

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 Douglas
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
Veterans For Peace
Racine (WI) Coalition for
Peace & Justice
Redwood City Catholic
Worker
ReThinking Foreign Policy
Rooms for PEACE
RootsAction.org

Safe Skies Clean Water
Wisconsin
School Sisters of Notre
Dame - CP JPIC
Seattle Anti-War Coalition
Sisters of Mercy of the
Americas - Justice Team
Socialist Law Students of
Wisconsin
Solidarity Realty
Spokane Veterans For
Peace #035
STEM Strikes for Peace
Syracuse Peace council
Syracuse Veterans for
Peace chapter 51
Tacoma Fellowship of
Reconciliation
The Center for
International Policy (CIP)
The Herd of Northern
Vermonters
Transformative Wealth
Management, LLC
U.S. Labor Against
Racism and War
UNA USA Chapter of
Greater Detroit
Unity of Madison
upstate (ny/usa) drone
action
Uptown Progressive
Action
US Boats to Gaza
Veterans For Peace
Veterans For Peace
Chapter 113 Hawai'i
Veterans For Peace
Chapter 27

Veterans for Peace chapter
90
Veterans for Peace Chapter
90 Binghamton NY
Veterans For Peace Golden
Rule Project
Veterans For Peace Jon
Miles Chapter 13, Tucson
Veterans For Peace Linus
Pauling Chapter 132
Veterans for Peace
Madison, Clarence Kailin
CH. 25 25
Veterans For Peace Maine
Chapter
Veterans for Peace the
Hector Black Chapter
Veterans for Peace
Vermont
Veterans for Peace-Chapter
136, The Villages, Florida
Veterans For Peace,
Milwaukee Chapter 102
Veterans for Peace, North
Texas
Veterans For Peace, Santa
Fe NM Chapter
Washington Against
Nuclear Weapons
Washington Poor Peoples
Campaign
WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
WEST SUBURBAN
PEACE COALITION
Western WA FOR Seattle
Chapter
Whatcom Peace & Justice
Center

WI Coalition to Ground
the Drones and End the
Wars
WILPF ST.Louis
Wisconsin Faith Voices for
Justice
Wisconsin Network for
Peace and Justice
Wisconsin Resources
Protection Council
Women Against Military
Madness
Women Cross DMZ
Women's International
League for Peace &
Freedom - Madison WI
Branch
Women's International
League for Peace and
Freedom - Burlington VT
Branch
Women's International
League for Peace and
Freedom- Triangle Branch
World Beyond War Naples
Chapter
World Without War
Yemen Relief and
Reconstruction Foundation
NH Peace Action
Raytheon Anti-War
Campaign - Massachusetts
Yemeni Alliance
Committee
Yemeni Liberation
Movement