

## Cruz's Gargantuan Military Budget

Daniel Larson

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Benjamin Friedman criticizes Ted Cruz's plan for a gargantuan military budget. Here he describes what the plan would cost:

Cruz says that as President he'll spend 4.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on defense for two years, and 4 percent thereafter. As the chart below shows, under standard growth predictions, **Cruz's plan produces a massive increase in military spending: about \$1.2 trillion over what would be Cruz's first term and \$2.6 trillion over eight years**[bold mine-DL]. Details on the chart are at the end of this post.

Cruz would spend this on large increases in the size of the Army and the Marines while adding at least another sixty-odd ships to the Navy and 1,000 planes to the Air Force. The plan also includes the extraordinarily costly modernization of the entire nuclear triad. Needless to say, Cruz doesn't come close to explaining how this would be paid for, and we know in advance that he won't raise taxes to pay for it, so we can safely assume that this massive and unnecessary expansion of the military would be funded through borrowing. It isn't surprising that Cruz's ostensible fiscal conservatism goes out the window when it comes to the Pentagon. That's standard for typical hawkish Republicans. It is nonetheless striking that he proposes to rack up trillions more in debt for the sake of building up a military that doesn't need to be built up. One almost imagines that Cruz thinks that increased military spending is what Republican presidents should do simply because that's what Reagan did.

As Friedman goes on to explain, Cruz's budget is a classic case of simply throwing more money at the Pentagon without rhyme or reason:

Cruz's force structure suggestions also lack a strategic basis. Cruz criticizes nation-building wars and worries about China. But rather than distribute his buildup accordingly by focusing it on the Navy and Air Force, he gives equally to the ground forces. Ultimately, Cruz proposes spending a lot more to do what we are now doing.

Cruz would take an already bloated military budget and make it even more wasteful and extravagant.