

THE NEXT GENERATION OF NATIONAL SERVICE

HEARING
OF THE
**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS**
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
ON
EXAMINING THE FUTURE OF NATIONAL SERVICE

—————
MARCH 10, 2009
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Printed for the use of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/senate>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

48-041 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2010

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
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THE NEXT GENERATION OF NATIONAL SERVICE

TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2009

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m. in room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Barbara A. Mikulski presiding.

Present: Senators Mikulski, Dodd, Murray, Enzi, Isakson, McCain, and Hatch.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKULSKI

Senator MIKULSKI. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will come to order. Today's hearing is entitled, "The Next Generation of National Service."

The purpose of the hearing today is to take testimony on the status of where we are at the Corporation for National and Community Service and our famous AmeriCorps and get the views of the chair of the National and Community Service Commission, along with Stephen Goldsmith, and also the vice chair.

We will also be listening to very talented social entrepreneurs, as we look at ways to renew, refresh, and reinvigorate national service. We are going to be listening to a distinguished group of people that includes: practitioners, social entrepreneurs who increase the social capital in our country, as well as a governor who oversaw the commission in his own State and knows what a difference service makes.

I want to acknowledge the fact that Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch have put forth a bill that will be our framework as we go to markup, and also, for today's hearing. Senator Kennedy wanted so much to be here in person to listen to you for this review and also to get new ideas on how we can keep national service as fresh as the country wants us to.

Senator Kennedy has prepared a statement that I am going to read in lieu of my own. I ask unanimous consent that my full statement go in the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Mikulski follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKULSKI

Good afternoon. I'd like to welcome and thank our panel of witnesses for being here today. I'm chairing this hearing for Senator Edward Kennedy, a champion of national service, and a chief spon-

sor of the Serve America Act. As always, I'm happy and honored to lead the charge in his absence.

I've been called the Godmother of national service. Wherever I go, people of all ages tell me they want to serve. They want to be part of an effort to improve society. We've got our economic stimulus. Now it's time to give the American people a social.

Talking about national service legislation is especially poignant for me. Last month it will have been 20 years since I introduced my national service legislation that eventually evolved into AmeriCorps. Service has always been dear to me. After grad school, I answered President Kennedy's call to service. I took my Master's in social work, and went down to the VISTA training center to teach volunteers how to be effective in the communities they serve. Seeing that group of determined people making a difference through gumption and hard work really made an impact on me. It was a wonderful experience. One that has colored everything I've done since. It's a special thing to answer a President when he asks you to serve.

We're here today to talk about the next generation of national service. How we can refresh, re-invigorate and reform our national service programs to meet the challenges we face today. Senators Kennedy and Hatch have written an excellent bipartisan bill. National service has always been bipartisan. FDR put his mark on national service through his Civilian Conservation Corps, which put people back to work conserving our public lands. President Kennedy called the Nation to serve with his Peace Corps. President Johnson had his VISTA program to get young people to fight the war on poverty. President George H.W. Bush founded his "Points of Light" to leverage nonprofits in doing community work. President Clinton has his AmeriCorps.

The Kennedy/Hatch *Serve America Act* expands national service so that we can increase the number of national volunteers from 75,000 to 250,000. But this bill doesn't just allow more people to serve. It asks people to help solve specific challenges in the areas where our Nation continues to struggle: we ask our high school students to join service-learning programs to reduce school drop-out rates, improve our neighborhood parks, and keep our communities clean through local recycling efforts. We want to set our young Americans on a path to lifetime service. We ask our college graduates to give a year to a targeted service effort and help us tackle America's education, health, energy and poverty problems. We ask our retirees to help us value their skills and experiences and make service work for them.

We'll leverage Federal dollars to help them transition into service jobs by providing an "Encore Fellowship" to incentivize service for an older generation that remembers giving back isn't just nice to do, it's the right thing to do. We ask our service alumni to give once more by enlisting in a Reserve to be deployed during times of national crisis or need. We ask our skilled professionals to engage in short-term service in developing countries to improve people's living standards, and to help rebuild America's standing in the world. We ask our successful and dynamic non-profits to increase their capacity and bring their innovative ideas to scale.

This isn't just about new programs and new opportunities. It's about answering the demands of a public that isn't just saying they want to give back, they're screaming for the opportunity. Last year 25,000 college seniors applied for a slot in Teach for America to teach 2 years in our Nation's most challenging schools. There were only 4,000 slots. The Peace Corps received approximately 13,000 applications last year for less than 4,000 slots. And in the last 2 years, young people across the country volunteered their time and effort to a cause fueled by optimism and hope even though the outcome was uncertain. I'm happy to say they got a handsome return on their work on Nov. 4. Now we're blessed with the challenge of harnessing this surge in goodwill and renewing the call to service that inspired my generation, the President Kennedy generation.

I think this legislation is a way to revive this spirit of volunteerism and service to our country. I think it is a way to harvest what I'm calling the "Obama effect." There's this new fascination with civic engagement that President Obama inspired throughout his campaign. This last election unleashed an incredible energy. People want to know how they can give, how they can help, how they can make a difference. Our President's actions speak to the people. When our President says that national and community service is important, and that it has a positive impact both on communities and the volunteers who serve in them, he's speaking from experience.

And it's affecting people of all ages and all walks of life. Last summer, I was talking to a veteran teacher in Baltimore who usually had to *push* for 10 kids to come to her summer math classes. Last summer that changed. She had a waiting list of more than 100 kids.

This teacher asked one of the young boys, "what do you want to be?" He said, "I want to be smart." And when she asked him what he wanted to be smart for, this young boy replied: "I want to be smart because of Obama. I look at Obama and he can do it. I want to do it, too. But I know I've gotta start out wanting to be smart."

The teacher left the room and started crying. In her 25 years in the Baltimore Schools 1 system, no student had ever said, "I want to be smart." So Obama's reaching our students. He reached the people last November. He's even reached Congress by asking us to send the Serve America Act bill to his desk. Let's give the public a chance to express the habits of the heart that were the foundation of this country: neighbors helping neighbors, communities sticking together.

President Obama has asked us to move quickly. And we will. But we also know process is important. And we need to go through the regular order—hearing from experts, hearing from Republicans and Democrats. I'm looking forward to a mark-up next week. But this hearing is an important step and in keeping with the tenor set by majority leader Reid. Let's move forward together.

Senator MIKULSKI. In the interest of time, because votes might be coming at 4 p.m., I just simply want to do this for Senator Kennedy. Let the record show that on Sunday night, there was a tribute to Senator Kennedy at the Kennedy Center at which he received the Profile in Courage. They sang The Man from La Mancha's "The Impossible Dream."

Well, today, we are here to make sure the dream is possible. So, in Senator Kennedy's own words, he wanted us to say:

"Many years ago, on the fifth anniversary of the Peace Corps, I asked one of those young Americans why had they volunteered, and I will never forget the answer. They said it was the first time someone asked me to do something for my country.

"Now it is time again to ask what you can do for your country. Americans, young and old, are looking for new ways to serve their communities and give back to their country. This hearing will enable us to learn new and better ways to provide opportunities to serve. Service has always been a bipartisan goal, and our hearing today continues that tradition.

"From President Kennedy's creation of the Peace Corps to President George H.W. Bush's Points of Light to President Clinton's AmeriCorps, presidents of both parties have contributed their own ideas. I commend President Obama for making an early priority of his Administration to expand service opportunities.

"In 1990, working with the first President Bush, our committee approved the original National and Community Service Act. Many of those who worked on it are here today, working together. Senator Hatch, who has committed a great deal of time and effort to national service, and Senator Mikulski, who planted the seeds for AmeriCorps. I am proud to work with both of them on this bipartisan service bill, and I commend Senator Enzi for his support as we guide this bill through.

"What the Serve America Act proves is that service can make a great deal of difference in tackling problems if we focus on specific challenges. Service opportunities early in life can put young people on a path to a lifetime of service. More and more older Americans want to put their skills and experience to work for their community and for their country.

"And forward-thinking social entrepreneurs are coming up with their own effective ways of tackling some of our greatest challenges and, at the same time, creating more social capital, which is the true investment in our communities.

"Now is the time to act on what we learned. This legislation will increase service opportunities, and we will be able to create the next generation of volunteers."

Senator Kennedy concludes by saying,

"National service has been a cause of mine for many years, and the time is right today to do much more. I look forward to working closely with my colleagues on the committee and the President to strengthen this service."

So this is for the record.

This bill, of course, will be the Kennedy-Hatch bill.

Senator Enzi, I would like to turn to you for your opening statement and then to Senator Hatch, as the lead Republican sponsor, for his statement. Then we will go to our witness panel.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ENZI

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, and thank you for holding this important hearing today.

I want to extend my gratitude to Senator Hatch for his leadership on these issues and congratulate him on his good work for the Serve America Act. Senator Hatch has been a tireless advocate for increased opportunities for volunteer service. He has been the chairman of this committee before. He and Senator Kennedy have worked on this bill before.

It was a nice compliment paid to the two of them by the President in the joint session speech that was given, where the President asked for this to be named after the two of them. And we should respect that wish, and they deserve it.

We look forward to the swift return of Senator Kennedy, for whom national service has been a lifelong pursuit. He has done so many wonderful things, and we do miss him here.

A comprehensive reauthorization of our national service statutes is long overdue. These programs haven't received a hard look in over 15 years. We have an opportunity with this hearing to identify the areas where reforms are needed, where waste can be eliminated, and where we can responsibly expand our efforts.

As the only accountant in the Senate, I am always looking for ways to strengthen the management and fiscal accountability of Federal programs. Specifically, I have a continued interest in improving the ability of small and rural programs to effectively reach rural communities. As the Senate considers how to streamline funding and minimize bureaucracy, we must keep in mind the needs of rural programs and the communities they serve.

Also, I am concerned that a significant portion of the 1 percent set aside for programs serving Native American communities has not been used. Too often, these communities experience the most extreme needs for education, health, and workforce services.

The programs in the National and Community Service Act and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act can play an important role in improving the quality of life in Native American communities, and we must improve their access to these programs.

I am encouraged by the work that is being done in Wyoming and across the country by volunteers in the Senior Corps program. In Wyoming, over 1,000 people a year—and we only have half a million people in our State to begin with—participate as senior companions, foster grandparents, or community volunteers. They perform services such as conducting safety patrols and participating in environmental cleanup projects.

In Wyoming, the Congressional Award Council connects young people to service opportunities and sponsors an award ceremony. It does not receive any Federal dollars, but it has been wildly successful.

One example is in Cheyenne, where young people are conducting CPR and first aid classes and providing disaster preparedness training in the community. For thousands of hours of service, they receive a Bronze medal or a Silver medal and, finally, a gold medal for their hours.

Across the country, there are now alumni associations of these congressional award winners who put on spectacular programs in their State for no award whatsoever. It is just a habit of service that has been developed through this wonderful program. The gold medal recipients do have a special opportunity to travel to Washington, DC, in June and receive their medals. The importance of these opportunities can't be overstated.

This hearing is an important starting point for the reauthorization of our national service laws. I look forward to hearing the testimony of our witnesses today. Your input is an important part of the legislative process.

I am confident that we can continue to work in a bipartisan way, incorporating the good ideas that Senators Hatch and Kennedy have put together, and get a bill to the President in the next few weeks.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Enzi follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR ENZI

Madam Chairwoman, thank you for holding this very important hearing today. I want to extend my gratitude to Senator Hatch for his leadership on these issues, and congratulate him on his good work in the Serve America Act. Senator Hatch has been a tireless advocate for increased opportunities for volunteer service. And we look forward to the swift return of our friend Senator Kennedy, for whom national service has been a life-long pursuit.

