

The Washington Post

Judging the Defense Department's budget

Benjamin Friedman

December 9, 2016

The article “Pentagon hid study revealing \$125 billion in waste” said that “under the 2011 Budget Control Act, the Pentagon will be forced to stomach \$113 billion in automatic cuts over four years.” The act actually imposes caps, which amount to budget cuts only when compared with what the Pentagon would like to spend. In reality, the caps will keep spending growing at about the pace of inflation.

The article also said that the report's estimated savings “could have paid a large portion of the bill to rebuild the nation's aging nuclear arsenal.” The arsenal is aging, but, contrary to the implication here, we've maintained it well over the years, and considerable sums are budgeted to pay for its modernization.

Benjamin Friedman, Washington

The writer is a research fellow in defense and homeland security studies at the Cato Institute.