaza to further Israel's goals of ethnic cleansing and displacement in Palestine. Saudi Arabia has expressed interest in F-35s as well as the UAE while both countries wage a brutal war on Yemen. The F-35 is a disaster of a project, but also a potential disaster for humanity.

INEFFICIENCIES AND FAILURES

The F-35 spending is becoming impossible for important members of Congress to justify. The Chair of the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Adam Smith called the F-35 a "rathole." Another member of HASC, Rep. John Garamendi had some scathing comments about the F-35 in a HASC subcommittee hearing in May:

"For the contractors out there, what are you doing? Why can't you give us a piece of equipment that actually works? You should never have a contract. And for Lockheed, you want a five-year maintenance contract? You can't do what you're doing today. Come on. What are we thinking? If I have not adequately expressed my frustration, I would assume that my frustration is less than the frustration of the pilots and the maintainers out there. ... The primary maintenance responsibility on this is Lockheed and you gentlemen."

The Government Accountability Office said the F-35 “continues to fall short of prescribed mission-capable rates and is consistently missing reliability targets”. According to the GAO, the F-35A in 2021 was fully mission capable 50% of the time, while the F-35B was fully mission capable less than 20 percent of the time. The F-35c was only capable 9.5% of the time.

The signatories call attention to the failures of the program to address harmful projects seeing never ending investment while programs that protect people such as universal healthcare never see the light of day.

COST TO THE TAXPAYER

The failures of the program make the spending impossible to justify, even from a militaristic standpoint. The F-35 program is the Department of Defense’s most expensive weapon system program. As of now, the F-35’s projected total cost is \$1.7 trillion, which includes \$1.3 trillion in estimated operations and sustainment over 66 years. The F-35 is horribly behind schedule, experiencing massive cost overruns with maintenance costs doubling. The F-35 is not ready for full scale production. According to the GAO, “if DOD moves forward as planned, it will have bought a third of all F-35s before determining that the aircraft is ready to move into full-rate production.” Spending billions to trillions of dollars on a plane that is not yet up to speed with what the government has requested is poor fiscal policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

F-35s also have a significant impact on the environment with their high carbon emissions and pollution on local bases. The F-35 uses a significant amount of fuel – about 2.37 gallons of fuel for every mile traveled and around 1,340 gallons of fuel per hour. This is particularly egregious compared to the F-35’s predecessor, the F-16, which used at least 415 gallons of fuel per hour less. One single F-35 tank of gas produces the equivalent of 28 metric tons of carbon dioxide. These emissions heavily pollute air and water sources in basing locations in the U.S. and abroad. Base site construction for F-35 training in the U.S. has also disregarded the need for environmental remediation of pre-existing contaminants such as PFAS, risking further pollution of surrounding communities. F35 pollution is an environmental justice issue, as they are disproportionately tested, trained, and deployed in low-income communities of color.

These environmental impacts do not even account for the role of the plane in active combat. As they’re deployed around the world, we see Lockheed Martin’s jets subjecting communities globally to egregious noise levels, environmental contamination, and the risk of nuclear warfare. The F-35 is also a part of the U.S. strategic nuclear bomber force, possessing the capability to carry and deploy the B61-12 guided nuclear bomb. If deployed, this bomb - and all other nuclear weapons - would have catastrophic long-term environmental consequences.

EFFECT ON U.S. LOCALS

Currently, F-35 training in Vermont disrupts the lives of working-class people. The training is irregular and Vermonters go without warning of when these trainings will take place. The noise caused by the F-35 hits 115 decibels which especially hurts and injures infants and children, the elderly, and the disabled. The F-35 has 300 to 600 takeoffs and landings a month.

Let's consider the City of Winooski, VT. More than half the city is within the US Air Force designated 5.2 mile by 1.2 mile oval-shaped F-35 noise target zone centered on the runway. Winooski is a working-class city, the most densely populated in Vermont, with the state's most ethnic diversity. As reported by the US Air Force itself in 2013, repeated exposure to military aircraft noise at the level of the F-35, can damage hearing. The Air Force also reported that the much lower aircraft noise level produced by civilian aircraft was still sufficient to impair the learning and cognitive development of children living in the flight path of heavily used commercial airports. The US Air Force identified the entire oval-shaped noise target zone as an area "generally considered unsuitable for residential use." So it was no secret for the state's political and military leaders that locating the F-35 at BTV would cause pain and injury to children and adults on a mass scale. In Madison, where the F-35's are likely to end up starting in the next few years, Physicians for Social Responsibility Wisconsin has identified the following risks to children as a result of loud noise and air pollution:

- Preterm or low birth weights
- Delayed speech development
- Hearing loss
- Interference with concentration, long term memory, reading and math comprehension

In addition, adults as well as children would face increased risk of:

- Stress hormones that cause sleep disturbances
- Anxiety
- PTSD
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Strokes

For all the aforementioned reasons, we, the undersigned organizations, reject the government's reckless over investment in the F-35 program and demand its immediate cancellation. The costs of this program to the taxpayer, the environment, local communities, and the communities upon which the US and its allies will wage war are too high to justify. It is time for the government to prioritize the welfare of human beings and the planet over military superiority and the weapons industry's profits.

