

Cut Funding for Non-Combat Related Research

SAVINGS IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016-2020	2016-2025
\$135	\$135	\$136	\$137	\$141	\$144	\$147	\$151	\$154	\$156	\$684	\$1,436

Heritage Recommendation:

The Defense Department should cut funding to research to programs that are not related to increasing military capabilities. This proposal saves \$135 million in 2016, and \$1.4 billion over 10 years.

Rationale:

The Defense Department has the largest research and development budget of the federal government, equaling just under \$70 billion a year. While the vast majority of this amount goes toward developing advanced military systems or technologies that have battlefield applications, each year, the DOD spends money on various projects that have no reason to be funded from the defense budget. In many cases, these projects are already being funded by other federal departments. For example, the DOD currently has \$45 million worth of grants available to support breast cancer research.¹⁷ Other examples include grants to promote science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, and prostate cancer research.

In addition, the DOD spends significant amounts of money on green-energy initiatives. While finding alternative fuels could be extremely beneficial to the troops and reduce DOD energy costs, these projects should be limited to those focused on providing cost-efficiencies, or improving warfighting capabilities. However, some of the DOD's programs are more focused on promoting green energy than military capabilities. One example is the current mandate that requires 25 percent of electricity used by the DOD to come from renewable sources by 2025. Congress should repeal this mandate.

Additional Reading:

- Senator Tom Coburn, "Department of Everything," November 2012, http://www.coburn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?a=Files.Serve&File_id=00783b5a-f0fe-4f80-90d6-019695e52d2d.
- Brian Slattery and Michaela Dodge, "Biofuel Blunder: Navy Should Prioritize Fleet Modernization over Political Initiatives," Heritage Foundation *Issue Brief* No. 4054, September 24, 2013, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2013/09/navy-s-green-fleet-a-biofuel-blunder>.
- Jack Spencer, "Capability, Not Politics, Should Drive DOD Energy Research," Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 3299, June 22, 2011, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2011/06/capability-not-politics-should-drive-dod-energy-research>.

Calculations:

Savings are expressed as budget authority and include a total of program and grant costs based on FY 2015 figures from "Department of Defense Budget Fiscal Year 2015: RDT&E Programs (R-1)," March 2014, http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2015/fy2015_r1.pdf, and open DOD grant opportunities found at Federal Grants, <http://www.federalgrants.com>. Total savings figures for 2016-2025 have been increased at the same rate as discretionary spending growth, according to the CBO's most recent August 2014 baseline.