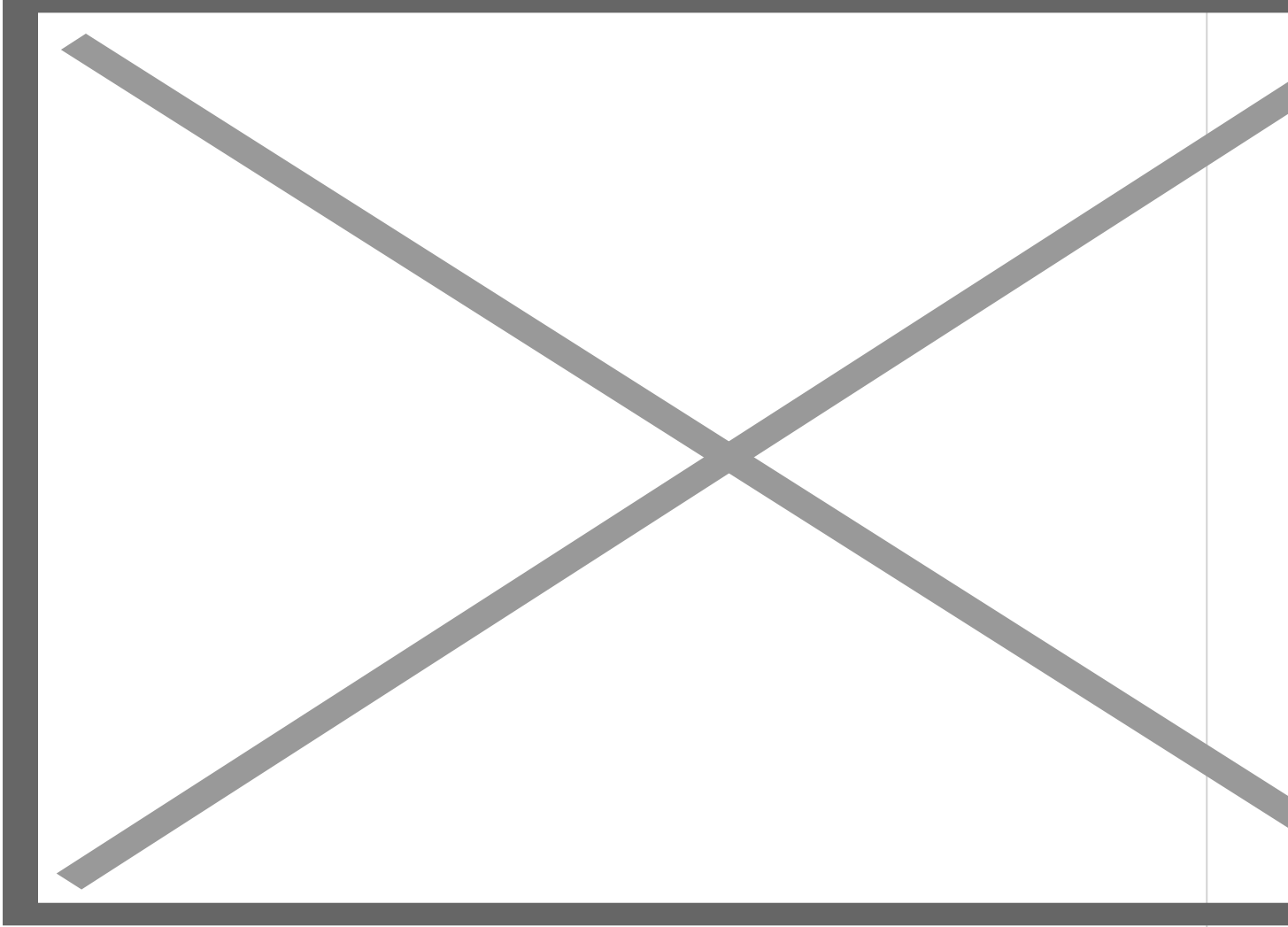


U.S. Congress approves increased \$768 billion Pentagon budget, rejecting calls to cut military spending

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U.S. Congress has approved increasing the Pentagon's budget even though the U.S. recently pulled combat troops out of Afghanistan, ending the longest war in U.S. history.

Washington, September 25 (RHC)-- On Capitol Hill, the House has approved increasing the Pentagon's budget even though the U.S. recently pulled combat troops out of Afghanistan, ending the longest war in U.S. history.

On Thursday, a bipartisan group of lawmakers voted in support of a \$768 billion Pentagon budget as part of the National Defense Authorization Act -- which was \$25 billion more than President Biden had sought.

The House rejected two amendments to trim the Pentagon's budget and an amendment to prohibit the military from transferring firearms, military vehicles and aircraft to local police departments.

House lawmakers have also voted to approve \$1 billion in new military funds for Israel despite accusations from human rights groups that Israel committed war crimes during its recent assault on Gaza.

The congressional funding is being given to help Israel replenish its Iron Dome missile defense system, which is built in part by the U.S. military contractor Raytheon. Eight Democrats voted against the measure, including Michigan's Rashida Tlaib, the first Palestinian American congresswoman.

Rep. Rashida Tlaib said: "I rise in opposition to this supplemental. I will not support an effort to enable and support war crimes, human rights abuses and violence. We cannot be talking only about Israelis' need for safety at a time when Palestinians are living under a violent apartheid system and are dying from what Human Rights Watch has said are war crimes. We should also be talking about Palestinian need for security from Israeli attacks. We must be consistent in our commitment to human life, period. Everyone deserves to be safe there."

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