

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 22, 2025

The Honorable Phillip Swagel
Director, Congressional Budget Office
Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dr. Swagel:

We are writing to request a formal cost assessment of the recent executive order issued by President Donald Trump on September 5, 2025, titled “*Restoring the United States Department of War*.” This directive authorizes the Department of Defense to adopt the secondary title “Department of War” in official correspondence, ceremonial contexts, and internal communications, despite the fact that the statutory name remains unchanged.

As you are aware, only an act of Congress can legally rename a federal department. The Trump administration’s unilateral move to introduce a parallel, unofficial designation for the department risks confusion, redundancy, and unnecessary cost expenditure.

Given the Trump administration’s repeated emphasis on fiscal restraint—particularly its aggressive use of illegal impoundments and now, unconstitutional pocket rescissions—this symbolic renaming is both wasteful and hypocritical. It appears to prioritize political theater over responsible governance, while diverting resources from core national security functions.

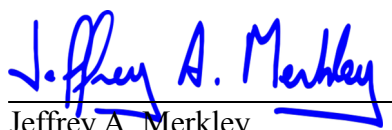
We respectfully request that CBO assess the projected costs associated with implementing this executive order, including but not limited to:

1. Administrative and personnel costs for updating titles, forms, and communications,
2. Procurement costs for signage, branding, and ceremonial materials,
3. Interagency coordination and compliance costs,
4. Website redesign and digital infrastructure updates, and
5. Any other anticipated downstream costs.

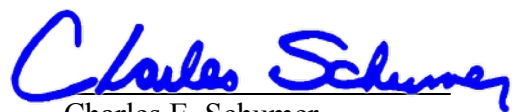
This analysis will help Congress evaluate the fiscal implications of symbolic executive actions and ensure that taxpayer dollars are being used efficiently and effectively.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



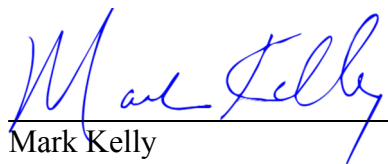
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



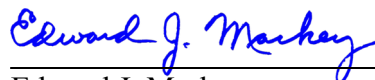
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator