

Letter: Wars have already sent us over the fiscal cliff

To the community,

There is loud chatter on the national stage about going over the fiscal cliff if there's no action soon. It's a bit late because we've already marched over the cliff to the tune of "Yankee Doodle Dandy" in Afghanistan.

In 2006, congressional researchers estimated it cost \$390,000 per soldier per year in Afghanistan. By 2009, the cost had increased to \$1 million per year.



Bill Crawford

In Baltimore in June 2011, at the annual meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the mayors called for an end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and use the \$126 billion annual savings to rebuild U.S. cities. The mayor of Los Angeles said, "That we could build bridges in Baghdad and Kandahar and not Baltimore and Kansas City absolutely boggles the mind."

The fiscal cost is immense. And the random wholesale killing of civilians by U.S. soldiers and drones is morally outrageous. Spiritually, we have come close to bankruptcy.

I believe our city should by resolution call for a quick end to our wars in the Middle East. And our city should call upon the League of California Cities to call for an end to the

wars.

For most our history it was the policy of our government not to fight land wars in Asia. Let's return to that policy and save ourselves.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe

PS: Our global network of bases and 255,000 overseas troops costs about \$250 billion annually.