

**REAUTHORIZATION OF THE CORPORATION FOR
NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

HEARING

OF THE

**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

EXAMINING PROPOSED LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING FUNDS FOR THE
INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM OF LIBRARY SERVICES ACT

APRIL 9, 2002

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TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2002

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 o'clock a.m., in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Edward M. Kennedy (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Kennedy, Mikulski, Jeffords, Wellstone, and Gregg.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR KENNEDY

The CHAIRMAN. Good morning. We will come to order.

Today's hearing is about one of the greatest strengths of the American people—our willingness to lend a helping hand to our neighbors, our communities, our Nation, and our world.

We have welcomed and aided refugees. We have joined the Peace Corps. We have volunteered at soup kitchens, places of worship, community centers, and schools.

Now, with September 11, that great spirit of volunteerism is stirring in Americans once again. We saw ordinary Americans risk their lives to help others. And no citizen could experience that tragic day without a renewed commitment to country, to community, to family.

That is why today's hearing is so important. It is about our Government's programs to provide Americans with ways to express our common spirit through voluntary service. Our challenge today is to match the demand for service by our citizens with meaningful opportunities to make a difference in people's lives.

But in many ways, we are still missing the mark. A recent study by Robert Putnam at Harvard University found that interest in service has risen in recent months, but only one in seven Americans is volunteering regularly—the same level of service as a decade ago.

Clearly, we must do more to make Americans aware of service opportunities. A citizen's first encounter when wanting to serve should not be a confusing Federal bureaucracy. We should look at ways to create easy pathways so that every American can serve.

It is now almost a decade since Congress created the Corporation for National Service to enhance opportunities for all Americans to contribute to their communities by actively engaging in local service programs. Every week, I have the privilege of reading with a

student in Washington at the Brent School in a program that my colleague and friend, Senator Jeffords, brought to the District, Everybody Wins. I have seen her impressive progress during the last 5 years, and I know firsthand that those who engage in community service gain as much as they give.

The Corporation for National Service has greatly expanded opportunities to serve for people of all ages. Since 1996, over 150,000 adults have committed a year of service through AmeriCorps. These Corps members have tutored and mentored students, rebuilt communities, and improved the lives of people of all ages.

And AmeriCorps is just part of the success story. Nearly 300,000 talented senior citizens have contributed over 125 million hours of service, giving back to the communities that they helped to build over their lifetimes.

One of the most impressive projects of all is the Learn and Serve program. The Corporation supports programs for more than 1.5 million students to integrate community service into the academic curriculum. According to the Learning in Deed study conducted by the Glenn Commission and the Kellogg Foundation earlier this year, service learning helps students to develop an enduring sense of civic and social responsibility, improves student engagement in schools, and can lead to improved achievement.

We know that lifelong habits of service have to begin at an early age. Young children who see the positive difference that they can make in their communities will want to continue to make that difference throughout their lives.

Since 1995, the appropriations for Learn and Serve have remained at \$43 million. We need to expand this vital program so that every school that wants to begin a program can get the technical assistance that it needs.

I am encouraged that the President has called on Americans of every generation to serve their communities. I commend him for making service to our communities and to our country a priority in his administration.

The programs created by the Corporation for National Service are key avenues of service available to all Americans through the State commissions, groups such as City Year or Public Allies that are funded directly by the Corporation, America's Promise, and the Points of Light Foundation. These programs have gained impressive community and corporate support and created new opportunities to serve. Let us build on that support and take service to the next level.

I recognize my friend and colleague from New Hampshire, Senator Gregg.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR GREGG

Senator GREGG. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate you holding this hearing, and I want to join you in supporting the emphasis which the President has placed on service, public service and community service, in his administration and bringing forward this concept of the USA Freedom Corps.

The initiative, in my opinion, is exactly right for our times. After the events of September 11, I think that as a Nation, we appreciate even more the significance of involvement with our fellow citizens,

and the President is putting his imprimatur and his commitment behind dramatically expanding the efforts of public service, something that I think is absolutely appropriate.

I hope that as we hold these hearings and look at this initiative that we will look beyond what the President has proposed in fact. In my opinion, I think there are other opportunities out there which could give people, especially in our inner-city communities who may not have too many avenues and options, more avenues and options through the use of community service tied into the rewards and benefits which will give them a better opportunity to participate in the American dream.

So I do hope that we will take a look at expanding the initiatives put forward and creating an even more dynamic effort in the area of drawing people into community service.

So again I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and I especially congratulate the President and the administration and the witnesses today who have been involved in this for quite a while for promoting this initiative.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to turn to my friend and colleague, the Senator from Maryland, who has been as strong a champion as we have had in this institution in terms of voluntary service and she has been enormously involved in the shaping of the original legislation and has followed it closely, has studied it well, and has been strongly committed during a time when the resolve of many others was flagging. We always benefit from her guidance, and in the area of voluntary service, if we could persuade her to say a word, we would be very, very grateful.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKULSKI

Senator MIKULSKI. I have been persuaded, Senator Kennedy, and I want to thank you for your generous words and also for your steadfastness in this issue.

Dr. Lenkowsky, I really want to welcome you to this committee, and I look forward to working with you both as the authorizer and then as the appropriator for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

You come with an excellent background, and you come with a whole series of recommendations to make based on your long history in this issue and your commitment to the issue.

As you know, and as Senator Kennedy said, I was one of the social architects of the original legislation, but I believe we should not be wedded to the past. I want to thank President Bush for presenting his views to us and his guidance and his principles. We want to work with him. What I would like to do is work on a bipartisan basis to see how we can take community service to the next level and how it can be an important tool for the 21st century.

In order to get there, we want to know what the President's vision is. I would like us to be able to review the original mission and intent of community service and look at lessons learned so that we can look ahead to the challenges that we are going to be facing.

My goals in this hearing are threefold—first, to listen to what the President has recommended; second, to look at the lessons learned from our national service experience—did we accomplish our goals and objectives; what are our evaluation plans in place so

we can know how well we have done, where we have done well, what are the potholes, and what are some of the ideas that might just need to be evaluated; and third, to really create a road map to guide us in terms of this new legislation.

We have certainly come a long way since 1989 when I introduced the National and Community Service Act to establish this Corporation and to create a series of demonstration projects that involve what we know became AmeriCorps.

Senator Kennedy and I worked with President Bush I in 1990 to pass the National Community Service Act to include an AmeriCorps like program, providing vouchers for full- and part-time community service so that it could go to reducing student debt or job training. We took it to the next level in 1993 with the Community Service Trust Act.

When we created this legislation, it was not to be another social program. It was to be a social invention, hopefully to create a social movement on community service. We were deeply disturbed in the mid-eighties that young people were losing the habits of the heart that made our Nation so great, when neighbor helped neighbor. We wanted to create a new ethic around community service and instill these habits of the heart, and at the same time address the troubling situation of the cost of higher education, either by reducing student debt or empowering people to help themselves.

When we created national service, and we created it around those national goals. It has been difficult. It has been very difficult. What we focused on was the quality, the innovation, and whether we could sustain it. And quite frankly, the other party—and I am so pleased that the President is engaged—has never embraced this. It has been ridiculed. It has been diminished, questioning why do we have to pay people to volunteer, and so on.

But with Dr. Lendowsky's leadership and experience, the President's vision, and our longstanding experience, I think we can really work together and take national service to where it needs to go in the 21st century.

So we look forward to making sure this is not again another social program but that we create opportunities of empowerment and maybe new ways of social glue in our society.

So I extend my hand to you in friendship and collegiality and look forward to working with you on this.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Mikulski.

We want to welcome Les Lenkowsky to our hearing today. He has been an important part of the Corporation since the beginning, first as a board member and now CEO. We are fortunate to have someone with your expertise and interest. We enjoyed having the chance to talk with you yesterday and look forward to your testimony and congratulate you on your willingness to undertake this very important endeavor.

Before we begin I have statements from Senators Edwards and Clinton.

[The prepared statements of Senators Edwards and Clinton follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR EDWARDS

Thanks to Dr. Lenkowsky for coming here today.

I want to praise the Administration for its support of national service. For a long time, Dr. Lenkowsky was one of a small group of Republicans who believed in AmeriCorps. It is great to see that the program now has strong bipartisan support.

I do want to highlight one serious concern about the proposals offered by the Administration today. While the support for expanding service opportunities for adults is admirable, the Administration has not proposed any new opportunities to the kids in high school who want to give back to their communities. In fact, if I read the Administration's budget correctly (see page 1088), its proposal actually slightly cuts the "Learn and Serve" programs that serve kids.

In my view, this is a mistake. If we are going to inspire Americans to serve their communities throughout their lives, we have to start working with them while they are young.

I would go even further. Service to the community ought to be more than just another afterschool activity, like basketball or photography. Service should be a part of every child's schooling, as much as math or science or anything else.

Based on that simple philosophy, I plan to introduce in the next week or so the School Service Act of 2002. I appreciate Senator Kennedy's interest in this proposal and Senator Clinton's support. I also want to thank Rep. Harold Ford in the House who plans to introduce a companion bill, and especially thank all the educators who have worked with us on this proposal, particularly at home in North Carolina. I hope we in this chamber will be able to work together, Republicans and Democrats, to make this bill become law.

The proposal is very simple: Say to a limited number of states and cities-if you will make sure that all of the students in your schools engage in high-quality service and servicelearning before graduation, we in Washington will support your efforts.

The service can be based in the classroom. It can be based in an afterschool program. It can be based in a summer program. And it can be directed or supervised by AmeriCorps members who are leaders and coordinators.

All that we ask is that you ensure two things:

First: real service with real benefits to communities. The Corporation's own studies show that a dollar invested in a good service effort produces benefits worth over four dollars. We need to keep that up.

Second: we want service that means something to young people, service that students reflect on and talk about with each other. We want kids seeing these experiences not as another chore, but as an exciting initiation into long lives of active citizenship. And we know service is often just that. Kids who serve grow up to volunteer more and to vote more throughout their lives.

Finally, our bill will hold these programs to high standards and require measurable success.

Let me stress: I don't think we should require any state or city to do anything. Nor should this program operate nationwide. My proposal is that for the select group of states and school districts that are ready, we ought to make sure every child has the opportunity and the responsibility to engage in service. Here in Congress, it is our responsibility to give those opportunities for service

to our young people. When we do, our country will be richly rewarded in the years and decades to come.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR CLINTON

Thank you Mr. Chairman for convening this hearing on this critical topic—national and community service in our nation. September 11 taught us some amazing lessons about the generosity of the human spirit and the depths to which our fellow citizens are willing to go when we are in need. I was profoundly moved by what I witnessed in New York and I know that we have a unique opportunity today to build upon that generosity and sense of community by providing more opportunities for all Americans to give back.

When we first envisioned AmeriCorps back in 1993, few of us could have imagined what it has become today. More than 50,000 energetic people volunteer each year—a total of 250,000 since my husband signed the bill into law. These special people who devote years of their lives to helping others are driven to do because early in their lives—through the influence of parents and teachers—they are taught the value of service.

That is why I support a terrific bill that my colleague, Senator Edwards, has developed. This bill, the School Service Act, will promote universal community service among high school students, which will promote a lifetime of service among all of our young people.

One particular group of young people that I am eager to involve in community service activities are young people coming out of the foster care system in service opportunities. These children have often witnessed firsthand the difficulties of living in poverty and in abusive domestic situations. Their compassion could be particularly meaningful to others facing similar situations and I look forward to working with all of you to increase opportunities for this population to serve.

I applaud President Bush's commitment to national service by expanding the number of volunteers by 25,000. This is a tremendously worthwhile goal, which will impact hundreds of thousands more Americans through the spillover effects of community service. I look forward to working with you Dr. Lenkowsky and with all of my colleagues on the HELP Committee on achieving this goal. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF LESLIE LENKOWSKY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Gregg, Senator Mikulski.

I am privileged to come before you this morning to present President Bush's principles for a new Citizen Service Act that would improve and enhance the programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Since the Corporation was created in 1993, it has accomplished a great deal, but to better help build a culture of citizenship, service, and responsibility, we must use the lessons of the past, as Senator Mikulski has just indicated, to strengthen the quality of the

Corporation's efforts and assist more Americans to serve their neighbors, their communities, and their country.

In my prepared testimony which I would like to submit for the record, I have outlined what the Corporation has achieved since it began and what we have learned about where we need to improve. This morning, President Bush is announcing the principles that we believe should guide reforms of the Corporation's programs, AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America. I would like to submit these to you as well and briefly summarize them.

The President's principles have four major objectives. The first is to support and encourage greater engagement of citizens in volunteering. In AmeriCorps, we would propose to do this by statutorily requiring all members to focus on generating additional unstipended volunteers; improving the education award, such as by eliminating tax on it and allowing it to be transferred to younger family members or even 2Ts; testing new approaches that might give would-be members a wider range of places in which they could serve; and encouraging growth and greater private backing for successful AmeriCorps programs such as Teach for America and City Year.

We would also reduce the age and income restrictions that disqualify too many older Americans from Senior Corps, create a special program to connect veterans with youth, and eliminate barriers to participation in all of our programs by people with disabilities.

Finally, we would urge Congress to amend the Higher Education Act to require every college and university to increase over several years the percentage of Federal work-study funds devoted to community service to 50 percent as part of a more comprehensive effort to enhance service learning among all of our young people.

Our second goal is to make Federal support for service more responsive to State and local needs. We would like to give States more authority to select AmeriCorps programs than they have today, as well as greater flexibility, within reasonable limits, to allocate funds for administrative uses.

We want to see communities have more leeway for developing Senior Corps programs that will appeal to the baby boomers who are on the verge of retirement, including by offering transferable Silver Scholarships to those who have made substantial commitments of time.

And we propose to consolidate and modify Learn and Serve programs so that they can better address barriers to high-quality service learning programs, such as the lack of teacher training.

Without jeopardizing our hard-won management improvements which produced our second consecutive clean audit opinion for fiscal year 2001, we believe that with appropriate authority, we can do more to simplify administrative requirements and ease the burden of our programs on State and local communities as well as the charities at which our members serve.

At the same time, the third objective of our principles is to make the Corporation's programs more accountable and effective. We propose a statutory requirement that all AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve programs establish performance goals, develop corrective plans if they fail to meet these goals, and lose part or all of their Federal support if corrections are not made.

We would also like to write into law the successful agreement we have had with Congress to contain the average cost of AmeriCorps.

One reason the agreement has been successful is that the Corporation was able to develop some lower-cost, high-impact ways of serving in AmeriCorps, such as the education-award-only version, in which our members receive no Federal living allowance.

We would like the authority to move these from the test phase, where we are limited in how many positions we can support, into the general AmeriCorps mix. We are also interested in using the National Civilian Community Corps model, which is now wholly funded by the Federal Government, as a basis for partnerships with public agencies and nonprofits that would primarily work on public safety, public health, and emergency response efforts.

Last but not least, our fourth goal is to provide greater assistance to secular and faith-based community organizations. This has always been a priority for the Corporation's programs, especially VISTA. By making some modest changes, such as in the rules governing how its members are selected and placed, we believe we can make VISTA even more helpful to groups on the front lines of helping the poor and needy. With proper authority, we can also do a better job of ensuring that all the Corporation's programs do what VISTA has long been committed to doing—helping nonprofits mobilize the resources, including modern technology, that they need to be sustainable and effective.

The President's budget for fiscal year 2003 proposes increasing AmeriCorps by 25,000 members and Senior Corps by 100,000. We request that this committee authorize the appropriations necessary to reach these ambitious targets. While our existing legislation, together with the management improvements we have made in recent years, would enable the Corporation to achieve these goals, we believe that the changes the President is calling for will produce more volunteers and more help for nonprofit organizations for each Government dollar spent.

We greatly appreciate the interest that members of this committee have had in the Corporation's programs over the years and know that many of you have ideas about what needs to be done to improve them. We look forward to working with you to translate these ideas and the principles the President has articulated today into legislation that will put the Corporation on a strong bipartisan footing for its second decade and beyond.

The time for doing so could not be better. Since September 11, Americans of all ages and backgrounds have even more come to recognize that this is a country worth not only defending but serving. According to one recent survey, 81 percent of young adults cutting across all demographic groups and political affiliations say they would like to have a chance for a full year of national and community service. Since the President's State of the Union Address in which he called for Americans to serve and created the USA Freedom Corps, applications for AmeriCorps are twice what they were a year earlier. Interest in Senior Corps has risen even more. And a blue ribbon committee chaired by former Senator John Glenn has just called upon the Nation's schools to invest more heavily in service learning.

By improving and enhancing its programs, this committee will enable the Corporation to respond more effectively to a public that wants to serve; and if, together with our Volunteer Centers, United Ways, and many other private groups, we are successful, we will do a better job of helping people in need and, perhaps more importantly, strengthen the spirit of civic responsibility on which the health of American democracy rests.

Thank you very much. I would be glad to take your questions at this point.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lenkowsky follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LESLIE LENKOWSKY

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the views of the Administration concerning the reauthorization of national and community service legislation—the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973.

This is my first public opportunity to appear before you, Mr. Chairman and the other Members of the Committee, since you confirmed my nomination by President Bush to be the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service. Prior to that, this Committee confirmed me to three consecutive appointments to the Corporation's Board of Directors and to the Board of its predecessor organization. Thank you for these opportunities.

Most importantly, this is an extraordinary moment in the history of our country and the Agency I head. Since the terrible events of September 11th, we have seen expressions of patriotism in the United States unlike any that I can remember in my lifetime. At a tragically high price, all of us have again come to realize how precious our freedoms are and why it is important for all of us to accept the responsibilities of citizenship in order to preserve them.

To make this a lasting change in our civic consciousness, President Bush has called on all Americans to give at least two years of their lives in service to their country. As the President has said, we can build a stronger nation and fight terrorism by making a commitment to service in our own communities, whether that be tutoring a child, volunteering at a hospital, or participating in a neighborhood crime watch.

Most of our nation's civic work is being done without the aid of the Federal Government. That is as it should be, since the Federal Government is not the source of this civic spirit. At the same time, the Federal Government can do a better job in helping to support and encourage it where I can.

Therefore, through an Executive Order, the President established the USA Freedom Corps, which will build on existing Federal programs that engage citizens in service, as well as create new opportunities related to homeland security and meeting other critical needs.

The USA Freedom Corps initially will have three major components, which will be administered separately but coordinated through a White House council. It includes an improved and enhanced set of programs supported through the Corporation for National and Community Service, which is the direct concern of this committee. Specifically, the Administration has proposed providing additional community-based service opportunities and leveraging thousands of additional volunteers by adding 25,000 new AmeriCorps members and 100,000 new volunteers in senior service, and by removing current barriers to service, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps participants who assist nonprofit organizations and public agencies in the areas of public safety, public health, and disaster relief and preparedness will work closely with Citizen Corps, through the coordinating efforts of the USA Freedom Corps Council.