We call on our policy makers to cancel the F-35 program, cancel training within the U.S. and reinvest that money into universal healthcare, student debt forgiveness, housing guarantees and more.

Sincerely,

CODEPINK: Women For Peace

Roger Waters, Co-Founder of Pink Floyd

Ben Cohen, Co-Founder of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream

Noam Chomsky, Linguist

Medea Benjamin, Co-Founder of CODEPINK

Jodie Evans, Co-Founder of CODEPINK

Abby Martin, Journalist

Bill Ayers, Activist/Professor of Education

Bernardine Dohrn, Activist/Law Professor

And the undersigned 229 organizations

BELGIUM:

Vredesactie

CANADA:

Boundary Peace Initiative

Canadian Foreign Policy
Institute

Canadian Voice of Women
for Peace

Conscience Canada

Fire This Time Movement
for Social Justice, Canada

Global Peace Alliance
Society

Gravelbourg & District
Tribune Weekly

Newspaper

Hamilton Coalition To
Stop The War

Just Peace

Advocates/Mouvement
Pour Une Paix Juste

Montréal for a World

BEYOND War

Nova Scotia Voice of
Women for Peace

Pax Christi Toronto,
Canada

Peace Alliance Winnipeg

Regina Peace Council

Socialist Action / Ligue
pour l'Action socialiste,
Canada

Victoria Peace Coalition

Winnipeg Branch

Association of United
Ukrainian Canadians

Women's International

League for Peace and
Freedom Canada

World BEYOND War -
Vancouver

Canadian Peace Congress

Pivot2Peace (S. Geo. Bay
Chapter, WBW)

The Canada Files

GERMANY:

Berlin World Beyond War
Chapter, Coop Antiwar
Cafe

Bundesausschuss

Friedensratschlag

Deutscher Friedensrat e.V.
(German Peace Council)

Forum against Militarism
and War, Heidelberg,

Germany

Friedensglockengesellscha
ft e.V., Berlin

International Peace Bureau
(IPB)

RüstungsInformationsBüro

GLOBAL:

CODEPINK

Food Not Bombs
Women's International
League for Peace and
Freedom
World BEYOND War

KENYA:

Loresho Ridge Art
Commune, Nairobi, Kenya

MEXICO:

Nuevo País, México.

PARAGUAY:

Consejo de Organizaciones
Sociales y Populares

SPAIN:

Women in Black, Madrid
Women in Black, Spain

SWITZERLAND:

Group For a Switzerland
Without an Army

UNITED

KINGDOM:

Campaign Against Arms
Trade
Shadow World
Investigations
Stop the War Coalition
(UK)
Tipping Point North
South/Transform Defence
Project

UNITED STATES:

350 Milwaukee
350 Wisconsin
About Face: Veterans
Against War
Action Corps
Alaska Peace Center

American Friends Service
Committee
Anti-Imperialist Action
Committee
Association of Concerned
Africa Scholars (USA)
Association of Roman
Catholic Women Priests
Backbone Campaign
Baltimore Nonviolence
Center
Ban Killer Drones.org
Banish The F35s Party
Barrymore Theatre
Brandywine Peace
Community
Broome County NY Peace
Action
Building Unity
Call To Action - Madison
Area, Inc.
Casa Baltimore Limay
Citizens Against Nuclear
Bombers
Citizens for Peace
CODEPINK Chicago -
DivestMike
CODEPINK Golden Gate
Chapter
Community Organizing
Center
Crawford Stewardship
Project
Demilitarize Western
Massachusetts
Divest Ed
Dorothy Day Catholic
Worker, Washington DC

DSA International
Committee
Earth care not warfare
Eisenhower Media
Network
El Centro de la Raza
Extinction Rebellion DC
Family Farm Defenders
FCNL Lansing Area
Advocacy Team
Feel The Bern San
Fernando Valley
Democratic Club
Fellowship of
Reconciliation, USA
Feminist Foreign Policy
Project
Feminist Peace Initiative
Florida for a World
Beyond War
Foreign Policy Team,
Progressive Democrats of
America
Four Lakes Green Party
Fox Valley Peace Coalition
- Appleton, WI, USA
Freedom Forward
Friends of FRanz & Ben
bensalmon.org
Friends of Starkweather
Creek
Global Network Against
Weapons & Nuclear Power
in Space
Granny Peace Brigade
NYC
Grassroots Global Justice
Alliance

Ground Zero Center for
Nonviolent Action
Harambee Village Doulas
Harmony With Our Planet
- NJ
Hawai'i Peace and Justice
Health Advocacy
International
Historians for Peace and
Democracy
Institute for Policy Studies,
New Internationalism
Project
Interfaith Peace Working
Group
Iowa Peace Network
Justice and Peace Team,
Edgewood United Church,
East Lansing, MI
JVP-Portland
Kairos Center for
Religions, Rights and
Social Justice
Kalamazoo nonviolent
opponents of war
Kateri Peace Conference
Kickapoo Peace Circle
L.I.Alliance for Peaceful
Alternatives
LaForge
Lansing Area Peace
Education Center
Lauren Faith Smith
Ministry for Nonviolence
LEPOCO Peace Center
Linda and Gene Farley
Center for Peace, Justice &
Sustainability

Long Beach Area Peace
Network
Madison Area DSA
Madison Environmental
Justice Organization
Madison Monthly Meeting
of the Religious Society of
Friends (Quakers)
Madison-Rafah Sister City
Project
MADRE
Maine Veterans For Peace
Maryknoll Office for
Global Concerns
Maryland Peace Action
Maryland United for Peace
and Justice
Massachusetts Peace
Action
Micah
Military Law Task Force of
the National Lawyers
Guild
Military Poisons
Minnesota Peace Project
Mothers Against Gun
Violence
Muslim Peace Fellowship
National Lawyers Guild
(NLG)
National Priorities Project
at the Institute for Policy
Studies
Nevada Desert Experience
No More Bombs
Nuclear Ban.US
Olympia Coalition to
Abolish Nuclear Weapons
Oregonizers

Our Revolution Baltimore
City/County
Our Wisconsin Revolution
Partners for Palestine
Pax Christi Lansing
Pax Christi Madison
Pax Christi Metro New
York
Pax Christi New York
State
Pax Christi Upstate New
York
Pax Christi USA
Peace Action
Peace Action Bay Ridge
Peace Action Maine
Peace Action New York
State
Peace Action of Michigan
Peace Action of San Mateo
County
Peace Action WI
Peace and Justice Works
Iraq Affinity Group
(Portland, OR)
Peace, Justice,
Sustainability NOW!
PEACEWORKERS
People for Peace &
Security
People's City Council
Physicians for Social
Responsibility Wisconsin
PJALS
Pregnancy Options
Wisconsin: Education,
Resources, & Support, Inc
Quaker Palestine Israel
Network

Rachel Corrie Chapter 109	upstate (ny/usa) drone	Washington Poor People's
Veterans For Peace	action	Campaign
Racine (WI) Coalition for	Uptown Progressive	WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
Peace & Justice	Action	WEST SUBURBAN
Redwood City Catholic	US Boats to Gaza	PEACE COALITION
Worker	Veterans For Peace	Western WA FOR Seattle
ReThinking Foreign Policy	Veterans For Peace	Chapter
Rooms for PEACE	Chapter 113 Hawai'i	Whatcom Peace & Justice
RootsAction.org	Veterans For Peace	Center
Safe Skies Clean Water	Chapter 27	WI Coalition to Ground
Wisconsin	Veterans for Peace chapter	the Drones and End the
School Sisters of Notre	90	Wars
Dame - CP JPIC	Veterans for Peace Chapter	WILPF ST.Louis
Seattle Anti-War Coalition	90 Binghamton NY	Wisconsin Faith Voices for
Sisters of Mercy of the	Veterans For Peace Golden	Justice
Americas - Justice Team	Rule Project	Wisconsin Network for
Socialist Law Students of	Veterans For Peace Jon	Peace and Justice
Wisconsin	Miles Chapter 13, Tucson	Wisconsin Resources
Solidarity Realty	Veterans For Peace Linus	Protection Council
Spokane Veterans For	Pauling Chapter 132	Women Against Military
Peace #035	Veterans for Peace	Madness
STEM Strikes for Peace	Madison, Clarence Kailin	Women Cross DMZ
Syracuse Peace council	CH. 25 25	Women's International
Syracuse Veterans for	Veterans For Peace Maine	League for Peace &
Peace chapter 51	Chapter	Freedom - Madison WI
Tacoma Fellowship of	Veterans for Peace the	Branch
Reconciliation	Hector Black Chapter	Women's International
The Center for	Veterans for Peace	League for Peace and
International Policy (CIP)	Vermont	Freedom - Burlington VT
The Herd of Northern	Veterans for Peace-Chapter	Branch
Vermonters	136, The Villages, Florida	Women's International
Transformative Wealth	Veterans For Peace,	League for Peace and
Management, LLC	Milwaukee Chapter 102	Freedom- Triangle Branch
U.S. Labor Against	Veterans for Peace, North	World Beyond War Naples
Racism and War	Texas	Chapter
UNA USA Chapter of	Veterans For Peace, Santa	World Without War
Greater Detroit	Fe NM Chapter	Yemen Relief and
Unity of Madison	Washington Against	Reconstruction Foundation
	Nuclear Weapons	NH Peace Action

Raytheon Anti-War
Campaign - Massachusetts
Yemeni Alliance
Committee
Yemeni Liberation
Movement