

Defense Secretary Robert Gates says military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan would cost almost \$136 billion for the 2009 budget year that began Oct. 1 if they continue at their current pace.

Speaking for neither his current boss, President George W. Bush — nor his future one, President-elect Barack Obama — Gates told top lawmakers in a New Year's Eve letter that the Pentagon would need nearly \$70 billion more to supplement the \$66 billion approved last year.

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