

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

Maine's campaign to generate conversations in our communities that connect the dots between military spending and economic crisis in the U.S.A.

RESOLUTIONS

Towns, cities, and school districts facing budget cuts call on their representatives in the House to redirect spending from military to solve funding shortfalls faced by schools, health services, infrastructure, etc.



BOW\$H CAMPAIGN COALITION:

Americans Who Tell the Truth, CODEPINK Maine, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, The Kennebunks Peace Department, Maine Green Independent Party, Maine War Tax Resistance Resource Center, Maine Veterans for Peace, Midcoast Peace & Justice, Military Families Speak Out - Maine Chapter, Pax Christi Maine, Peace Action Maine, Peace & Justice Center of Eastern Maine, PeaceWorks, Peninsula Peace and Justice (Blue Hill), Rockland P&J, ROSC (Resources for Organizing and Social Change), Union of Maine Visual Artists, Waterville Area Bridges for Peace & Justice.

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

How's the war economy working for you?

HOW TO BRING A RESOLUTION TO YOUR COMMUNITY:

- Download and edit a BOW\$H resolution that fits your audience.
- Contact your town office or school board district office to find out when their next public meeting is, and how to get an item on the agenda.
- Download and print out a flyer with key points about the effects of military spending on your local budget. Use the National Priorities Project website to find data for your state, which can be used with population data to get a rough estimate of the cost of wars to individual towns and cities. Make copies of the flyer.
- Go to the meeting, and pass out flyers to others in the audience while you wait for it to begin. Keep any conversations light at this point – you are just raising the issue for now.
- Wait until the citizen's delegation part of the agenda (get a copy of the agenda when you come in so you will know where in the line up this occurs).
- When you are recognized by the person chairing the meeting, stand up and hand the clerk or each of the selectmen, councilors or school board directors a copy of the resolution.
- Speak briefly, calmly and clearly asking them to consider adopting a resolution calling on the House reps from the area to reallocate funds from military to other areas that are struggling to find adequate funding.
- Very likely they will respond by saying they will put your request on the agenda for a subsequent meeting. In that case, thank them and sit down.
- Go to the meeting where you are formally on the agenda with another, more detailed handout for the audience and the decision makers.
- Speak on behalf of the resolution (see resources for a sample of what you might say).
- Organize some other community members to also speak in favor of adopting the resolution.
- Remain calm if criticized or rebuked. Repeat the BOW\$H mantra silently: “I am opening a space for this discussion to occur. Good for me!!!”
- In some cases, it may be best to contact potentially friendly decision makers in advance and invite their input into both the wording of the resolution and the process for trying to get it adopted.
- In some cases, it may be a good idea to notify the press that the matter will come before the decision making body.
- No matter what the outcome – the resolution passes, is tabled to a later date, fails, or they vote to “pass over” and not consider it – congratulate yourself on your effort and repeat the BOW\$H mantra: “I am opening a space for this discussion to occur. That is the goal.”

ASKING STATE LEGISLATORS TO SIGN A LETTER VERSION:

- Download and edit a BOW\$H resolution, then craft it into a letter from your state representatives and senators to your representative in the House.
- Contact your state rep and state senator and ask them to sign on to the letter.
- Ask your friends to do the same with their state reps and senators.
- Collect all the original signatures, then make a photocopy and send it to your rep in the House.
- Follow up with a phone call to find out if they received it, and what they plan to do about it.

MORE WAYS TO GET CONVERSATIONS STARTED IN YOUR COMMUNITY:

ONLINE COMMENTS 5 minute action:

- Find an article or letter to the editor about budget cuts, funding shortfalls, lack of essential services in your community.
- Write a comment or response letter pointing out that there is a solution: bring our war \$\$ home.
- Connect the dots for readers by estimating how many minutes of war in Afghanistan (at around \$48,000 per minute) would solve this particular funding crisis.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY 10 minute action:

- Download and print out a BOW\$H message that fits your audience (see example above and longer list below).
- Take the message to a location where a school or business has closed, or a budget cut meeting is being held.
- Create a photo or video of the message in the location.
- Upload your images to flickr or YouTube and share, share, share.

CALL-A-THON 1 hour action:

- Download and print out a BOW\$H message that fits your audience (see example above and longer list below).
- Download and print out flyer with key points about how military spending affects federal, state, local and school budgets.
- Take the message to a nearby public space such as the sidewalk in front of your local post office or grocery store.
- Ask passersby how they feel about defunding wars in order to fund education, bridge repairs, or another hot button issue for your community.
- If they agree that this is a workable solution, ask them if they would be willing to phone their congress critter using your cell phone. Provide them with a brief description of what will happen (e.g. "An operator will answer, you ask for Rep. George Martin, and a staffer will answer and take your message.")
- You can also have printed out simple talking points to support them in making the call.

PUBLIC CONTACT 2 hour action:

- Download and print out a BOW\$H message that fits your audience (see example above and longer list below).
- Crash your congress critter's fundraiser or other public appearance.
- Display your message, hand out flyers, and engage the critter in discussion if possible.

CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE VISIT 3 hour action:

- Download and print out a BOW\$H message that fits your audience (see example above and longer list below).
- Take the message to your congress critter's nearest district office.
- Ask the highest ranking staff member you can talk to to explain their boss's position on defunding wars in order to fund education, bridge repairs, or another hot button issue for your community.
- Create a video of the question and the answer.
- Upload your video to YouTube and share, share, share.

DRAW-A-THON 2 month action (this one is extra fun):

- Contact some artists and invite them to a Draw-a-thon to create images envisioning how the _____ billion your state has contributed to the wars so far could have been spent.
- Organize a venue and refreshments for the artists to work together for a day, if possible.
- Organize a pot luck supper for the public to view their work and celebrate their accomplishments. Invite poets and musicians to participate also.
- Contact the clerk's office of your state capitol building and reserve the space kept for delegations from the public.
- Organize a press conference with testimony from diverse groups – health care workers, social workers, educators, labor, students, indigenous groups, veterans, immigrants and other advocacy groups – about the effect of military spending on cuts to essential programs.
- Send a press release two weeks in advance of the conference, then remind them a couple of times before the date.
- Display the work of the artists in the state capitol building public space.
- Ask a few artists to hold a Draw-in to create images based on requests of passersby (“What would you spend \$2.5 billion on instead of war?”), especially kids if any are around, because kids have very cool ideas like hot air balloon rides.
- If possible, create a 'zine or brochure using some of the images and calling on state legislators to contact Congress about the need to cut military spending to fund other programs.
- Deliver the publication to the legislators. Let the press know you are going to do this, too.

CRAFTING A MESSAGE THAT'S EFFECTIVE FOR YOUR COMMUNITY:

These taglines can be customized to be effective with target audiences in your community. The fear of appearing (or being) unpatriotic may be a concern for your audience, for example.

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

How's the war economy working for you?

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

to make U.S. economy strong

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

for real national security

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

for needs at home

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

invest in U.S.A.

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

America needs them!

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

to make America strong

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

and bring our troops home

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

to strengthen America

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

because these wars are killing us

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

balance the budgets

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

because we need:
road & bridge repairs
health care
education
veteran's benefits
housing
green jobs

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

budget cuts? problem solved!

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

balance your town budget today

Bring Our War \$\$ Home to ME, Bring Our War \$\$ Home to CA, Bring Our War \$\$ Home to Albany, etc.

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

spend for peace

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

fund human needs, not corporate greed

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

No more debt for military spending.
Bring our troops home now!

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

so there's a future for the U.S.A.

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

fund green jobs and other needs

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

military spending is bankrupting U.S.

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

U.S. military budget not sustainable

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

let's have a peace economy, not a war economy

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

convert to peaceful production

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

fund jobs & housing

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

fund OUR economy

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

to run our country

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

and stop financing the Taleban

Bring Our War \$\$ Home

reduce the deficit



CLOSED June, 2010

Data to compute the price tag of war spending for your community:

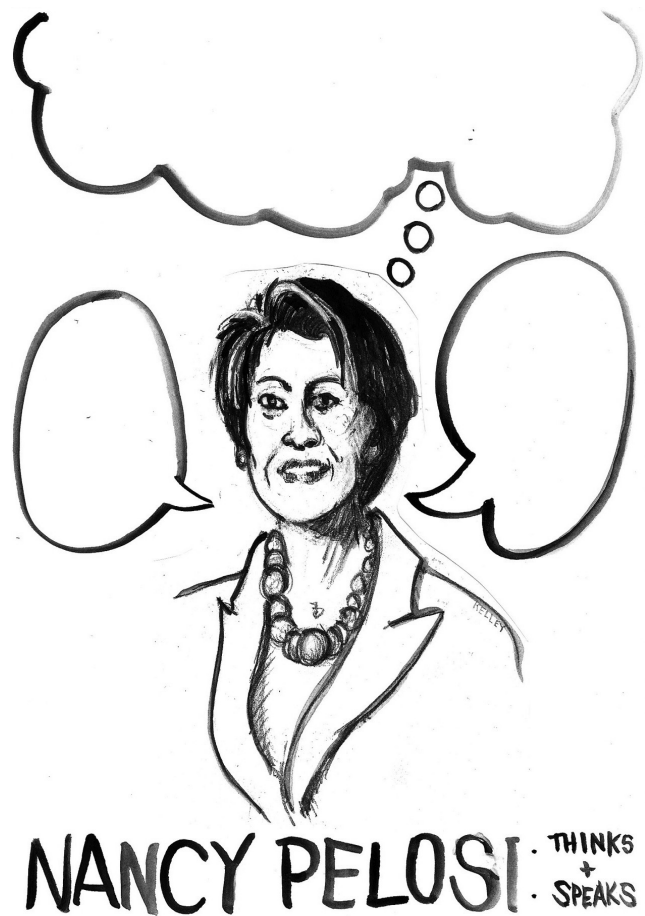
nationalpriorities.org

To see more images from Maine artists envisioning what our war \$\$ could have bought:

flickr.com/photos/mainedrawathon



Artist: Elizabeth Kelley



bringourwardollarshome.org

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