A comprehensive reauthorization of our national service statutes is long overdue. These programs have not received a hard look in over 15 years. We have an opportunity with this hearing to identify the areas where reforms are needed, where waste can be eliminated, and where we can responsibly expand our efforts. As the only accountant in the Senate I am always looking for ways to strengthen the management and fiscal accountability of Federal programs.

Specifically, I have a continued interest in improving the ability of small and rural programs to effectively reach rural communities. As the Senate considers how to streamline funding and minimize bureaucracy, we must keep in mind the needs of rural programs and the communities they serve.

Also, I am concerned that a significant portion of the 1 percent set-aside for programs serving Native American communities has not been used. Too often these communities experience the most extreme needs for education, health, and workforce services. The programs in the National and Community Service Act, and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act, can play an important role in improving the quality of life in Native American communities, and we most improve their access to these programs.

And I am encouraged by the good work that is being done in Wyoming and across the country by volunteers in the SeniorCorps program. In Wyoming over a 1,000 people a year participate as senior companions, foster grandparents or community volunteers. They perform services such as conducting safety patrols and participating in environmental clean-up projects.

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Each year the Council sponsors an award ceremony in Wyoming where members of our congressional delegation award Certificates and Bronze and Silver medals. Gold medal recipients have the special opportunity to travel to Washington, DC in June to receive their medals.

The importance of these opportunities cannot be overstated.

This hearing is an important starting point for the reauthorization of our national service laws. I look forward to hearing the testimony of our witnesses today. Your input is an important part of the legislative process. I am confident that we can continue to work in a bipartisan way, incorporating the good ideas that Senators Hatch and Kennedy have put together, to get a bill to the President in the next few weeks.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you, Senator Enzi, for that excellent opening statement.

Senator Hatch.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR HATCH

Senator HATCH. Well, thank you, Madam Chairman.

First and foremost, I would like to thank you personally for giving me an opportunity to make a statement at the opening of this proceeding. I would also like to thank you for chairing this hearing and, of course, your willingness to take charge of this hearing in the absence of our dear friend Senator Kennedy.

Though Senator Mikulski is able to the task, I must say that given the subject matter we are discussing today, I don't think Senator Kennedy's absence will go unnoticed. He would be here if he could, and he will be here in the future.

It was over 2 years ago that I approached Senator Kennedy and suggested that we create a system to encourage our citizens to devote significant time to volunteer service. At practically that same time, I met with Pastor Rick Warren, who came and visited with me and thought this would be a good idea and has made some helpful suggestions.

As a young man, I served a 2-year volunteer mission for my faith during which I learned firsthand the benefits of service. It was the greatest period of my life. I wouldn't trade that for being a U.S. Senator because I gave 2 solid years, 18 hours a day, helping people, and it was a really wonderful thing for me. I want to give that opportunity to as many young people as we can, though in a different way, through this legislation.

Also Sargent Shriver—I don't know how many of you have read "Sarg," the biography of Sargent Shriver, but it is a worthwhile read. I have read it, and both Sargent Shriver and Eunice have been wonderful friends over the years.

In fact, in the early days, when I became chairman of this committee and Senator Kennedy decided to give me a little bit of a

rough time at that time and whenever he gave me too rough a time, I would say, "OK, Teddy, I am going to go see Eunice." "Oh, no. Don't do that. Don't do that," he would say.

[Laughter.]

Because he knew that Eunice would work him over, and we have had a lot of fun through the years doing that with each other. Fortunately, none of this was necessary on this bill.

I came to Senator Kennedy in hopes that we could find ways to give similar opportunities to more and more people across the spectrum—from the veteran who returns home and wants to continue to serve to the traditional volunteer in a community who wants to help their neighbor in times of need. Though it has taken some time and no small amount of work, these were the humble beginnings of the Serve America Act.

As we worked on this legislation, I personally had a list of priorities. I also have to say that Senator Kennedy agrees with these.

We wanted to ensure that we weren't just creating another Federal program. We didn't want to add another level of government bureaucracy in order to encourage volunteer service, but to work through existing community-based efforts that represent one of the finest and most uniquely American traditions in the world.

In addition, if we were going to work within the framework of existing community and national service programs, I was insistent that we improve upon it by adding more direction and accountability for results, to set some goals and work to achieve them and to increase the role of States and small communities in these programs.

We also wanted indicators of civic health, just as we have indicators of the state of our economy. I believed that doing so would leverage even more volunteers and investment at the local level with the belief that people closest to the actual needs, people who share your zip code and live in your communities, understand best how to help.

Finally, we wanted our legislation to include enough flexibility to encompass different types of service. We wanted to see opportunities increase for individuals to follow their own paths when serving in their communities.

We also wanted to encourage both full-time service and traditional episodic service, and we wanted opportunities for Americans of all ages, from children in schools to employees in workplaces to older Americans as they move to encore or second careers looking for more meaning in their lives. Everyone can serve.

All of this was a tall order, to be sure, but I think that with the Serve America Act, we have drafted a bill that will address all of these profiles and priorities.

As President Ronald Reagan once said, "The work of volunteer groups throughout our country represents the very heart and soul of America. They have helped make this the most compassionate, generous, and humane society that ever existed on the face of the Earth."

Volunteerism and selfless service are, in my opinion, fundamental. They are fundamental American virtues, and they will continue to be so with or without the aid of the Government.

Now I understand those that do not see a significant role for the Federal Government increasing volunteer service, and I share the concerns of those who want to ensure that we spend tax dollars in a sensible way. Quite frankly, I don't think that such concerns are good reasons to oppose the Serve America Act.

Currently, roughly 75,000 Americans participate in national service every year, receiving modest living stipends and even smaller education awards. However, the efforts of those 75,000 help to leverage more than 2 million other traditional volunteers, who receive nothing from government to work on the same projects.

