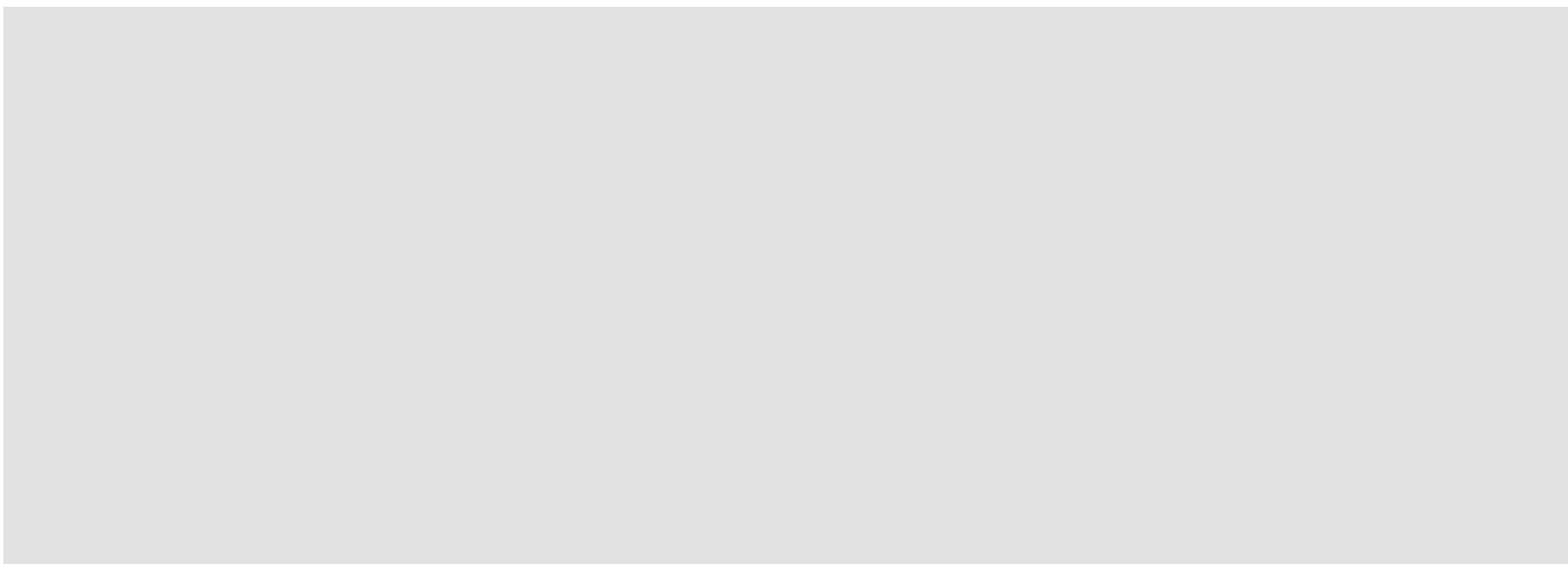


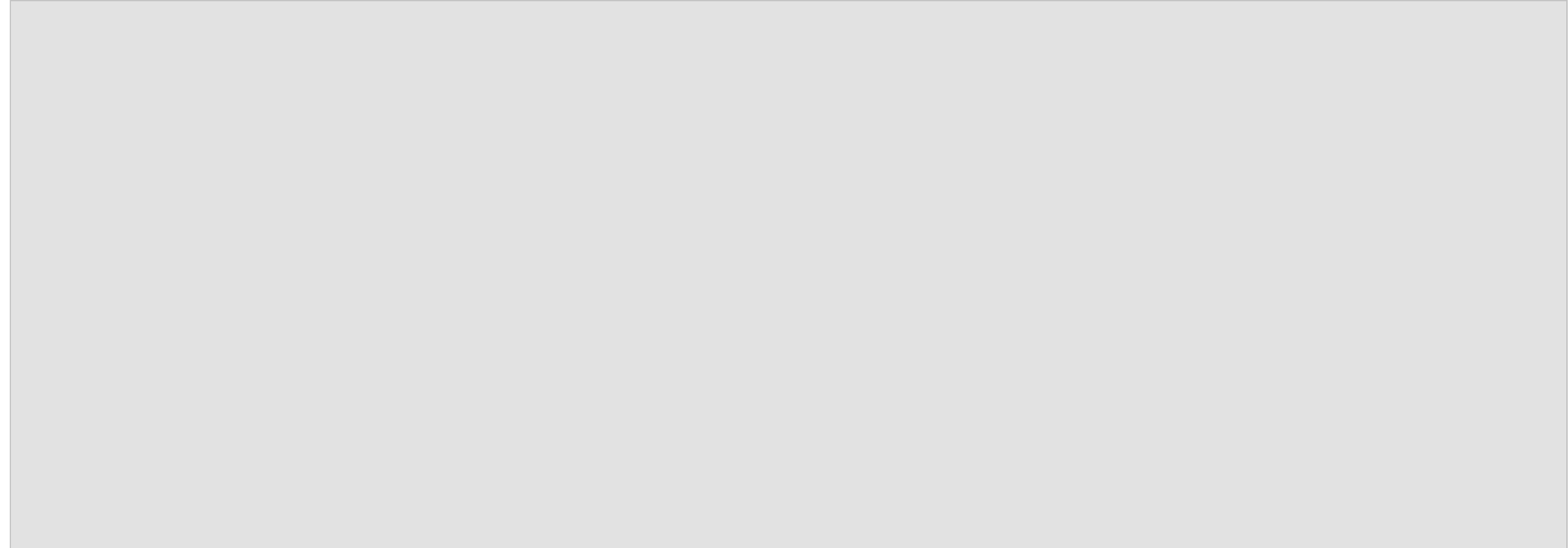
Pentagon & Congress

# First look — White House says GOP budget plan would harm defense

By Leo Shane III

Mar 24 at 05:00 AM





F/A-18 Super Hornets sit on the on USS Gerald R. Ford's flight deck on March 22, 2022. (Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nolan Pennington/Navy)

White House officials are accusing far-right Republican lawmakers of endangering national security with plans to severely limit federal spending in next year's budget.

In a national security statement first obtained by Military Times, administration officials said threatened Republican cuts to that budget would damage efforts to counter threats from China and Russia, set back plans to modernize the Navy and Air Force, and damage military planning by severely limiting defense spending.

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The Biden brushback is part of a coordinated Democratic response to defend the White House budget in anticipation of GOP attacks in months of Capital Hill debate to come. If a compromise on next year's budget can't be agreed upon by Oct. 1, it could trigger a partial

government shutdown, leading to canceled military training and furloughs of non-essential Defense Department personnel.

The administration is taking aim specifically at a plan backed by some House Freedom Caucus members to cap federal spending at 2022 levels.

“Their proposal could amount to a roughly \$600 billion reduction in funding for national defense over just the next five years compared to the president’s budget – undermining military readiness, weakening our deterrence against China, and impeding our ability to meet pressing global challenges, both now and in the future,” the statement says, adding that it would hinder investments in priorities such as the Pacific Deterrence Initiative and the procurement of critical munitions.

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While the White House statement asserts that Republicans are focused on across-the-board budget cuts – including to national security – top GOP lawmakers have called for higher defense spending in recent hearings.

Both House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mike Rogers, R-Ala., and Senate Armed Services Committee ranking member Roger Wicker, R-Miss., have called Biden’s \$842 billion military spending plan for next year “inadequate.”

On Thursday, during a Defense Department budget hearing, Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Calif., and

chairman of the House Appropriations Committee’s defense panel, told Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that “we’re going to work together to plus this somewhat” i.e. to raise defense spending even higher.

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The Biden administration is portraying plans from Republicans to gut the federal budget as jeopardizing national security.

By **Joe Gould**

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But the White House charges that the slimmed down budgets, as required by the 2022 spending proposal, would require the Navy to cut “at least two capital ships” while “eliminating a new Virginia class submarine and a new DDG-51 destroyer.” For the Air Force, the plan “would likely cause significant disruption and delays to the B-21 bomber program.”

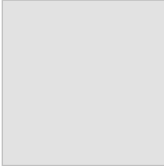
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In a statement connected to the White House release, House Appropriations Committee ranking member Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., echoed the administration’s concerns, saying that the proposed budget levels “put our national security at risk, undermine military readiness, break promises made to our allies, and gravely impact the brave women and men in uniform who defend our country.”

How the latest attack influences the budget debate remains unclear. Earlier in the day, during a House Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing on the White House budget plan, Republican lawmakers grew increasingly angry with Democratic members who accused them of aiming to trim defense and veterans program funding, and vowed to correct the record as budget negotiations continue through the summer.

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Pentagon officials have urged lawmakers from both parties to avoid a fall budget showdown, and warned against cutting too deeply into non-defense spending, while protecting military funding.

Pentagon Comptroller Mike McCord argued in a letter to lawmakers this week that non-defense spending cuts would be “just as harmful” to national security.

“Our whole-of-government response to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine clearly demonstrates the value of integrating security assistance, economic assistance, humanitarian assistance, sanctions and export controls,” McCord wrote. “No one agency could achieve the effects we are producing as a team, and deep cuts to any one of the agencies would undermine the effort as a whole.”

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## About [Leo Shane III](#)

Leo covers Congress, Veterans Affairs and the White House for Military Times. He has covered Washington, D.C. since 2004, focusing on military personnel and veterans policies. His work has earned numerous honors, including a 2009 Polk award, a 2010 National Headliner Award, the IAVA Leadership in Journalism award and the VFW News Media award.

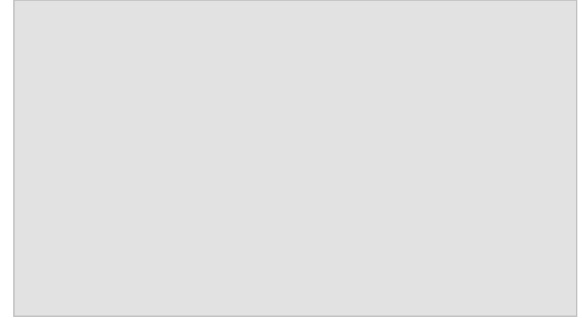
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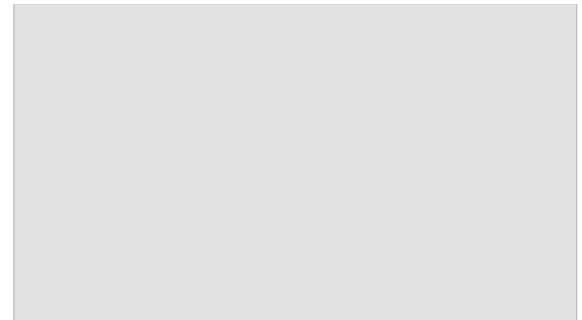
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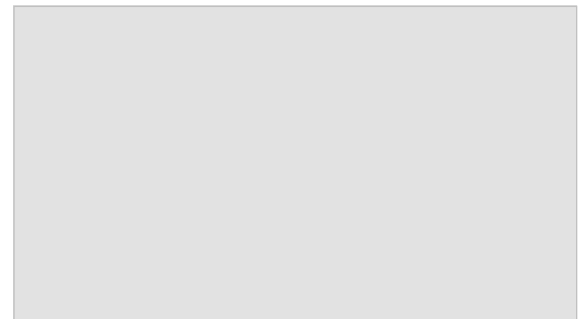
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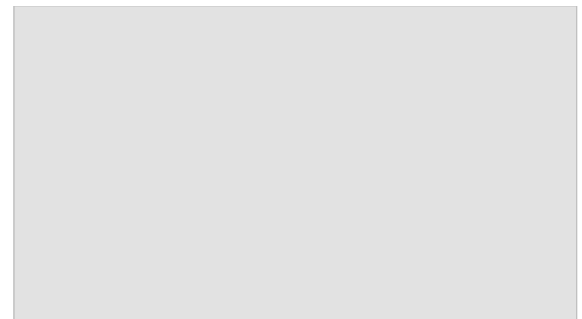
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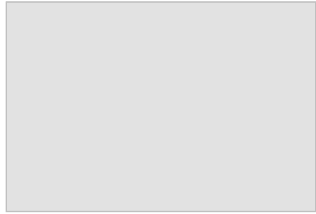
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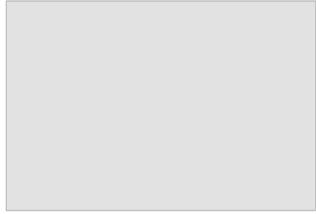


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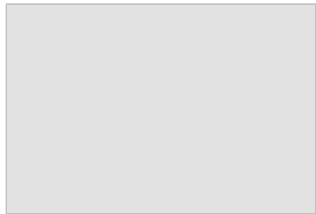
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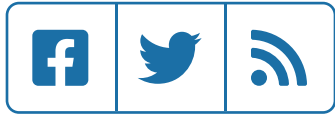
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