



***Peacebuilding is
in our hands.***

WHAT TO SAY

When You Ask Congress To Support a Department of Peacebuilding



It is time to build peace and compassion into our decisions and actions at every level -- including at the level of our federal government. Make peacebuilding a national priority by creating a cabinet-level U.S. Department of Peacebuilding.

YOU Can Make a Difference

Be a mover and shaker in promoting the Department of Peacebuilding legislation (DoP/ HR 1111) and gaining Congressional cosponsors for a DoP which is sponsored by Congresswoman Barbara Lee (CA-13). **You don't have to be an expert. You just need persistence and conviction about the importance of this legislation.**

You can make a difference by **calling and writing your member of Congress and any other members of Congress.** To find your member of Congress, call the Congressional switchboard at (202-224-3121) or [Find Your Representative](#). To determine if a member of Congress already cosponsors: [Department of Peacebuilding Cosponsors \(117th Congress\)](#)

WHAT to Say

When you call or write to a member of Congress, you may want to use this sample script and to elaborate on the needs and themes that make a DoP so relevant. **See reverse side for more suggestions.**

Sample script: "My name is _____. I am a constituent **or** I am an individual who is very concerned about the violence in this country and internationally **or** I am one of thousands of Peace Alliance supporters. The Department of Peacebuilding legislation (HR 1111) addresses the root causes of violence by researching solutions and promoting policies and programs that already work. It is cost effective and will save lives and money. **Please make peace a national priority by cosponsoring this legislation. To do this, contact Rep. Barbara Lee's office (202-225-2661).**" Ask for the email address of a legislative staffer and then write to that person.

Needs. We need a Department of Peacebuilding to:

- Focus comprehensively on **preventing violence** domestically and internationally
- Save lives and money as nonviolence is proven **practical and cost effective**
- Expand civilian capacity for peacebuilding and **nonviolent conflict intervention**
- Promote and fund the many community-based violence prevention "**best practices**"
- Uniformly teach **violence prevention & mediation** skills to America's school children
- Address root causes of terrorism to **enhance homeland security**

REPORT YOUR CALLS TO US

Please let us know who you called by emailing nancy@peacealliance.org.

Each call/ each email takes only a few moments ... time well spent to build peace ...
(See reverse side)

WHAT ELSE TO SAY TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Violence is costly and impacts all.

The 2020 Global Peace Index, ranks the peacefulness of the U.S. at 121 among 163 nations. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimated the U.S. per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as \$63,415. The World Health Organization estimates the cost of violence in the U.S. as 3.3% of GDP, or \$2,092 for every man, woman and child in our nation. **Every hour, U.S. taxpayers pay \$32.08 million for the Total Cost of Wars since 2001.**

Data collected in the National Crime Victimization Survey shows that **10,000 hate crimes involving guns occur in the United State each year.** Each of those hate crimes involves not only the perpetrator and the victim(s), but also traumatizes the loved ones and friends and, ultimately, the community of all of us. Many of the deadliest mass-shooting perpetrators have a history of threatening, committing, or verbalizing domestic violence. Multiply this out, and **hate crime shootings alone involve hundreds of thousands of people on both sides of the gun every year.** For 2021, U.S. taxpayers are paying \$740 billion to the military. If we spent that amount on human services, we could fund health care for almost 70 million low income adults, almost 70 million head start slots, and create more than 3 million clean energy jobs, all of which are conditions of peace.

Peace is priceless.

Peace is truly priceless and the available studies show that **preventive interventions to stop interpersonal violence save more than they cost**, in some cases by several orders of magnitude. For instance, the 1994 Violence Against Women Act in the USA resulted in an estimated net benefit of \$16.4 billion, including \$14.8 billion in averted victim's costs.

A DoP promotes a sustainable global society.

Destruction of the natural world is often driven by greed and the desire to maximize profits, but it is also driven by inequality, poverty, and poor management which leaves people with few other options. We are already struggling with the consequences of mass migration due to poverty and violence. The DoP would help us join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. **Peacebuilding is working together with all nations to protect both life and land and hold the Earth in balance.**

We all want safe and prosperous lives for ourselves and our children.

In its preamble, it states that among the purposes for establishing the U.S. Constitution are “*to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility . . .*” Yet there is no cabinet-level Department that focuses on insuring domestic tranquility. The DoP will address the need to bring our citizens and nation into collaborative relationship with each other and with the natural world.

A DoP recognizes that systemic racism is a key obstacle to peace & driver of violence in the U.S.

A DoP would respond to the growing awareness of the enduring traumas to our citizens from systemic injustice that continues to this day and would support local community initiatives that draw on neighborhood resources to create peace projects that facilitate the **development of conflict resolution and healing of societal wounds** such as patriarchy, racism, war, manifest destiny, and economic injustice to thereby inform and inspire national policy.

A DoP is an all-hands-on-deck approach to peacebuilding.

A DoP is an all-hands-on-deck approach in recognition of the fact that we are all part of the problem and, more importantly, are part of the solution. There are many solutions to the problems we face individually and collectively. A DoP would research, disseminate, promote and fund programs and policies that are effective in creating peace at all levels. **Having the tools to build peace will give all citizens response-ability and hope** in a time when many U.S. citizens feel hopeless and helpless to effect change. For instance, the City-County Neighborhood Initiative to engage residents from the Sobrante Park neighborhood in Oakland, CA in community-strengthening efforts like neighbor-to-neighbor bartering and youth economic development programs resulted in a 40% reduction in Sobrante Park's violent crime in its first three years, even while overall rates of violent crime in Oakland increased.

It is past time to establish a Department of Peacebuilding to reduce suffering on a national and global scale while saving billions of dollars through violence reduction and increased economic productivity.

– Congresswoman Barbara Lee

(For more information, see [Department of Peacebuilding](#) & www.peacealliance.org/)