

DeFazio has long advocated for constraint on using our Armed Forces. He is a recognized expert on Congress' constitutional prerogative to declare war and has fought for fiscal responsibility and accountability at the Pentagon so that scarce funds can be better spent on the basic needs of our troops, obligations to veterans of past wars, and other domestic priorities.

Click to jump to section

[Major Accomplishments](#) | [Afghanistan](#) | [Iraq](#) | [War Powers Resolution](#) | [Iran](#) | [Israel-Palestine Conflict](#) | [Human Rights](#)

Media: [Must Reads](#) | [Videos](#) | [Press Releases](#)

Major Accomplishments

Defense Budget Watchdog

Since 1990, the Department of Defense has spent \$10 trillion. Over the next six years, it will spend \$4 trillion more. Despite the fact that the Pentagon is the largest and most expensive department in the federal government, it has never passed a financial audit. In fact, under current law the Pentagon is exempt from a federal law that requires all federal agencies to complete annual audits. During consideration of the 2011 Defense spending bill, DeFazio offered and passed an amendment to end the special exemption, requiring the Pentagon to publicly disclose how it spends hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars each year.

Reforming Security Contracts

DeFazio has been a long-time critic of Pentagon weapons programs that are over-budget, behind schedule and irrelevant to fighting today's threats. He successfully fought to have the Army's over-budget, under-performing Comanche Helicopter program cancelled. DeFazio continues to serve as a watchdog over Pentagon spending to ensure federal resources are being used to support U.S. troops and their missions instead of serving the needs of weapons contractors.

[top ↑](#)

Afghanistan

DeFazio has been an outspoken critic of the war in Afghanistan. He adamantly opposed the Obama escalation of the war and has repeatedly voted in Congress to bring a responsible end to the open-ended conflict. DeFazio called on both the Bush and Obama Administrations to provide a clear exit strategy and to move towards a less expensive, less troop intensive policy that could bring about more successful and strategic results. He continues to advocate for investing the \$100 billion the U.S. spends in Afghanistan each year in America's economy, infrastructure, and education system.

[top ↑](#)

Iraq

DeFazio has a long and consistent record opposing the war in Iraq. He voted against the original authorization for the war in October 2002 after rejecting the Bush Administration's bogus arguments about weapons of mass destruction and ties to al-Qaeda. DeFazio introduced legislation in February 2003 to repeal the congressional authorization of the Iraq war before it started and has repeatedly sponsored bills to mandate a safe and orderly withdrawal of U.S.

troops.

[top ↑](#)

War Powers Resolution

DeFazio is a recognized expert and a public watchdog on Congress' constitutional prerogative to declare war. The War Powers Resolution was passed by Congress after the Vietnam War to check the power of the President in committing U.S. forces in armed conflict. Only Congress has the constitutional authority to declare war and as a co-equal branch of the federal government, DeFazio has insisted that Congress fulfill its constitutional responsibilities and obligations. Unfortunately, over the last several decades Congress has outsourced its war powers to the executive branch, giving administrations unchecked authority to unilaterally commit U.S. forces to armed conflict. After President Obama committed U.S. forces in Libya, DeFazio introduced legislation requiring the President to acquire Congressional authorization for any conflict lasting more than 60 days.

[top ↑](#)

Iran

DeFazio has serious concerns about Iran's support for terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, its drive to undermine U.S. interests in Iraq and the region, and its pursuit of developing nuclear weapons. DeFazio supports a policy of containment through active diplomacy, working with U.S. allies in Europe, and imposing severe multilateral economic sanctions on the Iranian regime. DeFazio was an original cosponsor of the Iranian sanctions signed into law by President Obama.

[top ↑](#)

Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an emotional and complicated dispute. Both sides passionately believe the actions of the other are illegal under international law and consider the lands under dispute to be their ancestral home. The conflict is further complicated by religious, political, and economic differences. The United States has an interest to ensure a lasting peace is reached between Israel and Palestine. DeFazio believes this can only be accomplished through a two-state solution, which will require a much more assertive role by the U.S. in bringing Israeli and Palestinian leaders to the negotiating table.

[top ↑](#)

Human Rights

As a long-time member of the Human Rights Caucus, DeFazio is a vocal critic of the use of torture and supports the permanent closure of the prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He believes Guantanamo contradicts American values, undermines U.S. diplomatic and military missions, strains our relationship with key allies, and puts Americans traveling or living abroad at risk.

DeFazio also firmly believes the U.S. government can protect the United States without trampling on the U.S. Constitution. DeFazio opposed the Military Commissions Act of 2006, which illegally established trial procedures for detainees held at Guantanamo and provided immunity to administration officials that authorized torture. DeFazio also voted against the USA PATRIOT Act, legislation that dramatically expanded executive powers to conduct intrusive surveillance, including on Americans, without safeguards or congressional oversight. DeFazio is working with his colleagues in the House of Representatives to ensure that while we fight terrorism at home and abroad, we do not unduly trample on the rights of law abiding citizens.

[top ↑](#)

Must Reads

[DeFazio-- US Military Deployed at World War II Levels](#) *KLCC*, June 30, 2011

[EDITORIAL: The War Over War Powers](#) *Register-Guard*, June 2, 2011

[DeFazio Explains His Vote Against War Funding](#) *Albany Democrat Herald*, May 25, 2007

[EDITORIAL: Answer the questions- Bush has yet to adequately justify Iraq war](#) *Register-Guard*
, September
12, 2002

[top ↑](#)

Videos

[_ top ↑](#)

Press Releases

03.19.11: [DeFazio Demands Obama Seek Military Authorization Under War Powers Act](#)

06.24.10: [DeFazio Urges New Policy In Afghanistan](#)

04.24.07: [DeFazio Votes to Support U.S. Troops and Veterans and Bring an End to the Iraq War](#)

03.23.07: [DeFazio Votes for a Bill to End Iraq War, Refocus Military Efforts in Afghanistan](#)

01.11.07: [DeFazio Statement on President Bush's Call for Escalation of War in Iraq](#)

01.09.07: [FLOOR STATEMENT: Extensions of Remarks on Ending the War in Iraq](#)

06.21.06: [DeFazio Offers War Powers Amendment To Defense Appropriations Bill](#)

06.16.06: [DeFazio Opposes Partisan Iraq Resolution](#)

02.05.03: [DeFazio, Paul Introduce Bill to Repeal Bush's Blank Check For War](#)

10.10.02: [DeFazio Votes Against Iraq Resolution](#)

10.07.02: [DeFazio Responds to Bush Speech on Iraq](#)

[top ↑](#)