The Corporation's programs—AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America—will support the President's call to service by helping to provide full-time and part-time opportunities for Americans to serve at all stages of their lives, from when they are elementary-school students through their retirement years. We will also work closely with our nation's many worthwhile charities, not only in helping them accomplish their missions, including providing security for our homeland, but also in helping them recruit and manage additional volunteers.

As part of the announcement of the USA Freedom Corps, the Administration indicated its intent to work closely with the Congress on a bill that will reform and extend the Corporation's programs and authorities. The Administration's reforms for

a Citizen Service Act of 2002 were outlined, in the USA Freedom Corp policy book released on January 30.

For the Corporation to play the role envisioned by the President under the USA Freedom Corps, we need to make AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America more responsive to state and local needs, more accountable for results, more adept at leveraging private resources, and more effective in assisting hard-pressed charities, including faith-based and community organizations. I'd like to describe these three programs briefly and explain why we are proposing reforms.

AMERICORPS

AmeriCorps engages 50,000 Americans in intensive, results-oriented service each year, AmeriCorps members mobilize, manage, and train volunteers to assist nonprofit groups and public agencies across the country. The members, and the volunteers they help organize, teach children to read, make neighborhoods safer, and help build affordable homes for low-income families, among many other activities. When a new class of members enrolls this fall, more than 250,000 Americans 18 and older will have participated in AmeriCorps since it was created in 1993 through amendments to the National and Community Service Act of 1990.

There are three main components to AmeriCorps: 1) AmeriCorps—State and National, which provides grants to states and national charitable organizations to support members in local charities and nonprofit groups across the country; 2) AmeriCorps—VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), which focuses on helping poor people overcome poverty and assisting community and faith-based organizations in meeting the needs of low-income neighborhoods; and 3) AmeriCorps—NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), a ten-month, full-time residential service program for men and women that combines the best practices of civilian service with the best aspects of military service, including leadership and team building.

The President proposes to increase the annual level of 50,000 AmeriCorps members to 75,000 in 2003. The new AmeriCorps participants will generate at least 75,000 additional volunteers to work with the nation's nonprofits.

As the Congress contemplates this proposed increase, I think it is important to explain how AmeriCorps functions, and how it can be improved.

First, most AmeriCorps members serve with nonprofit and community organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Teach for America, the American Red Cross, Boys and Girls Clubs, neighborhood watch organizations, community action agencies, local faith-based organizations, and many others. In the majority of cases, these organizations, not the Federal Government, select and manage the members who serve with them. The members assist those organizations in meeting community needs.

Second, AmeriCorps is decentralized—that is, it gives a significant amount of power and control to states and local authorities. State commissions on national and community service, led by citizen volunteers appointed by Governors, select or nominate most of the projects in which AmeriCorps members serve, based on their assessment of local needs.

Third, AmeriCorps, has both full-time and part-time members. Slightly more than half of the individuals in these programs serve full time and receive a modest living allowance in order to be able to serve. The other half serve part time and generally do not receive any living allowance from Corporation resources. Upon successful completion of service, both types of AmeriCorps members receive an education award, available for seven years, to help finance college or pay back student loans. At the end of this year, the first AmeriCorps class will have used about 72 percent of the education award amounts that were earned.

Fourth, the Federal Government, states, local communities and the private sector share funding for AmeriCorps members. There are various statutory provisions that mandate such cost sharing.

Since it was created in 1993, AmeriCorps has compiled an impressive list of accomplishments. Members have helped recruit and supervise additional volunteers for nonprofit organizations; they have tutored and mentored disadvantaged children; they have established or expanded neighborhood safety programs; and they have helped communities rebuild after dozens of natural disasters and emergencies—including the September 11th terrorist attacks—in more than 30 states. Although evaluation studies are not always of the highest quality, project reports have consistently shown that AmeriCorps members are meeting community needs in education, health and human services, public safety, and the environment.

At the same time, the program has had its share of challenges and problems over the last several years. Many in Congress have documented those challenges and problems and rightfully told us to do better. Members of Congress have identified

the need to refocus the program and create greater efficiency and accountability. As a result, AmeriCorps has tightened its management, reduced its per-member costs from early-year highs, adopted tough rules on political activity, and cut off grantees that violated them. We intend to continue strengthening our management and personnel systems, change some of the ways our programs operate, and take additional steps to insure that each government dollar is used more effectively. For example, upon becoming the Chief Executive Officer, I established a new Department of Research and Policy Development, which reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer, specifically for the purpose of strengthening accountability.

But many of the changes we envision to make our programs more efficient, effective, and responsive to local needs cannot take place without legislative, authority. I would like to bring forward some ideas for reform identified by the Administration, Members of Congress, the national and community service field, Corporation board members, service members, and professional staff.

States, communities, and nonprofit organizations need greater flexibility. For example, community and faith-based organizations have told us that the rules and requirements for receiving a grant often are too complex and costly. States have told us that we can do even more to devolve decision making, particularly on grant selection, to the State level.

Nonprofit groups often find our program confusing because rules are not consistent across different types of AmeriCorps programs. For example, Members of one program cannot seek part-time employment or schooling during their term of service, while members of another AmeriCorps program can. Moreover, most (but not all) AmeriCorps programs prohibit members from developing resources, performing routine administrative tasks, and engage in other activities that help nonprofit organizations increase their capacity to carry out their service mission. Unfortunately, that is precisely the kind of help that small grassroots charities are interested in receiving, and we need to support them while continuing strong prohibitions on the use of support for any political activities.

Legislative reforms can also help with accountability. Early in the Corporation's history, the agency was not aggressive enough about holding grantees accountable for achieving results. Failure to meet goals did not have immediate and direct consequences. To be effective, the organizations with which we work must understand that failure to meet performance goals will have consequences. Although there is much that can be done administratively in this area, the statute can make this expectation permanent and more forceful.

Currently, some of our programs are recruiting many additional volunteers for each government dollar spent; others are not. Our explicit goal should be to produce more volunteers for each government dollar spent. We should limit what the Federal Government can spend on average per member, put into practice more low-cost approaches to using members, and encourage more private support. When evaluating what we fund, we should recognize that a fundamental strength of AmeriCorps is to help mobilize and manage volunteers for our nation's charities.

Sustainability is another goal that we should make more explicit. Currently, most AmeriCorps members (though not VISTA's) are restricted by statute from mobilizing resources and building the service capacity of the organizations with which they serve. We should set resource mobilization as a fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps and increase the types of support that AmeriCorps members can provide.

We Should Also implement new ways to support and expand programs that are effective. One such way is a "challenge grant," which would provide Corporation funds to organizations that raise new private money. The challenge grants would be used specifically to expand service and volunteering. For example, a successful program such as Teach for America, which recruits and trains recent college graduates to work as teachers in underserved communities, could increase its private support, in part by demonstrating to donors how private contributions would be "matched" by government funds. Such approaches would increase the flow of private dollars to such organizations and allow them to become sustainable with non-Federal resources.

Another effective program model that should be expanded is AmeriCorps—NCCC, which is able to dispatch teams of members on short notice to help deal with natural disasters and other emergencies. For example, NCCC teams from across the country were dispatched to Pier 94 in New York after the September 11th attack to provide assistance to victims' families through the Red Cross, and several teams helped operate an overflow homeless shelter in Salt Lake City during the recent Olympic Games. We should use this as a model for other programs—including those operated by public agencies and nonprofits—that support public safety, public health, and emergency response efforts.

We also need to reform some of the benefits we offer. Many AmeriCorps members have been disappointed because they have found the education award to be less valuable than they had believed it to be. Currently, the awards are taxable. Although many AmeriCorps members are eligible for education tax credits and deductions that fully offset any tax liability not all members qualify. We look forward to working with Congress to exempt the award from taxation and to provide greater flexibility in its use.

Finally, the Corporation's Board and I want more opportunity to test new approaches in AmeriCorps. Currently, members can serve only in organizations that have a grant from or an agreement with the Federal Government. We should explore new relationships with nonprofit organizations that will provide greater flexibility for individuals to do their service at the organizations of their choice.

SENIOR CORPS

The Corporation for National and Community Service administers Senior Corps, which provides opportunities for more than 500,000 older Americans to serve in their communities. Senior Corps consists of three major programs: the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), and the Senior Companion Program (SCP).

President Bush spoke about expanding senior-service programs during the Presidential campaign in 2000, and he put forth several new ideas that would attract more seniors to service. In the 2003 budget, the President is proposing to expand this effort by supporting an additional 100,000 seniors in service.

RSVP, by far the largest Senior Corps program, matches older Americans who are willing to help meet local needs with opportunities to serve in their communities. RSVP volunteers choose how and where they want to serve, and they determine how many hours a week they serve. RSVP volunteers provide a wide range of important services such as tutoring youth, responding to natural disasters, serving as citizen patrols for local police departments, teaching parenting skills to teen parents, getting children immunized, and mentoring troubled youth.

Foster Grandparents provide valuable aid to children and youth with exceptional needs. Foster Grandparents serve in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, and Head Start and day care centers. Foster Grandparents help abused and neglected children, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities.

Senior Companions provide assistance to frail, homebound individuals, most of them elderly. These clients have difficulties with daily living tasks, and Senior Companions help them retain their dignity and independence.

These programs date back to the 1960s and were created as much to provide support for, and supplement the incomes of the elderly as they were to foster continued civic engagement. In fact, participants in the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs have to pass a "means test" to participate. They also have to be 60 years old, instead of the age eligibility of 55 required for RSVP. As a result, many people who want to serve are disqualified either because their incomes are too high or because they are too young—and many clients who need such services are denied them.

For example, approximately 60 percent of program directors in the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs say they are having problems recruiting participants. About 70 percent of both Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion grantees reported turning away people because their incomes were too high. At the same time, 95 percent of Senior Companion projects reported having client waiting lists, and 67 percent said those lists have increased over the past year. For children in need of a Foster Grandparent, and for frail elderly, people in need of a companion to buy groceries or take care of other necessities, our programs' inability to fill slots is a very serious matter.

As we look to the future—and to a rapidly expanding population of seniors interested in helping to meet community needs—we need to update and modernize our programs. We need to create new roles, opportunities, and institutions that are more flexible than they have been in the past. We need to provide additional incentives for seniors to serve, such as allowing them to earn scholarship awards that can be transferred to their grandchildren or other designated individuals. These efforts should build on the best of the Corporation's experience with our programs and incorporate emerging knowledge about the preferences, education, and capacities of the coming wave of retirees.

We also must have greater accountability in our system of support for senior projects, and a greater focus on achieving measurable results. Since 1996, we have implemented what's known as "programming for impact," through which senior vol-

unteer projects demonstrate how they deliver benefits to the communities they serve and help address high-priority local needs. Traditionally, senior volunteerism had, been more concerned with the benefits realized by the seniors themselves. As we move ahead, we need to ensure that grantees meet specific program objectives and accountability standards.

The Administration's reforms will strengthen the senior service programs administered by the Federal Government. They will also ensure that older Americans will have expanded opportunities to serve in their communities, including supporting the efforts of public organizations charged with public safety, health, and emergency preparedness.

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA

Learn and Serve America provides grants to schools, colleges, and community groups to link academic studies to community service. Through such programs across the country supported by Learn and Serve America, more than 1.5 million students in kindergarten through college gain a deeper insight into their studies, develop problem-solving and other skills, and learn the habits of good citizenship while also helping to improve their communities.

Service-learning and community service tied to education have experienced rapid growth over the past decade. A 1999 U.S. Department of Education study found that 32 percent of all public schools included service-learning as part of their curriculum, including nearly half of all high schools, and that 57 percent of all public, schools organized community service activities for their students. This growth is significant when compared to a similar study conducted in 1984 that found that only 9 percent of all high schools offered service-learning, and that only 27 percent of all high schools offered some type of community service.

These programs are, critically important if we are to instill the ethic of a lifetime of service and civic involvement in a rising generation of Americans. And schools at all levels should seize on the President's call to service to look for ways to integrate service and education.

But as we look to reauthorize Federal programs that support service and service-learning at our nation's schools and colleges, we believe we need to reexamine the purpose of Federal support at the elementary and secondary education level. We must make sure that funds are spent to improve the quality of these programs through teacher development and other means. We must make sure that the programs allow for the practice of civic skills and lead to the development of active, responsible citizens.

As with the recent changes to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 that were made by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, we must add more accountability to the system of support for service-learning. Grantees should have specific program objectives and accountability requirements. The Corporation should have authority to: 1) establish performance measures for each grantee; 2) require corrective plans for those not meeting goals; and 3) reduce or terminate grants if corrections are not made.

At the higher education level, we propose to increase the service goals for the Federal Work-Study Program—a popular form of financial aid initiated in the 1960s that currently reaches nearly a million students a year. Among the program's statutory purposes is “to encourage students receiving Federal student financial aid to participate in community service activities that will benefit the nation and engender in the students a sense of social responsibility and commitment to the community.”

Over the years, a significant amount of work-study has been devoted to such on-campus tasks as staffing academic departments, processing admissions applications, and filing away library books. According to a 2000 study, about 40% of FWS students were employed as clerks or office workers. This same study notes that $\frac{3}{4}$ of FWS students selected their own jobs but it was unclear that they were offered options to do community service. Indeed, the national average of such funds devoted to community-serving activities is about 14%. To be sure, the work-study percentage devoted to community service is not necessarily reflective of a school's total commitment to service. For example, at the University of Notre Dame, 75 to 80 percent of students get involved in community service at some point during their undergraduate years, while the university's community service commitment under work-study is very small. But a pattern of minimal commitment to community service programs under work-study by some of the nation's best schools appears evident.

It is not just colleges and universities, however, that are lagging. A poll of this year's freshmen at four-year colleges who participate in a study conducted by the American Council on Education and the University of California at Los Angeles Higher Education Research Institute, found that more than 50 percent said they

spent less than 1 hour a week doing volunteer work during their final year of high school—and that an additional 24 percent volunteered only 1 to 2 hours a week. That figure is troubling because, while related to educational attainment, service and citizenship patterns are established at a young age and persist throughout a person's lifetime.

Perhaps that explains why, despite the amount of time and relative freedom students have, rates of volunteering among undergraduates are less than those of the population as a whole. According to the National Post-Secondary Student Aid Survey, in the 1999-2000 academic year 34.6 percent of all undergraduates participated in voluntary community service the previous year. That is fully 10 percentage points less than the national average as measured by the Independent Sector. Even taking into account the nontraditional student, with greater responsibility for family and work, the number of hours volunteered by the traditional undergraduate at four-year institutions is less than the average reported by the Independent Sector. Although college graduates are more likely than those who do not attend college to volunteer as adults, increasing student volunteering would likely produce even higher rates of adult volunteering in the future.

Improving these rates will not be easy. Those who have worked with volunteers know that it takes more than motivation to get someone to serve; it also requires asking and creating meaningful opportunities for people to participate. September 11th may have given many more Americans the desire to become active citizens, and President Bush has asked all of us to act on that desire. But whether we really do commit to service will depend heavily on the efforts of all of us in positions of leadership—whether in government, in colleges and universities, in voluntary associations, and in student groups—to enlist our fellow citizens to take responsibility for our communities.

We hope that college and university officials will work with us to increase the percentage of Federal work-study funds devoted to community service.

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

All of us involved with national and community service—the Corporation's Board, its previous CEOs, the Congress, State Commissions, and programs across the country—have recognized the management and administrative challenges of running the Agency over the last decade. While more remains to be done, the organization has made significant progress over the last couple of years.

More specifically, fiscal year 2000 was a landmark year for the Corporation in that for the first time in its history, it received an unqualified opinion on its financial statements. This achievement resulted from a commitment to strong management control and accountability for financial resources. I'm pleased to report that the 2001 audit showed that our progress continues, as we received a "clean opinion" for the second year in a row. Perhaps more important, the number of operational areas deemed to be materially weak was reduced to zero. Not that long ago, we were cited for 10 material weaknesses.

The Corporation, in other words, has reached the point where it is on solid financial ground. But our management and administrative work, is not done. In general, the Congress has provided the tools and support necessary for the Corporation to achieve management improvements, and I would like to thank this Committee for its efforts. We have additional ideas that are intended to strengthen the ability of the Corporation, States, and communities to inspire people to serve and help them find ways to improve their neighborhoods.

Finally, in support of the President's call to service, we ask that the Corporation's reauthorization bill reauthorize and update existing provisions of law that support the Points of Light Foundation and America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. We are clearly at an opportune moment in the history of Federal support for service. I look forward to working with you and with the other Members of Congress to pass reforms and extend national service legislation this year. I am available to address any questions that the Committee may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

This is very ambitious, but we like to believe this committee is up to the challenge.

I remember very well being at the 25th anniversary of the Peace Corps and sitting at the table with the first volunteers and asking them how they became involved. They all gave virtually the same answer, and that was that this was the first time anybody had

asked them to do something for others—paraphrased in different ways, but it was a very, very powerful message.

The way that I read what the President is talking about is how to create more of those opportunities. People want to be able to volunteer. We should not limit this just to those who are financially well off. The motivation for service is there for people with limited resources as well as those who have substantial resources.

As I understand it, we are going to give that opportunity to as many different citizens as we can. Building on the senior service programs which have been in effect, actually, since the early 1960's we can create new opportunities. In Fall River, MA seniors work to keep neighborhood libraries and museums open, escorting children through there and helping them to learn. They get \$2.65 an hour—but that is precious to them, and it is really important to the community. So we want to try to do as much as we possibly can, and then we want to make sure that those are good programs and we want to evaluate them.

At the time that we passed the legislation, for the Corporation, as Senator Mikulski pointed out, we brought into the program the Points of Light Foundation into the program. Now the Points of Light Foundation is operating and has their own board. We also have America's Promise, Colin Powell's program. As I understand it, although you can explain that to me, we are now adding the Freedom Corps, and at least a good part of that is going to be out of FEMA. We need a clearer idea of how all these Corps are going to function.

One thing that the previous administration tried to do was to get each of the Cabinet offices to develop programs within the Cabinet agencies, and they had varying success depending on whether they were really interested, but some efforts were very important and very successful. We need to know how FEMA will operate.

I am just trying to get a handle on how this overall structure is going to work. We have spent time, not as successfully as some would have liked, trying to bring programs together, consolidate different programs, consolidate administration, use resources in terms of the objectives, and we want to try to work with you on this, but we want to get some idea and understanding about how these boards will work, how they will interact, and how we are going to avoid the kind of inevitable struggle that I imagine will come along between them.

I would be interested in how you look at this—and I do not want to spend a lot of time on it, but I would like to hear you out on it.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Thank you, Senator.

It has been a bit confusing, we know. I would like to say sometimes that we have a corps identity crisis going on. The Freedom Corps is a Cabinet-level organization. It is a White House organization that will indeed do the kind of consolidation that you are talking about. If you think of it as an equivalent in some ways to the National Security Council or the National Economic Council, that would be pretty close to the mark. It would be a group of people at the Cabinet level plus agencies like mine represented on it that will meet to coordinate all the work that goes on within the Federal Government related to volunteering and creating opportuni-

ties. The President has in fact already directed the members of the Cabinet to inventory their own programs preparatory to identifying ways by which other Cabinet departments can effectively promote volunteering and service.

So we will be working closely with the Freedom Corps. The Freedom Corps does not change any of our legislative authority or my responsibility as the CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service but gives us enormous opportunities to work more closely with other Cabinet agencies, with the Peace Corps, and with the collection of volunteer groups that are grouped under Citizens Corps and will be focusing exclusively on homeland security tasks.

The Points of Light Foundation is currently authorized within our statute, and we are recommending as part of the President's principles that America's Promise be so authorized as well. Both of these organizations have unique status in terms of their relationship to our mission.

I mentioned in my opening statement the Volunteer Centers. These are wonderful organizations. There are over 500 of them in every community. They are a kind of switchboard, so if you are new to a community and want to find a way to get involved, you could call up the Volunteer Center, and that is what they help you do. They work closely with colleges and universities as well to place students in service.

One of the principal roles of the Points of Light Foundation is to work with, coordinate, and help enhance the activities of those Volunteer Centers, so we feel that it is very fitting for us to have a close relationship with them.

With America's Promise, one of the five promises of that organization is to give young people opportunities to give something back so that young people are not just the objectives of attention, but they can contribute in a constructive way to their society. We feel this is very important as well for healthy youth development; it again fits very closely with our core mission of helping people find opportunities to serve. So we feel that having a good, close relationship with that organization as well will be an asset for us to achieve our mission of promoting greater civic engagement.

The CHAIRMAN. We welcome the opportunity to go through and have a better sense. The Corporation now, as I understand, is under the Freedom Corps; is that right?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. That is correct. We are a component.

The CHAIRMAN. How is the Freedom Corps established—is the President going to name those members?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It is an executive order, and the President has already identified a number of Cabinet members plus independent agency heads such as myself and the head of the Peace Corps as members of it.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me just mention quickly a couple of issues. One is the work-study program. As you know, the work-study program is targeted generally—the only eligible children are students identified by colleges as financially needy. The average income for participants, at U-Mass Boston is \$18,000. They have to spend a certain amount of their work study money, 7 percent—it is not a lot—doing community service work. We looked at this over a period

of time as far as increasing that requirement, and there are a number of issues raised, including whether we are just going to have the neediest students in the schools involved in community service, or whether it is going to include the class generally so we are not bifurcating the class. That is number one. Second, the colleges themselves are going to have to undertake the program, so they are wondering whether they are going to get support for the development of these programs so they will have high-quality programs, particularly among the smaller colleges, and there are many smaller, independent colleges in our part of the country.

Your thoughts?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. We are very sensitive to that. As you know, Senator, I am a former college professor, and I do appreciate how valuable the existing Federal work-study program is for students and for the schools they attend.

We want to work with colleges and universities to build a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility on every campus. Federal work-study in our view is one tool for that but by no means the only tool. We think that some of our AmeriCorps education award programs can be more effectively utilized at colleges and universities. We think that traditional service programs can also be used, as well as other things.

We have had some very promising discussions going on since the President's proposal with the head of the Independent Colleges Association, David Warren, with the president of Tufts University, and with several others. I think everybody shares the goal of trying to get more college students. I frankly would like to see as close to 100 percent as possible engaged in service through one means or another.

With regard specifically to the work-study program, we do think that students ought to have an option to decide whether they would like to do their volunteering on campus or tutor, as you are doing, or mentor or other things off-campus.

A recent study done for the Department of Education showed that close to 80 percent of Federal work-study students did not know that if they wished to do so, they could use their Federal work-study funds in the America Reads program, which is a tutoring program that helps children gain in reading—something that I know is very important in light of the bill that we just passed and this committee helped to enact.

So we would like to see Federal work-study students have that option, but we agree completely with you that service should be an expectation for all students, not just for those who receive Federal work-study.

The CHAIRMAN. In Massachusetts, we had the highest percentage of volunteerism in schools of any State. California has always been a leader in volunteerism but we managed to make them second place. Tufts University has helped Massachusetts lead the Nation. Their former President, John Di Biaggio was an enthusiastic supporter. I have been to his conferences. He was a strong believer, and he has had a very important and powerful impact and his successor Dr. Bacon seeks to continue Tufts' commitment and I think we can learn a good deal from this institution.

Senator Gregg?

Senator GREGG. Thank you.

Dr. Lenkowsky, you certainly outlined a whole series of legislative changes as part of the President's initiative. Are you going to send us up some language or a package which reflects those?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. We would be glad to provide language if you would like to see it, Senator. We thought we would send up principles at this point so that we could work with you, but if you would like to see us translate some of those principles into language, we would be glad to do so.

Senator GREGG. Well, "The memo does control the meeting," to quote Dr. Kissinger, so I think language might be helpful.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Thank you.

Senator GREGG. This Silver Certificate is a new concept. As I understand it, somebody who works in the Senior Service Corps can work a certain number of hours or commit a certain number of hours to public service and earn a certain amount of academic credits or college credits which can then be passed on their grandchildren?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It would be similar to the education award that we have in AmeriCorps, although at a smaller value. I think the proposal we have in our budget is \$1,000. So if you commit a significant amount of time over the course of a year, you would earn a Silver Scholarship that could be passed along to 2T; it could be put in a Coverdell IRA for education purposes for a child or grandchild. It is a way of recognizing the contributions of seniors to service, particularly those seniors who wish to commit a fairly substantial amount of time.

Senator GREGG. And that would have to flow to a relative?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Not necessarily. It could be set up so that if you were tutoring somebody, as many of our Foster Grandparents do and R.S.V.P. people, you could make that scholarship available to the person that you were tutoring or mentoring. Again, you would want to set it up in an education IRA or something like that.

Senator GREGG. Do you have a cost assigned to this yet?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It is in the budget. It is a fairly modest cost. We can get you that number.

Senator GREGG. It sounds like a very creative idea.

You said something in your testimony that I found interesting and that was that, I believe, 87 percent of the people in high school said they would be willing to give a year of public service.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. That is 81 percent of people between the ages of 15 and 25. This was a new poll done for a center at the University of Maryland.

Senator GREGG. And have you or your organization given any thought to how you would create a year of public service that was universal?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Well, we have certainly talked a lot about AmeriCorps, and AmeriCorps of course does provide a service opportunity that is close to full-time if people want to do this, or you could do it half-time for a year or even up to 2 years.

Right now, the President is proposing an increase in the number of AmeriCorps positions from 50,000 to 75,000. We feel this is a step in the right direction.

We are fortunate in this country in having a lot of opportunities for people to serve. Not everybody has to serve in AmeriCorps, but obviously, we think that our program is a very important way by which we can respond to that interest. Even at 75,000, of course, there may be an even greater demand than we can fulfill at that number, but we want to proceed cautiously in expanding the program so that we do not create the kinds of management problems that we have had in the past.

Senator GREGG. And of course, 81 percent of the population would be millions.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It would be indeed. It is really very heartening.

Senator GREGG. But there is nothing on the drawing board to address that.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Not directly from us, but we think we are moving in that direction. We think that by creating opportunities—one thing, for example, that AmeriCorps members will be doing under our proposals is that their assignments will require them to engage other people in volunteering, people who might not be volunteering full-time but would be volunteering a few hours a week. We call this “volunteer leveraging,” and one great example of it is what happens with AmeriCorps members at Habitat for Humanity. Our members at Habitat do not replace volunteers who are building houses, but they come in early, they get the site ready, they help recruit volunteers; they do all the things so that when the volunteers come up to build that house on a Thursday or a Friday and spend the weekend doing it, they have a very positive experience that has two very good effects—one, we are engaging and responding to those people who want to serve, but two, when people volunteer and have a good experience volunteering, it is a good bet they will be back again.

Senator GREGG. City Year is part of AmeriCorps, isn't it?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It is indeed.

Senator GREGG. Job Corps, however, is not involved in any of this discussion.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Job Corps is not part of our program; I believe it is part of the Department of Labor.

Senator GREGG. But it is not part of the USA Freedom Corps discussion, either?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. No, sir. The Department of Labor is a member of the Freedom Corps Council, and they may be thinking of ways to use Job Corps in relation to this, but I am not privy to those discussions.

Senator GREGG. Well, then, you are the wrong person to ask that question of. I am interested in how we can develop a program that is more targeted on urban areas that are inner city and disadvantaged, where kids in high schools who are identified as having potential but are trapped in violence and drugs would have the opportunity to go into a service program for a year, which would give them some footing and would also give them a future and give them something toward their education when they got out.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. We actually do have a lot of those programs already within AmeriCorps. One out of five AmeriCorps members report that their parents receive food stamps. So we are reaching that age group.

One of my aides just visited a program called Improved Solutions for Urban Systems in Dayton, OH. It is a charter school that serves at-risk young people, 300 of them right now. It is very successful. They are thinking of expanding to Cincinnati and Columbus. These are young people who have dropped out, in a way, of the existing high schools. They are enrolled in this program, they are earning their GED. They all become AmeriCorps members when they turn 17, which is our age limit, so they could start earning that education award, and they are receiving training in things like computer technology, construction activities. They are putting the training to use while they are going to school; it is service learning, and it is a very successful program. In fact, it was called to my attention originally by someone who had not been exactly a fan of AmeriCorps but had seen this program in action and said, "This is really great; I did not know you were doing this."

Well, we have lots of programs like that already, and certainly one of the President's principles is to increase support for community-based organizations, and I think that is where we will get even more and get more young people involved that way.

Senator GREGG. Well, at some other time, I would like to follow up on that. I would be very interested in further initiatives like that.

The CHAIRMAN. Before leaving that issue, take a look at young people in urban and rural areas who are prepared to work, say, four summers so that they will have the opportunity to go on to college; so it is not just waiting until they graduate from high school, and do community service at least they can begin to work, and if they do it and stay in school, something might be out there at the end. We have some ideas—

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Summer is a great unutilized resource—I say this as a professor. We always know that things drop off in the summer, and to keep high school students or junior high school students engaged actively in the summer has many positive effects.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Mikulski?

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to return to the questions raised by Senator Kennedy related to Freedom Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Corporation for National and Community Service and so on.

Senator Kennedy said this lacks clarity, and he felt confused. I felt confused. And quite frankly, if Kennedy and Mikulski are confused about national service, America is confused about it, because we have been so involved in it.

As I understand it, the Freedom Corps is a council of other corps; is that right?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. And Cabinet agencies, yes, Senator.

Senator MIKULSKI. OK—and Cabinet, or independent, like FEMA.

Then the question becomes FEMA is involved, HHS is involved—and I am not going into the merits of the program, although I have some flashing yellow lights around them. So the question is do all of those programs need to be authorized—the Medical Reserve Corps, the Volunteers in Police Service Program, a doubling of the Neighborhood Watch, which I did not even know was a Federal program, the tripling of the Community Emergency Response—do

they all have to be authorized, and then they will be funded separately?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I cannot really speak to the Citizen Corps; I think that would probably be better directed to the head of FEMA. I think most of those already exist. There is a recommendation in the President's budget for some additional funding, and I believe it goes through the HUD-VA Appropriations Subcommittee.

Senator MIKULSKI. What is your role in that? Are you just one of the guys at the table, or—

Mr. LENKOWSKY. No. We run the Corporation for National and Community Service which is a second leg of this three-legged stool, if you will.

Senator MIKULSKI. Who is in charge of this Council?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. There is an assistant to the President named John Bridgeland, a special assistant to the President, who is executive director of the Council. The President, of course, is the chair of the Council.

Senator MIKULSKI. I understand that, but here is my question. Is all the money for all of these corps in the budget?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I believe it is in part of President Bush's 2003 budget, Senator.

Senator MIKULSKI. And would the head of the Freedom Corps Council be accountable to Congress in some way so that we could get a picture of how all this works and operates, or is this like a Tom Ridge position? [Laughter.] I am not being sarcastic.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. As I am accountable to you and to Congress generally for everything the Corporation for National and Community Service does, my colleague, the head of the Peace Corps, remains accountable to you and Congress.

Senator MIKULSKI. I understand that, but—

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I think Mr. Bridgeland's relationship to Congress would, I imagine, be parallel to the relationship of Condaleezza Rice as assistant to the President in the National Security Council.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, I think we will need to come back to this question, because if we are going to be spending this money, we need to all be going in the same direction.

Let me return to AmeriCorps, which is central to this. The original goals of AmeriCorps as we established it were around three deals. First was what I call character-building, meaning the instillation of the habits of the heart, so you not only volunteered to get the voucher, but you would also embrace the spirit of national service, and you would go on—hopefully, be involved in alumni associations like in the Peace Corps, and you would be a potent leader.

Then, the second was community-building by what you did in the community; and third was your own empowerment, meaning that you would learn new skills, and you would learn a way to either reduce your student debt or pursue higher education either full-time or part-time, because not everybody can go away to volunteer. A single mother working for a voucher to go to a community college could not go away, and someone with high-tech skills in engineering might not want to go away for a year but could work at Habitat or as a design center/urban renewal person.

So here are my questions. First, in the reassessment of national service, do you feel that the goals continue to be the same, and second, under the framework that the President is proposing, how do you see those goals continuing to be achieved, or do you feel they need to be revised?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I think the goals continue to be the same, and I would actually add a little bit to one of those goals—I think it is very consistent with it—which is that we ought to use the members of our programs to help build the capacity of local not-for-profit and charitable organizations, because we are always going to be limited. As Senator Gregg pointed out, there are lots of Americans who want to serve. We are probably not going to have the programs ever in this agency to respond to all of them, but we have lots of not-for-profit groups around the United States, and by using our members who give a significant commitment of their time to work in these groups, we can strengthen them so that those groups in turn can engage more people in service.

I certainly think—and as you know, Senator, I have been a board member not only since the Corporation but going back to the Commission on National and Community Service—and I certainly think the three goals that you articulated—the citizenship goal, the habits of the heart, giving useful community service and that sense of ongoing empowerment, a lifetime of developing real skills that you can take with you as you go into other aspects of your career, remain central, and I think that every one of our efforts here, every one of the President's principles, is designed to reinforce those objectives.

Senator MIKULSKI. First of all, I appreciate that, but I am concerned that we are really going to get scattered here—I do not mean here at the hearing—but with all of the various corps, I think it is going to get scattered. That is number one.

No. 2, in terms of AmeriCorps, one of the building blocks of the program is the role of the Governors and that there would be commissions at the gubernatorial level so that we could have some form of training, some form of accountability, so that people were not going in different directions with service du jour or current fads, so that it was focused on public issues that you are so experienced in.

Where do you see this fitting in, and do you see the Governors then being part of something like Freedom Corps councils?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. No. The Governors—

Senator MIKULSKI. And I do not want to get too wonky here, but you see what I mean.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I certainly understand and sympathize with you on this confusion. In terms of our agency, though, as you know, we have State commissions in each of the 50 States—well, 49; I think one of the Dakotas is just getting a State commission now. These are all gubernatorially-appointed commissions. That is how the Governors get involved.

We are proposing to give more authority to those commissions and to couple that with accountability. We would like to give them even stronger incentives to do State planning so that the resources of the Corporation are devoted to the most pressing State and local needs as these commissions and therefore the Governors see them.

These commissions consist of distinguished citizens in each State—

Senator MIKULSKI. I want to talk about what they are going to do; I know who they are.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. The commissions will continue to do what they are currently doing—

Senator MIKULSKI. They are not, then, going to be a coordinator for the Freedom Corps, the Neighborhood Watch, and so on?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. No, they are not. There will be another apparatus that FEMA is responsible for that will do that. To the extent our people will be involved at all, about 30 percent, I am told, of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps positions in one way or another deal with public safety, health, and disaster preparedness, and as those citizen corps, the FEMA-coordinated councils, at the State and local level develop their plans for responding to disasters or—we hope they will not occur—future terrorist attacks, part of the assets they will take into consideration will be people engaged in the Corporation's programs.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, again, I think we need a lot more clarity here. I believe in flexibility and creativity at the local level. I am also concerned that we could be pursuing the volunteerism du jour issue—and I am not being critical; I am just raising this as an issue.

I just want to make two additional points, and I know my time has expired, and other colleagues are here, but I want to raise two flashing yellow lights, Dr. Lenkowsky.

First, we as appropriators of national service are being deluged by national programs for earmarks. We are earmark-deluged by very worthwhile programs—the YMCA, Teach for America, and others that I could elaborate on—they are outstanding, and they are doing a great job. But I am now becoming the authorizer-by-proxy, because we have not thought through how the Corporation is going to be responsive to national organizations who then do their work at the local level.

So we are really going to look to you for guidance in the appropriations hearing on that and then how to address that.

The second yellow flashing light is with the innovation of how to use the voucher, I just want to alert you—not warn you; it is not meant to be a stern word—we are heading toward being a Finance Committee bill. And I will tell you that if this goes to the Finance Committee, we are dead, because they have so many other things ahead of them. The senior voucher to pass on to the grandchildren will end up in the Finance Committee, and they get very cranky about anything related to what they view as compensation or a benefit.

The second issue, of course, is the proposed use of a service voucher for either health care or a prescription drug benefit. This committee is absolutely aware that these are compelling national needs. But we are now very concerned that these proposals seek to compensate for a lack of national policy on these issues. Do we really want to use national service where you have to become a volunteer to be able to afford your insulin? I do not know about that.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. That is certainly not the intent, Senator.

Senator MIKULSKI. But these are yellow flashing lights, and perhaps you can respond in a wrap-up—I intend to stay here a few more minutes—but I really do not want to take this bill to the Finance Committee, and I think we are going to need to talk about it, because it could stall what you want to do.

Senator Kennedy wants to move on a pretty good track, and I am your appropriator, so we could really have at least, if not the whole President’s plan, a good down payment this year, and then move right along next year.

So, know that I want to work with you, but you see my flashing yellow lights.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I certainly do, Senator, and we are looking forward to talking with you. I am scheduled, I think, along with Mr. Bridgeland to see you next week, and we can talk more about this as well as the Freedom Corps.

