

U.S. House Backs \$848 Billion Defense Bill with Pay Hike, Ukraine Aid, and Procurement Reform

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The U.S. House Armed Services Committee has advanced an \$848 billion defense authorization bill that includes a military pay raise, enhanced support for troops' families, and funding to assist Ukraine. The legislation aligns with the Trump administration's proposed defense

budget and reflects a broader commitment to American military strength and operational readiness.

One of the key provisions in the bill is a 3.8 percent increase in pay for members of the U.S. Armed Forces, aimed at addressing inflationary pressures and improving recruitment and retention across all service branches. In addition, the monthly family separation allowance is slated to rise from \$250 to \$400, a move that directly supports service members deployed away from their loved ones. These provisions indicate a meaningful effort to prioritize the welfare of military personnel, a cornerstone of conservative defense policy.

The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) also allocates continued funding to support Ukraine's defense against Russian aggression, reaffirming bipartisan consensus on maintaining America's global leadership. While some have voiced concerns about the scope of foreign aid, the inclusion of Ukraine funding underscores the strategic imperative of countering adversaries abroad rather than waiting for threats to reach American soil.

Procurement reform features prominently in the bill, with lawmakers pressing the Pentagon to speed up modernization and streamline acquisitions. This effort follows persistent complaints about costly delays and inefficiencies in defense contracting. Conservative lawmakers have long advocated for a more agile and accountable Department of Defense (DoD), and this bill marks progress toward that goal.

The House version of the bill is in line with the administration's \$848 billion defense top-line figure, while the Senate Armed Services Committee has proposed a higher budget of \$879 billion. Lawmakers will

need to reconcile these differences before the legislation becomes law. Despite fiscal concerns from some quarters, many Republicans argue that a well-funded military remains essential in the face of rising threats from China, Russia, and rogue regimes.

Additional provisions prohibit the restoration of Confederate names on U.S. military installations, continuing previous bipartisan efforts to modernize the military's public image while maintaining unit cohesion.

Overall, the bill demonstrates a balanced approach, supporting military families, confronting geopolitical threats, and demanding efficiency from the Pentagon. It reinforces core principles of national security, personal responsibility, and American leadership, ideals that resonate well beyond party lines.