

FAQ: DIVESTMENT FROM WEAPONS

Talking Points & Responses to Common Objections

Which weapons companies should we divest from?

Our recommended [divest list](#)¹ is the top 100 weapons manufacturers, based on data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Arms Industry Database.²

But I know of products those companies make that are not weapons. What gives?

Boeing does make passenger aircraft such as the B-737. However, Boeing is not only one of the biggest Pentagon contractors but it also sells bombers to other countries including brutal dictatorships, such as Saudi Arabia. Honeywell does make building control and security systems to keep building occupants comfortable and safe. However, Honeywell is a major purveyor of advanced weapons systems including missile guidance systems.

Isn't military spending good for the economy?

According to a study by Heidi Garrett-Peltier of the Political Economy Research Institute, investments in healthcare, education, and clean energy create more jobs — and in many cases, better-paying jobs — than military sector spending.³

How feasible is it to pass a weapons divestment resolution?

Divestment is doable! New York City, NY;⁴ Burlington, VT;⁵ Charlottesville, VA;⁶ San Luis Obispo, CA;⁷ Stuttgart, Germany;⁸ Münster, Germany⁹ and many more cities have passed resolutions to divest their municipalities from weapons. Lichtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, and Switzerland have adopted nuclear weapons divestment policies on the national level.¹⁰ And dozens of financial institutions worldwide have divested from nukes.¹¹

Weapons help protect us. Doesn't divestment from weapons make us less safe and vulnerable to attacks?

Violence provokes violence. According to the Global Terrorism Index, terrorism (that is, non-state, politically motivated violence) actually increased during the U.S.'s so-called "war on terror." Numerous journalists, federal intelligence analysts, and former military officials have warned that U.S. military interventions, including the drone program, may actually cause an increase in terrorist strength and activity, generating more violence than they prevent. Research from Peace Science Digest shows that the deployment of troops and weapons exports to another country increase the chance of attacks from terror organizations from that country. Further, a 2013 Gallup poll of 65 nations found the United States to be considered the largest threat to peace in the world, underscoring the hatred and blowback that results from U.S. war-making.¹²

What are the alternatives to weapons investments?

- According to the US SIF, research indicates that sustainable and ESG (Environmental Social Governance) funds pose little financial risk. On average over the long-term, sustainable investment funds achieve comparable or even better financial returns than conventional investments.¹³ Underscoring this point, a study done by Cornerstone Investment Partners for Charlottesville, VA showed that divestment from weapons and fossil fuels would have a negligible financial impact on the city's retirement fund portfolio.¹⁴
- Instead of propping up the Wall Street economy, the student-led [Towards a People's Endowment](#) campaign recommends a community impact investing strategy that infuses capital into local projects that provide social and/or environmental benefits.¹⁵ Community investments have low correlation with traditional asset classes, hedging against market downturns and systemic risks in the economy. What's more, they offer financial benefits such as portfolio diversification, which supports risk mitigation.¹⁶
- [WeaponFreeFunds.org](#), [CODEPINK \(divestfromwarmachine.org/divestbanks\)](#), & [dontbankonthebomb.com](#) offer helpful lists of financial institutions, mutual funds, and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) that aren't invested in weapons.

Learn more & get involved in World BEYOND War's Divestment campaign at worldbeyondwar.org/divest

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