Let me just say that our intent here is not to use service to compensate for other kinds of public policies. Rather, what we are trying to do is make service as attractive as we possibly can.

I was doing a C-SPAN call-in show one morning, and a woman called in from Ohio, saying that she was a VISTA member at age 62, and she really felt good about her service, but the education award that you got at the end of this service was not exactly relevant to her.

Well, one way of making it more relevant is by making it transferrable; another might be by exploring alternative uses for the education award.

Another big issue that we have to deal with—and it is the complaint I hear most often from AmeriCorps members—is that our education award is taxable—

Senator MIKULSKI. Yes. That has been a decade-long thing.

Mr. LENKOWSKY [continuing]. So that you have given 2 years of your life serving in inner-city communities like Red Hook, NY, really doing great work at community organizing in a community that has been torn apart by a highway; you go in there, and you put in 2 years, and most of the members, by the way, come from that community. And then, at the end of that, when they are trying to get going in their careers, we say, “By the way, about 15 percent, 20 percent,” whatever it is going to be, “of your education award, we are going to tax away.” It is not right.

Senator MIKULSKI. Yes. This is going to apply to another conversation. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I would just mention here, Senator Mikulski, that one other matter I mentioned to Mr. Lenkowsky yesterday was the McCain-Bayh 18-18-18 legislation, where you enroll in active duty for 18 months, the reserves for 18 months, and community service for 18 months. There may be some positive elements here, but that goes basically to the Armed Services Committee. The Senators feel very strongly about it, both of them, and I have talked with them about it, and that has very, very profound implications both in terms of recruitment as well as the education provisions, the Montgomery provisions in the armed services that are available to people in the Guard, and we are obviously interested. And I am sure that whatever comes out, that will be the first amendment that will be offered.

Obviously, we want to try to the extent we can to deal with all of these issues. I would just underline, though, what Senator Mikulski said about the issues that will be referred to the Finance Committee—and we can talk about that at another time.

Senator Jeffords, welcome.

Senator JEFFORDS. Good morning.

This is the first I have heard about this, and I would like to learn more about it. Being the one in charge of FEMA, I was surprised to see this and not know about it.

Other than that, I certainly want to commend any kind of program which helps in these areas, and I want to learn a little more about it.

How will the \$280 million that the President announced yesterday be administered? From what I read in this morning's paper, the new Citizen Corps would be tied to FEMA. Will FEMA or the Corporation for National Service implement this program?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It will be FEMA, Senator. Again, a lot of the questions related to Citizen Corps, I would encourage you to direct to the head of FEMA; this is their portion of it, as I said in an earlier response.

Our relationship to Citizen Corps basically comes about as a result of the fact that about 30 percent of our members are doing public safety, public health and disaster preparedness, and therefore, as State and local councils inventory the resources that might be available in the case of an emergency, they will take into account people who are engaged in AmeriCorps or Senior Corps for the most part.

Senator JEFFORDS. I am obviously interested in FEMA's role here. Is it the intent of the administration to use a new Citizens Corps program in both urban and rural communities, or just in the urban?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I believe so. I think it is really meant to be a comprehensive program to safeguard against the great risks that we now recognize in our country.

Senator JEFFORDS. And what entity will oversee it? Who will have oversight of the program.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. The Citizens Corps?

Senator JEFFORDS. Yes.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I think that is FEMA.

I hope you have all had a chance to receive—and we had asked to be brought up to the committee this document, which is the Freedom Corps booklet that was released after the President's State of the Union. This helps a lot, but again, I am sure that Mr. Bridgeland would be glad to come by with the head of FEMA at an appropriate time to meet with you and go over this.

We know there is a certain amount of confusion there. It is a new idea. We think it all works, and from my point of view, it is a big positive for what we do at the Corporation to be able to work with a Cabinet-level agency like the Freedom Corps. But obviously, like a lot of new ideas, it needs to be a little bit clearer and better explained.

Senator JEFFORDS. Well, I obviously look forward to learning more about what the intentions are and what responsibility FEMA will have.

Thank you.

Senator MIKULSKI. If I could, Senator Jeffords, as you know, I am the appropriator for FEMA, and we are not averse to the President's suggestions, but it is really confusing, and FEMA has no experience in this. Its experience with volunteerism is the volunteer fire departments, and that has been outstanding. The President's budget request for Citizen Corps programs is for \$230 million. A year and a half ago, that is what we were putting into the Fire Grant program to help all the volunteer fire departments around the country.

So you and I need to talk, and maybe even hold a joint roundtable so that we can get it right and sort this out.

Senator JEFFORDS. I agree with you. I think we have to get together, obviously.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I will convey that to Mr. Bridgeland as well.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator WELLSTONE. And I would add to what you all have just said—I think we just got this this morning.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. That is a different document, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. That brings us to the introduction of my friend Senator Wellstone.

Senator WELLSTONE. Dr. Lenkowsky, welcome.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Thank you.

Senator WELLSTONE. I would like to raise a concern with you about service learning. There is not a lot of emphasis or talk about expanding service learning in this reauthorization the way we are talking about some of the other programs. Our colleague John Glenn headed up a really important Commission on Service Learning, and from my 20 years teaching, all of what he says rings true. You can reverse some of the student disengagement and get students more involved. The whole bringing of the real life context to the classroom can be magic. The citizen aspects of public education—John Dewey talked about the importance of public education to democracy. Getting students more involved in communities—I have seen it in Minnesota—is just incredible. Mr. Jim Keilsmeyer in Minnesota is I think one of the really great national leaders on this.

Overall, it has been just win-win-win. So given the extraordinary, I think, contributions of service learning that I have just outlined, why not more of an emphasis on the expansion of service learning by expanding the Learn and Serve program?

Mr. LENKOWSKY. We do have a number of items in our proposals, Senator, that do address this. First, of course, the whole emphasis on expanding service among college students, which is symbolized by the Federal work-study program but goes beyond that, as I had occasion to say a bit earlier, implies expanding service learning in higher education.

Like you, I was a college professor, and I used to do service learning with my students as well, and it is very valuable. I think that insofar as we are encouraging more colleges and universities to take service seriously across the board, that is one way that we are responding to this.

A second way is that when President Bush called on Americans to devote 4,000 hours of service over their lifetime, he was very

careful to indicate that service learning is one kind of activity that would qualify in his view toward those 4,000 hours.

I had a meeting with Senator Glenn and other members of the commission at about that time, and I pointed out that this is in fact a call on all schools to start developing service learning programs to help students fulfill that 4,000 hours.

Also, through the expansion of AmeriCorps, we expect that a number of AmeriCorps members will participate in various ways in service learning. And last but by no means least, in our proposals with regard to Learn and Serve America specifically, we are interested in working with members of this committee in connection with the current funding we are providing to give more emphasis on quality improvements in service learning programs.

I was interested to read some of your proposals, Senator, where you put your finger on exactly the major area where we most need help, and that is teacher training. Yet the current way that we are doing business at the Corporation in Learn and Serve America, my understanding is that we have a great deal of difficulty targeting some of the funds at whatever level you choose to appropriate them on teacher training.

So first we need to make this kind of change in how we are allocating the funds, and then we will use that to build, at whatever level you choose to appropriate, to build in the kind of quality improvements that we think are necessary.

When we started Learn and Serve America, a relatively small fraction of K-12 schools had service learning programs. Our best data now suggest the percentage is above one-third. So we have really had a good impact in terms of seeding. Our view, as with our other proposals, is the next step is quality.

Senator WELLSTONE. I appreciate your comments, and one piece that I am certainly hoping will be a part of this is the Hubert Humphrey—we like that name in Minnesota—Civics Education Act, and part of that is to bump up the authorization for service learning, and to expand teacher training through summer institutes.

Summer institutes have been incredibly important and effective. When you bring people together, and people exchange notes and renew one another, and it is a big bang for the buck.

Where I think I disagree with you, though—and I am sure Senator Glenn has had this conversation or other members of the commission—is that part of what you are talking about in response to my question about why not more of an emphasis on Learn and Serve America, you jumped to the work-study. That is different. I am talking about K through 12 as well as college. Work-study at the college level is a whole different concept. First of all, people are working in work study. That is what they do. That is not the same thing.

Service learning is sort of a synthesis, as you know, between the experience, the community work, and the curriculum—do the work, reflect on the work, learn—and it is rich. In Minnesota, I am in a school every 2 weeks, and I am telling you it is one of the most exciting things that I have seen.

So we can work together on this, but I really want to just call on you as we go forward to really put more of an emphasis on what

has been very successful, and I really do not think the work-study model fulfills that need. The President's call for citizens to be more involved is fine, too, but that does not speak directly to what has been the heart and soul and effectiveness of service learning, especially if we are looking at our public school system.

So I really think we have got to do much better than what we have here.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. We certainly agree with you, Senator. As I said a bit earlier, Federal work-study is one of many things that we are doing. We are in active discussion with colleges and universities now, not simply about Federal work-study but service learning and other areas as well. So we think we are in agreement on this, and we will be making further announcements and further strides as we go forward, and we certainly look forward to working with you.

We are also very interested in the civics education portion—

Senator WELLSTONE. That is good.

Mr. LENKOWSKY [continuing]. And without saying a lot, we have had some discussions within the umbrella of the Freedom Corps, and we can talk a little bit about that, too.

Senator WELLSTONE. I think it is terribly important that we have good civics education, and everybody learns that they should vote Democrat. [Laughter.] I am pushing it hard.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. One of the things I am thinking about doing—I would like to see AmeriCorps members have a basic reading list that might include things like the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, things we can all agree on that really do not create divisions, and read those while you are in AmeriCorps.

As you and I both know from our experience in the classroom, a lot of our students have never read the Declaration or the Constitution, and we think that if you are going to be in AmeriCorps, maybe that is something you should read.

Senator WELLSTONE. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I want to underscore what Senator Wellstone said. Service learning has been at the same appropriation level, \$43 million, since 1994. I am familiar with the programs up in my State, and this is not only the service, but it is also challenging teachers to make education more relevant to kids in these high schools. It has been working, particularly in underserved areas. I can take you to a high school in Springfield, MA, which had a high dropout rate, a high rate of violence, a high teenage pregnancy rate, and they started an aggressive service learning program, and it is now probably the number one high school in Springfield, more directly related to service learning than anything else.

It is challenging for the schools. They have to try to develop something that is going to be relevant to students. In Massachusetts, they measure acid rain in a school that I visited recently. They look at the differences in it during winter and spring, where it comes from, what are the different products, what causes the poison, what is its impact on the lakes, which fish are dying, what other water life is dying. They have converted that into a science program that is the most interesting program, and the kids are flocking to it. It gets them out into the communities to start improving their environment. They learn about the ponds, they learn

about the importance of fresh air, they learn about the value of things which are relevant to them.

So we want to make sure these are quality programs, but I cannot underline enough that if we have things that are working, they ought to be strengthened, but I agree that we are starting a lot of other programs around here, and we are lectured constantly—not by you, but by others—about how we have got to make sure that every Head Start child is able to score on three different tests, and how everything has to be done so that we are not going to waste resources. So we want to make sure that we are finding out what programs are working well and follow the administration in supporting those efforts; we are interested in opening up, but we want to make sure that proven programs that are working effectively are also going to be strengthened.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. We agree with you on that. I think one thing we know about those habits of the heart is that they start young, and if you do not start working on them when they are young, it is going to be that much harder to do later on in life.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Mikulski?

Senator MIKULSKI. Just to wrap up, because I know there is a lot more to this conversation, first of all, I am going to ask the administration to really win support for our appropriation on the usual and customary National Service and AmeriCorps. This has been flat-funded for over 5 years, and every year in Appropriations, I have to fight to keep it—and quite frankly, it is the other side of the aisle. I am not talking about many of my good friends on the other side of the aisle. And in the House, they hate the program. Jim Walsh is always zeroing it out, only because if it were coming over in the appropriation, they would zero it out and put it in another program, and we would lose the \$400 million. So we need support, and we need support in a big way.

The other thing—and Senator Jeffords and I will work on FEMA—I think there is a question of whether Citizen Corps needs to be authorized. We have been asked to spend \$230 million for a new program in FEMA, Senator, I think you ought to look at the authorizing and give me guidance in terms of what you would like, so we can work expeditiously.

I want to put this \$230 million for Citizen Corps into the framework of an appropriator. The Fire Grant program is a new program over the last 2 years, the goal of which is to help our fire fighters pay for the equipment they need, to protect the protector, to provide for their personal safety equipment, and new types of vehicles and technology. That whole program was authorized at \$300 million, and I had to forage for the funding. Now we are asked to spend \$230 million on, quite frankly, an ill-defined Citizen Corps including \$144 million in matching grants to form councils. Well, the volunteer fire fighters are going to say, “Senator Mikulski, you know, we are volunteer fire fighters on our own dime and on our own time, putting ourselves in the line of fire. Why don’t you just put this funding into the volunteer fire fighters? We are the volunteers.”

These are the kinds of questions that they raise. I am not being prickly about it, but I think there is really a lot to sort out here—and I know it is not under your jurisdiction, but essentially, it af-

fects the whole climate on service, and again, I think we need some sorting out here.

I am sorry that we are dealing with this in April. We are going to be marking up our appropriations bill soon so we need to sort out what is in the Finance Committee, and what is this Cabinet-level council or agency.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. I know that Mr. Bridgeland is looking forward to chatting with you next week when we are scheduled to see you and working on that.

Senator MIKULSKI. Yes, and we will be working that out.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. On the first point you made, again, the real value of being able to work with the White House on this issue is that we have had some very productive conversations in the other Chamber with people who have been fairly critical in the past of what we have done. I would characterize them as educational. One of the great things that we do is when you actually get beyond—

Senator MIKULSKI. Is that a nice phrase? [Laughter.]

Mr. LENKOWSKY [continuing]. You get beyond the rhetoric, and you actually go out there and you see Sister Mary Jonas on the corner of Stanislaus and Koskiusku in Buffalo, and you see VISTAS coming with food so that she can run a food pantry, you realize that this is not some Government plot to take over the voluntary sector but is actually a way in which we here in Washington are working to strengthen the voluntary sector, to build good habits of citizenship that will last a lifetime, and to help needy people in our communities.

Whenever I travel, I go to some of the worst parts of every town, and I see some of the best people. And what most impresses me is that our folks, the folks in the programs that you authorize and appropriate funds for, are out there helping those people. And the more that people see that, the more they are going to support what we do.

The CHAIRMAN. Give us that wonderful quote of yours, Dr. Lenkowsky, that you use in your speeches.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. It is what I said—I go to the worst parts of all communities, and I see the best people. I went to Little Haiti in Miami not long ago, and there, we had some VISTAS helping first-time Haitian home owners whose credit histories begin in Port au Prince and whose native language is Creole, navigating their way through the very complicated forms you have to do—and I was doing it at the time myself—to buy or sell a house. And our VISTAs were not very far-removed socioeconomically from the people they were helping.

So you really had a win-win; you were building stable communities, you were helping needy people, and our VISTAs were really getting a sense of what they could do and learning some skills. Many of them wanted to go on after their VISTA year and get into credit counseling or real estate brokerage or some of the other skills. So it is really heartening to see, and I think that as people go out there and see what we are really doing, some of the preconceptions will drop away.

The CHAIRMAN. We will include in the record at this point a statement of Senator Bond, as well as others who may wish to submit statements.

[The prepared statement of Senator Bond follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOND

Thank you, Chairman Kennedy for holding this important hearing on the reauthorization of national and community service legislation. I also welcome Mr. Les Lenkowsky, the new Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). As an appropriator and authorizer of the Corporation, I am very interested in this issue. I look forward to working with you, Senator Gregg, and my good colleague and fellow appropriator Senator Mikulski in developing a bi-partisan reauthorization bill for CNCS.

Along with the Peace Corps, CNCS plays a vital role in leading the federal government's involvement in volunteer activities. Out of the tragedy of the terrorist attacks of September 11th has come a public cry for citizens to become involved in public service and help our communities respond to the new demands of homeland security. The demand for volunteerism is probably at its highest ever as I have witnessed in my home State of Missouri. As I have traveled across Missouri, I have heard from people in all walks of life - senior citizens, college graduates, and high school students - who have told me that they want to serve and help their neighborhoods. The events of September 11th have generated a new spirit of public service, compassion, and responsibility. We have a unique opportunity to capture and harness this new spirit and in turn, we can improve our communities and strengthen the bonds of all Americans in unimaginable ways.

However, the current structure and programs of the Corporation does not lend itself to meet effectively and efficiently the volunteer needs of Americans. The Corporation is not getting the "biggest bang for the buck." That is why I strongly believe that the Corporation's programs need fundamental reforms. I believe that it should perform less "retail" activities and focus more on "wholesale" activities. What do I mean? This means that instead of funding and training volunteers directly, the Corporation should fund and train organizations that are experienced and equipped to train volunteers. In other words, the Corporation should "train the trainers" so that it can expand and widen its reach in terms of the number of volunteers it touches today.

Before closing, I must raise the importance of management and accountability. For too long, the Corporation has been riddled with inadequate management systems and ineffective oversight practices and it has been unable to provide performance outcome data on its programs. Unfortunately, the Corporation's top management often ignored or minimized the importance of management and accountability and as a result, the Corporation was unable to meet fully its mission. Further, management problems have hurt the Corporation's credibility on Capitol Hill and made it an easy target of criticism and budget cuts. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to ensure that the Corporation is able to demonstrate that every taxpayer dollar is maximized and spent appropriately. As the previous Chairman and now Ranking Member of the VA-HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, I

have become intimately knowledgeable about the Corporation's long-standing management problems.

I am pleased that the Corporation received a clean opinion on its fiscal year 2001 financial statements audit with no material weaknesses and I congratulate Mr. Lenkowsky for his leadership. However, we cannot afford to back slide from this important achievement, especially if the responsibilities and functions of the Corporation are expanded as requested by the Administration. I hope that the Corporation's leadership continues to keep management a top priority.

Thank you again Chairman Kennedy for holding this hearing. I look forward to working on the Corporation's reauthorization this year and appreciate your leadership in addressing this important issue.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.
Senator Jeffords?

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Chairman, I just want to add that I want to make sure we all work together. I am on the Finance Committee along with Senator Bond, and certainly, all of us who have a say can be better communicated with than we have been thus far so we can all work toward making this a very workable program.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I think you are among friends of volunteerism here, and we want to be constructive, and we are positive, and we applaud the President's focus on this and admire your own strong personal commitment. And we want to make sure that whatever we have is going to really work, and we are very eager to work with you. I think you will find that you have a very positive response from members of the committee to help make some sense about some of these concerns.

Thank you very, very much.

Mr. LENKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:22 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]