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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8014

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State of Washington

62nd Legislature

2012 Regular Session

By Senator Chase

Read first time 01/19/12. Referred to Committee on Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections.

1 TO THE HONORABLE BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND  
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
5 SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH STATE'S  
6 LEGISLATURE:

7 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of  
8 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully  
9 represent and petition as follows:

10 WHEREAS, Our State, as most others, faces the most severe economic  
11 crisis since the Great Depression; and

12 WHEREAS, The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics cites an  
13 October 2011 unemployment rate of 9 percent in the State of Washington,  
14 yet closer to 30 percent are unemployed if residents who have exhausted  
15 their benefits and given up hope of finding a job are counted; and

16 WHEREAS, The poverty rate in Washington State is 11.7 percent; and

17 WHEREAS, State support for community-based businesses that hire  
18 locally, and the ability of workers to earn wages that exceed a  
19 subsistence rate, are keys to economic recovery in Washington State;  
20 and

1           WHEREAS, Since fiscal year 2001, taxpayers in the State of  
2 Washington have paid 26 billion dollars toward the total spending for  
3 the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; and

4           WHEREAS, Taxpayers in the State of Washington will pay an  
5 additional 3.5 billion dollars toward total Iraq and Afghanistan war  
6 spending for fiscal year 2011, bringing the total war spending bill for  
7 Washington State taxpayers to 29.5 billion dollars; and

8           WHEREAS, One year of taxpayer war spending dollars could have  
9 alternately built our state infrastructure by creating 48,461 school  
10 teacher jobs, hiring 45,205 firefighters, creating enough jobs to  
11 convert 1.3 million households to solar energy, creating 42,585 new  
12 police or sheriff's patrol officer positions, or providing 113,000  
13 four-year university scholarships; and

14           WHEREAS, 11.7 percent of soldiers who fought in Iraq and  
15 Afghanistan are unemployed, with many having inadequate support to  
16 adjust to civilian life; and

17           WHEREAS, Counties with military facilities are experiencing the  
18 highest foreclosure rates in Washington State, and the already high  
19 number of homeless veterans is increasing; and

20           WHEREAS, In February 2011, the State Legislature passed House Bill  
21 No. 1432 relating to veterans' relief by permitting private employers  
22 to exercise a voluntary veterans' preference in employment; and

23           WHEREAS, For every 1 billion dollars spent on the military 11,600  
24 jobs are created; yet for the same 1 billion dollars 17,100 jobs are  
25 created by investments in clean energy, 19,600 jobs are created by  
26 funding health care, or 29,100 jobs are created from spending on  
27 education; and

28           WHEREAS, United States military spending has more than doubled  
29 since 2000; and

30           WHEREAS, The proposed fiscal year 2012 military budget is 703  
31 billion dollars, with military spending by other agencies raising that  
32 total to more than 1 trillion dollars; and

33           WHEREAS, Adjusting for inflation, the level of funding proposed for  
34 the base defense budget in the fiscal year 2012 request comprises 60  
35 percent of the national discretionary budget, the highest level since  
36 World War II; and

37           WHEREAS, The United States military budget presently represents 43

1 percent of worldwide military spending, distantly followed by China  
2 (7.3 percent of world share), the United Kingdom (3.7 percent), France  
3 (3.6 percent), and Russia (3.6 percent); and

4 WHEREAS, The Washington State Governor and Legislature have had to  
5 cut nearly 10.5 billion dollars from current and projected spending  
6 with another 1.4 billion dollars in reductions looming, resulting in  
7 significant job losses and cuts to vital programs; and

8 WHEREAS, Projected revenues for Washington State continue to  
9 plummet, depleting our state reserves; and

10 WHEREAS, This drain on the public treasury is bleeding our state  
11 and forcing increasingly severe cuts in vital social programs and  
12 public services, resulting in the inability of state government to  
13 support job creation and meet the most basic needs of our people, while  
14 producing ever-greater debt that will be borne by future generations;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the United  
16 States Congress and the President change course by ending the war in  
17 Afghanistan: Dramatically shifting our national priorities to create  
18 stable jobs at living wages for all who seek employment; restoring  
19 vital social programs and public services; rebuilding our nation's  
20 deteriorating infrastructure; and putting our nation on an  
21 environmentally sustainable, ecologically responsible path that  
22 addresses the challenge of climate change and environmental degradation  
23 while reinvigorating jobs and our economy.

24 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately  
25 transmitted to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United  
26 States, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of  
27 Representatives of each state's legislature, the President of the  
28 United States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and  
29 each member of Congress from the State of Washington.

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