In addition, they lead to hundreds of millions of dollars every year in non-Federal investment in service organizations and charities. None of these additional volunteers receive any aid or awards from the Federal Government, and none of the resulting private donations are underwritten by the Federal Treasury.

While the investment in the existing programs is not insignificant, most of the real benefits are never seen in the Federal budget. They are real and the Serve America Act would greatly improve upon them.

Now this is the type of return we expect to see on this relatively modest investment, especially at a time when youth unemployment is at 21 percent and unemployment among older Americans is at its highest level since 1983. These are two populations that community and national service disproportionately engages at low cost to government with no new bureaucracy.

Madam Chair, the programs in the Serve America Act are all designed to foster new forms of service and to leverage increased volunteerism from organizations at the local, State, and national level and to mobilize skilled American professionals to meet urgent needs abroad.

The bill establishes programs that will allow individuals and small nonprofits to come up with innovative and creative solutions to addressing national and international problems, maintaining the role of communities and States as laboratories for invention. Rather than providing direct aid to the economically disadvantaged, the bill will encourage citizens, private organizations, and communities to work together to empower those in need.

In the long run, I believe that the Serve America Act will allow communities to help themselves, meaning that the Government will ultimately be asked to do less and less.

Once again, I would like to thank the Chair for the opportunity to chat about this today, and I would like to just announce that I am really pleased that my friend John McCain has agreed to sponsor this and help push it through. It means a lot to me, and I think he is one of the great Americans, one of the greatest Americans that we have in this day and age. With both him and Senator Kennedy on this bill, I think we should do all right. Don't you think, John.

[Laughter.]

Thank you so much, Madam Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Hatch follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR HATCH

First and foremost, I'd like to thank Senator Mikulski for giving me an opportunity to make a statement at the opening of this proceeding. I'd also like to thank the distinguished Senator from Maryland for her willingness to take charge of this hearing in the absence of our dear friend Senator Kennedy. Though Senator Mikulski is able for the task, I must say that, given the subject matter we're discussing today, I don't think Senator Kennedy's absence will go unnoticed.

It was over 2 years ago that I approached Senator Kennedy and suggested that we create a system to encourage our citizens to devote significant time to volunteer service. As a young man, I served a 2-year full-time mission for my church, during which I learned firsthand the benefits of service—not only for the beneficiaries of the service, but particularly for those who volunteer their time in the service of others. Likewise, I think we've all witnessed with awe those who sacrifice and volunteer to serve in the military and get the opportunity to be part of something bigger than themselves.

I came to Senator Kennedy in hopes that we could find ways to give similar opportunities to more and more people across the spectrum—from the veteran who returns home and wants to continue to serve, to the traditional volunteer in a community who wants to help their neighbor in times of need. Though it has taken some time and no small amount of work, these were the humble beginnings of the Serve America Act.

As we worked on this legislation, I had a list of priorities. Foremost, I wanted to ensure that we weren't creating just another Federal program. I didn't want to add another level of government bureaucracy in order to encourage volunteer service, but to work through existing, community-based efforts that represent one of the finest and uniquely American traditions in the world.

In addition, if we were going to work within the framework of existing community and national service programs, I was insistent that we improve upon it by adding more direction and accountability for results—to set some goals and work to achieve them and to increase the role of States and small communities in these programs. I also wanted indicators of civic health, just as we have indicators of the State of our economy. I believed that doing so would leverage even more volunteers and investment at the local level, with a belief that people closest to the actual needs—people who share your zip code, and live in your community—understand best how to help.

Finally, I wanted our legislation to include enough flexibility to encompass different types of service. I wanted to see opportunities increased for individuals to follow their own paths when serving their communities. I also wanted to encourage both full-time service and traditional episodic service. And I wanted opportunities for Americans of all ages—from children in schools, to employees in workplaces, to older Americans as they move to encore or second careers looking for more meaning in their lives. Everyone can serve.

All of this was a tall order, to be sure. But, I think that, with the Serve America Act, we've drafted a bill that will address all of these priorities.

As President Ronald Reagan said:

"The work of volunteer groups throughout our country represents the very heart and soul of America. They have helped make this the most compassionate, generous, and humane society that ever existed on the face of this earth."

Volunteerism and selfless service are, in my opinion, fundamental American virtues and they will continue to be so with or without the aid of the Government. I understand those that do not see a significant role for the Federal Government increasing volunteer service and I share the concerns of those who want to ensure that we spend tax dollars in a sensible way. But, quite frankly, I don't think that such concerns are good reasons to oppose the Serve America Act.

Currently, roughly 75,000 Americans participate in national service every year, receiving modest living stipends and even smaller education awards. However, the efforts of those 75,000 help to leverage more than 2 million other traditional volunteers—who receive nothing from government—to work on the same projects. In addition, they lead to hundreds of millions of dollars every year in non-Federal investment in service organizations and charities. None of these additional volunteers receive any aid or awards from the Federal Government and none of the resulting private donations are underwritten by the Federal treasury. So, while the investment in the existing programs is not insignificant, most of the real benefits are never seen in the Federal budget, but, they are real and the Serve America Act will greatly improve upon them. This is the type of return we expect to see on this relatively modest investment, especially at a time when youth unemployment is at 21 percent and unemployment among older Americans is at its highest levels since 1983. These are two populations that community and national service disproportionately engages at low cost to government with no new bureaucracy.

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The bill establishes programs that will allow individuals and small non-profits to come up with innovative and creative solutions to addressing national and international problems, maintaining the role of communities and States as laboratories for invention. Rather than providing direct aid to the economically disadvantaged, the bill will encourage citizens, private organizations, and communities to work together to empower those in need. In the long run, I believe that the Serve America Act will allow communities to help themselves, meaning that the government will ultimately be asked to do less and less.

Once again, I'd like to thank the chair for the opportunity to speak today and I look forward to hearing the comments from both distinguished panels.

Senator MIKULSKI. I want to recognize Senator McCain. He was one of the founding fathers of our original commission. Senator McCain, I believe that it was in 1990.

We weren't going to do a lot of opening statements in the interest of time, but when you have got a founding father and a founding mother—the founding mother has got a chance to talk, so does the founding father.

[Laughter.]

So founding father.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MCCAIN

Senator MCCAIN. I thank you, Madam Chairman and thank you for your commitment on this issue.

I thank Senator Enzi and, of course, my friend Senator Hatch.

As you mentioned, I have been involved in this issue for quite a while. Senator Bayh and I introduced somewhat similar legislation in previous years, and I appreciate very much Senator Hatch and Senator Kennedy's effort. I look forward to hearing from the witnesses today, and I think the time is right for such a measure.

I thank you, Madam Chairman.

Senator HATCH. Madam Chair, could I put a statement in the record from our lieutenant governor in Utah, who would have been here except for the legislative session?

Senator MIKULSKI. Absolutely. Without objection.

[The information previously referred to follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GARY HERBERT, LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, STATE OF UTAH

Madame Chair, distinguished Senators, I welcome the opportunity to give a statement on the important matters before the committee today. I greatly appreciate the invitation to give a statement and I regret that, during these waning days of the Utah legislative session, I am unable to attend in person.

My name is Gary Herbert and currently serve as the Lieutenant Governor for the State of Utah. One of my many duties in this position is to oversee the Utah Commission on Volunteers, which administers the State's efforts in existing national service programs as well as those originating from within the State.

Anyone who has spent time in Utah and among its people knows that service, generosity, and an outstanding work ethic are values that are deeply ingrained in our State's culture. Tens of thousands of Utahns participate every year in various service projects and initiatives. In 2007 and 2008, more than 44,000 people participated in 88 different national service projects throughout the State. In the last year of accounting, more than 7,200 seniors in Utah participated in Senior Corps programs. During that same time, nearly 1,000 Americorps participants did their work in our State and more than 35,000 students benefited from Learn and Serve America. Indeed, projects funded through national service initiatives have greatly enriched Utah's philanthropic landscape.

I was greatly encouraged to see Senators Hatch and Kennedy introduce the Serve America Act because, though we've enjoyed much success in our State's volunteer efforts, the ailing economy has been particularly hard on the non-profit sector, leading to a decline in services offered by charities and community organizations. This landmark legislation will help our State by supporting non-profit organizations that are hurting as a result of the evaporation of wealth, the State and local budget crunch, and increasing demands for services that accompany difficult economic times.

The bill will also increase the numbers of people in our State who participate in full-time, part-time and traditional volunteer service. With unemployment among youth and older Americans at very high levels throughout the country, investing in the community-based infrastructure to permit thousands of volunteers from Utah to give back to their communities and State makes perfect sense.

As in other States, in Utah, we need teachers in high-need schools, mentors and tutors for disadvantaged youth, extra hands in soup kitchens and homeless shelters,

and volunteers in senior centers, nursing homes and nursery schools. The non-profit and church-sponsored organizations that work in our communities to address these issues have been hit hard by the economy. Yet, I believe that many Utahns are willing to be put into productive work to meet these growing needs and the Serve America Act will help us make great strides to do so.

I applaud Senator Hatch's leadership on this important legislation, which will permit more Americans to do good works in hard times and move from talk of bailouts to a spirit of overcoming challenges in America.

Senator HATCH. Appreciate it.

Senator MIKULSKI. We are now going to turn to both the chair and the vice chair of the Corporation of National and Community Service. When they are concluded, I am going to ask our other panelists to come up and join them and make their testimony because we are going to be voting at 4 p.m.

We will just open up the questions to you, as essentially our board, and then also to the people who bring both experience and some new ideas.

I would like to turn now to Alan Solomont, the board of directors and chair of the corporation, and then to Stephen Goldsmith, the vice chair for the corporation. Mr. Solomont is the CEO of Solomont Bailis Ventures in western Massachusetts, and Stephen Goldsmith is the Daniel Paul Professor of Government and the director of Innovations in American Government at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government in Cambridge, MA.

Gentlemen.

STATEMENT OF ALAN SOLOMONT, BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CHAIR, CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE, CHAIRMAN AND CEO, SOLOMONT BAILIS VENTURES, WESTON, MA

Mr. SOLOMONT. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman, Ranking Member Enzi, members of the committee.

Good afternoon, and thank you for this opportunity to testify and for this committee's longstanding bipartisan support for national service.

I especially thank you, Chairwoman, the founding mother of national service—and the founding father—for your passionate advocacy and strong oversight over the past 16 years. We are grateful that you have put national service on the committee's agenda so early in the 111th Congress.

I appear before you today as the newly elected chairman of the board of the Corporation for National and Community Service. I was appointed to the board by President Clinton in 2000, reappointed by President Bush in 2007, and elected chairman last month, stepping into the very large shoes of my good friend Steve Goldsmith.

Having served on the board for this long, I know there have been times when you have had concern about the corporation's management and leadership. I want you to know that we heard you then, and we hear you now. We remain committed to transparent and rigorous management of the resources with which we have been entrusted. Sound management and accountability remain a top focus of our bipartisan board and senior staff.

Let me acknowledge one member of the committee who is not here and who happens to be my Senator. I would not be here if it

weren't for Senator Kennedy, who sponsored the original national service legislation and who, along with you, Senator Hatch, is driving the next generation of service envisioned in the Serve America Act.

I was very pleased when Senator Kennedy received the Profiles in Courage award from his niece Caroline that she mentioned his leadership in national service.

Today's hearing comes at a pivotal moment for national and community service. The economic crisis is causing hardship for millions of Americans, and no one sector of society can pull us out of it.

We have a President who understands the power of citizen action and who has pledged to make service a central cause of his presidency. We have bipartisan support for a dramatic expansion in service, and we have a new generation, known as "millennials," that is looking to participate in something larger than themselves by serving their communities and their country.

National service is about engaging citizens and solving community problems. That idea is as old as America, but it is made new with each generation. As each generation realizes the impact of service, it also learns that service is transformative. I know because, as Senator Hatch mentioned, it was also for me.

After I graduated from college, I moved to Lowell, MA, to be a community organizer. Lowell, the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, by the 1970s was down on its luck. Our organizing project helped tenants avoid eviction and homeowners protect their neighborhoods. We worked with businesses, churches, and labor unions to save jobs.

I worked alongside then city councilor Paul Tsongas and a young candidate for Congress, John Kerry. Our organizing made a real difference in helping Lowellians cope with the economic crisis, but it also had a profound impact on my life. I went on to a career in business, but everything I have done since then has been informed by what I learned from that experience, especially my belief that things can change for the better if we work together.

This ethic of service affects every generation, and the next generation of young people is especially open to it. I believe that civilian service has the potential to do, in part, for this generation what military service did for the "greatest generation."

Through their military service, the men and women of the greatest generation were exposed to the great diversity of America. Their service bound them together and fueled their patriotism, made them better citizens, and made America a stronger Nation.

Today, we are at an inflection point, the beginning, hopefully, of a new era of responsibility and citizen engagement. We saw this in the 2008 presidential campaign when millions of Americans from both political parties became part of the process for the first time. We are seeing it in volunteer centers and community organizations as Americans respond to the economic downturn and to the President's call to service.

The Serve America Act, first introduced in the 110th Congress and re-introduced as S.277 by Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch, will grow national service to meet these challenges. It will invest in and expand the civic and volunteer infrastructure to support this growth. The bill sets the corporation on a path to enlist

250,000 members, and it strengthens service opportunities for people of all ages.

The March 6, 2009, letter from the Office of Management and Budget lays out the Administration's priorities for national service. I would like to highlight a few.

The Administration supports simplifying funding streams, management structures, and application and reporting processes. Part of the simplification is expanded authority to use fixed-amount grants that simplify reporting requirements while ensuring more robust performance accountability and more uniform collection of impact data.

Any discussion about the next generation of service should include talking about innovation. Problems our Nation faces can't be solved by government alone. They require all hands on deck.

Though the corporation's role has traditionally been to choose the best programs and ensure accountability, it also can play a role in supporting and investing in new ideas. The Serve America Act provides for that through the Community Solutions Fund, which will test new ideas, leverage private support, and expand successful programs to scale.

The Administration is pleased that the Serve America Act also seeks to improve service learning opportunities and new service opportunities for baby boomers and older Americans. As someone who has been an outspoken advocate for Senior Corps, I appreciate the value and impact of the Senior Corps programs. Some of them, begun in the 1960s in conjunction with the war on poverty, have done a terrific job.

As we anticipate the coming wave of aging baby boomers, now is the time to modernize these programs for the 21st century. The Administration has made a commitment to expand these programs, but we cannot provide seniors with the service opportunities they deserve without introducing competition, greater accountability, and innovation.

Finally, the Administration would like to see an increase in the maximum amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award. Named for a dear friend and one of the architects of national service, the award has not been adjusted since the program's inception in 1993.

I thank you for this opportunity to share a bit of my own experience and some of the Administration's priorities on national service. I appreciate your support. I truly believe that we have the opportunity not only to transform lives and communities, but to change our country.

I look forward to working with you and to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Solomont follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALAN SOLOMONT

Chairwoman, Ranking Member Enzi, and members of the committee, good afternoon. Thank you for this opportunity to testify, and for this committee's long-standing bipartisan support for national service. I especially thank you, Chairwoman—the Godmother of National Service—for your passionate advocacy and strong oversight over the past 16 years.

We are grateful that you have put National Service on the committee's agenda so early in the 111th Congress. I appear before you today as the newly elected Chairman of the Board of the Directors of the Corporation for National and Commu-

nity Service. I was appointed to the Board by President Clinton in 2000, reappointed by President Bush in 2007, and elected as Chairman last month, stepping into the shoes of my good friend Stephen Goldsmith, who you will hear from shortly.

Having served on the Board for this long, I know that there have been times when you had concerns about the Corporation's management and leadership. I want you to know that we heard you then, and we hear you now. We remain committed to transparent and rigorous management of the resources with which we've been entrusted. Sound management and accountability remain the top focus of our bipartisan Board and senior staff.

I want to acknowledge one member of the committee who is not here and who happens to be my Senator. I would not be here if it weren't for Senator Kennedy—who sponsored the original national service legislation, and who—along with you and Senator Hatch—is driving the next generation of service envisioned in the Serve America Act.

Today's hearing comes at a pivotal moment for national and community service:

- The economic crisis is causing hardship for millions of Americans, and no one sector of society can pull us out of it.
- We have a President who understands the power of citizen action and who has pledged to make service a central cause of his presidency.
- We have bipartisan support for a dramatic expansion in service.
- And we have a new generation—known as the Millennial Generation—that is looking to participate in something larger than themselves by serving their communities and their country.

To me, national service is all about engaging Americans in solving community problems. That idea is as old as America, but it is made new with each generation. And as each generation realizes the impact of service, it also learns that service is transformative. I know because it was for me.

After graduating from college in the 1970's, I moved to Lowell, MA to be a community organizer. Lowell was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, but by the 1970's what was once a prosperous mill town was now down on its luck. Our organizing project helped tenants avoid eviction and homeowners protect their neighborhoods. We worked with businesses and churches and labor unions to save jobs. I worked alongside then-City Councilor Paul Tsongas, and a young candidate for Congress, John Kerry.

The organizing we did made a real difference in helping Lowellians cope with the economic crisis. But it also had a profound impact on my life. I went on to a career in business, but everything I've done since then has been informed by what I learned in Lowell—especially my belief that things can change for the better if we work together.

This ethic of service affects every generation. And the emerging generation of young people is especially open to it. I believe that civilian service has the potential to do in part for this generation what military service did for the "Greatest Generation." Through their military service, the men and women of the Greatest Generation were exposed to the great diversity of America. Their service bound them together and fueled their patriotism—making them better citizens and making America a stronger nation.

Today, we are at an inflection point, the beginning of a new era of responsibility and citizen engagement. We saw this in the 2008 presidential campaign, when millions of Americans from both political parties became part of the process for the first time. We saw this on Martin Luther King Day when Americans across the Nation honored Dr. King's legacy through service. And we're seeing it in volunteer centers and community organizations, as Americans respond to the economic downturn and to the President's call to service. From Millennials to Baby Boomers to the Greatest Generation, Americans want to be part of helping their country recover, prosper, and lead.

The Serve America Act, first introduced in the 110th Congress and re-introduced as S. 277 on January 16 by Senators Ted Kennedy and Orrin Hatch, will grow national service to meet these challenges. It will invest in and expand the civic and volunteer infrastructure to support this growth. The bill sets the Corporation on a path to enlisting 250,000 members and it strengthens service opportunities for people of all ages.

The March 6, 2009, letter from the Office of Management and Budget lays out the Administration's priorities for national service. I would like to highlight a few provisions discussed in the letter here.

The Administration supports simplifying funding streams, management structures, and application and reporting processes. Part of this simplification is expanded authority to use fixed-amount grants that simplify reporting requirements,

while ensuring more robust performance accountability and more uniform collection of impact data.

Any discussion about the “next generation of service” is also an opportunity to talk about innovation. The problems our Nation faces can’t be solved by government alone. They require that all hands be on deck. Though the Corporation’s role has traditionally been to choose the best programs and ensure accountability, it also can play a role in incenting and investing in new ideas. The Serve America Act provides for that through the Community Solutions Fund, which searches for and tests new ideas, leverages private support, and expands successful programs to scale.

The Administration is pleased that the Serve America Act also seeks to improve service-learning opportunities and new service opportunities for baby boomers and older Americans.

As someone who has worked with seniors my entire professional life, and who has been the Board’s advocate for Senior Corps, I appreciate the value and impact of Senior Corps. Older Americans are a precious resource who bring a lifetime of skills and experience to their volunteer work.

The programs of the Senior Corps, some of which began in the 1960’s in conjunction with the War on Poverty, have done a terrific job. I know that because I have worked closely with Retired Senior Volunteer Programs in my business. But as we anticipate the coming wave of aging Baby Boomers, now is the time to modernize these programs for the 21st century. The Administration has made a commitment to expand these programs, but we cannot provide seniors with the service opportunities they deserve without introducing competition, greater accountability, and innovation into the Senior Corps programs.

Finally, the Administration would like to see an increase in the maximum amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award—named for a dear friend who was one of the architects of national service—which has not been adjusted since the program’s inception in 1993.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my own experience and some of the Administration’s priorities on national service. I appreciate your support, and I truly believe that we have the potential not only to transform lives and communities but to change our country. I look forward to working with you and to answering your questions.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, Mr. Solomont, thank you very much for your longstanding service with the board. We are going to have some questions for you. And some we will be having for the record.
Mr. Goldsmith.

STATEMENT OF STEPHEN GOLDSMITH, VICE-CHAIR, CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE AND DANIEL PAUL PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT AND DIRECTOR OF THE INNOVATIONS, AMERICAN GOVERNMENT PROGRAM, CAMBRIDGE, MA

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Thank you, Madam Chairman and members of the committee.

Senator MIKULSKI. Is he wired?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Sounds ominous.

[Laughter.]

Thank you, Madam Chairman and members of the committee. It is my honor to be here on behalf of this piece of legislation.

I would also like to say that, Madam Chairman, I remember, as a young board chair of this organization, vividly remember your admonition about the responsibilities of the board with respect to good management, which occasioned in your office after an unfortunate pause in the corporation. I think we have made steady, but insufficient progress since then, and I hope to return to that issue in a minute.

Let me say that this is an interesting and very important time. Both the needs of this country in terms of those who are hurting has increased and the interest of young adults and all adults in service has also dramatically increased. In just the last several

months, we have seen a 300 percent increase in application for those individuals in America who want to be part of AmeriCorps.

We have a huge need, and we have a huge demand. This bill will, in fact, respond to it.

I would like to just offer, because you have my written testimony, a few brief principles. Let me start with a 60-second anecdote about when I was mayor of Indianapolis. I think we have different perspectives perhaps on the role of government, but we probably have common agreement that nothing helps a community more than the civic engagement of a neighbor.

When I was mayor, trying to build up our community organizations, those organizations, particularly the small ones, had a great shot in the arm when they had an AmeriCorps or VISTA member who could work with them day-by-day, hour-by-hour in organizing individuals in that neighborhood. This bill will allow many more of those community organizations to benefit from that very capacity that this bill adds.

We have spent the last 8 years trying, as Senator Hatch mentioned in his statement, to think about this organization as the infrastructure that supports volunteerism. That is why these 75,000 AmeriCorps members are responsible for leveraging almost 4 million Americans who participate.

The role of the Federal Government needs to be a respectful one that supports community organizations and helps them leverage volunteering. We think that that is our mission that you have charged us with, and we think that is the reason for so much bipartisan support.

As we go forward, the principles in this bill are important, and I would just like to underscore the ones that I think are most important. You demand that we be more accountable, that we intensify accountability. There are specific performance goals in this legislation, much more specific than occurred in the original legislation and will help hold the organization more accountable.

We are essentially a pass-through Federal agency. We need to hold our recipients accountable for results, but we need to be much less intrusive in how they do their work. We need to ease the burden on those who receive our dollars.

They are small organizations, in large part, and they need the support. They need to be held accountable, but they need to be responded to in a less burdensome way. That is a principle as well.

Third, we have a responsibility to level the playing field. As Senator Enzi mentioned, we need to make sure that small organizations, rural organizations, faith-based organizations, those that have some who are unaccustomed to dealing with the Federal Government have an opportunity to participate and receive the support of our organization. In addition to easing the burden, we need to level the playing field.

And finally, we need to be better, as Alan mentioned, in the way that we manage the organization. We have, over the years, spent more and more of our dollars on programs and less and less of our dollars on our own infrastructure to manage those programs.

We have a relatively weak foundation. We saw after 9/11 where the demand for Americans to help in their communities exploded, literally, across the country, just good-hearted American civic en-

gagement. Our corporation was not equipped at the time to handle it.

We are better off now. More importantly, what this bill does is it makes it easier to manage the corporation. It removes many of the silos. It provides the resources for those support systems that are necessary.

Madam Chairman, members of the committee, I appreciate the charge you have given to the board, and we are pledged to doing a first-rate job. We think, as a result of this legislation, millions of people will be helped, both those who serve and those who receive the services.

Thank you for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Goldsmith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHEN GOLDSMITH

Chairwoman, Ranking Member Enzi, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify, and for the committee's long history of leadership and support for national and community service.

Now is the right time to update our national service laws and unleash the energy and ingenuity of the American people to solve community problems. This hearing comes at a critical moment of both need and opportunity for our Nation:

- The economic downturn is causing hardship for millions of Americans—putting more people at risk of unemployment, foreclosure, homelessness, abuse, addiction, and other social ills.
- The nonprofit sector is reeling from a double whammy of increased demand for services at the same time it is experiencing drops in giving and public support.
- But against this bleak backdrop, there is strong momentum for citizen service:
 - Last year, 62 million Americans gave 8 billion hours of service to our Nation.
 - The number of AmeriCorps applications has shot up in recent months, and volunteer centers and nonprofits are reporting increases in volunteers.
 - Millennials are volunteering more than past generations while Boomers will dramatically boost the number of older adult volunteers in the coming decades.
 - Leaders in every sector—from corporate CEOs and college presidents to Governors and grantmakers—recognize that service is a proven strategy to tackle tough challenges.
 - Social entrepreneurs are redefining service and volunteering, and Web 2.0 technologies are providing new ways for citizens to engage and connect.

National service has bipartisan support because it was founded on common sense, good government principles—devolution, competition, accountability, leveraging of non-Federal resources, and public-private partnership. We have worked diligently the last 8 years to reposition Federal involvement as the human infrastructure that supports volunteerism—rather than approaching our work as a method of putting Federal workers in local nonprofits.

Today, our Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs engage nearly four million Americans in service through more than 70,000 community organizations across the Nation, addressing issues of poverty, illiteracy, disasters, public safety, independent living, and more. These participants have a powerful catalytic effect by leveraging hundreds of millions of non-Federal dollars and mobilizing community volunteers. Last year, AmeriCorps members mobilized 2.2 million additional volunteers, helping thousands of nonprofits expand their reach and impact.

We are also proud that the Corporation supports a wide array of organizations, from large national nonprofits like Teach for America, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Habitat for Humanity, to faith-based organizations like Sisters of Notre Dame and Alliance for Catholic Education, to small community groups.

Approximately 6 years ago, you and Senator Bond challenged the board to hold the management more responsible and to improve the Administration of the programs. We have made steady progress and implemented reforms across the agency to increase efficiency, reduce costs, streamline operations, improve program quality, strength grant and fiscal monitoring, and build a high-performing workforce. While the Corporation's management has improved, there are areas that need further strengthening, and management will continue to be the Board's top priority.

To take these programs to the next level of effectiveness, we need changes in our authorizing laws. I'd like to highlight a few key principles as you move ahead:

- We need to intensify the focus on accountability and results by tying funding to performance and increasing support for rigorous program evaluation, performance measures, and assessments of our civic health. Today, the Corporation is a hodgepodge of programs pasted together with a set of inconsistent and confusing rules that make clarity and transparency difficult and increase overhead costs not only to the Corporation but, more importantly, to its grantees. Both the Serve America Act introduced by Senator Kennedy and Hatch and the GIVE Act passed by the House Education and Labor Committee last Congress bring needed reforms.

- While we need to do better at demonstrating the impact our programs are having, we also need to ease the burden on our grantees by streamlining the application and reporting process, combining funding pools, and simplifying program management through expansion of fixed-amount grants.

- We need to continue providing a level playing field for faith-based and small community organizations, which are doing such critical work in our most vulnerable communities. Both the GIVE Act and Serve America Act would open up service to more small community organizations and rural and underserved areas.

- As we intensify the focus on the issues of education, health, clean energy, and poverty, we also need to maintain the core principles that have been key to AmeriCorps success—flexibility, adaptability, and a decentralized approach that gives a key role to States in identifying their problems and selecting the organizations best able to solve them.

- In recent years, the Corporation and our grantees have initiated some creative and successful programs with other Federal agencies on issues such as prisoner re-entry, early childhood education, conservation of our public lands, and more. We should encourage more coordination with other Federal agencies.

- Finally, the Serve America Act would invest in our civic infrastructure by creating a Volunteer Generation Fund and increasing the leveraging of community volunteers that are the lifeblood of our schools and shelters, hospitals and hotlines.

Chairwoman Mikulski and members of the committee, the Corporation and the entire national service field has come a long way, thanks in large part to leadership of this committee. This bill would usher in the next generation of service and facilitate civic engagement in a way that respects and supports local and individual acts of kindness, generosity, and service. We look forward to working with you to restore America's communities and its greatness through the active citizenship of neighbors.

Thank you again for this opportunity, and I'd be glad to answer any questions.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, we thank both of you for your service. You also bring a great deal of experience because this is a new century. When we created national service, it was in 1990. In the 1990s, as we all remember, there was a great deal of talk about it being the time of the "me generation."

What we wanted to do on a bipartisan basis was take the "me generation" and begin to transition to a "we generation." The demonstration project was meant to test out ideas because we didn't want a new bureaucracy. We didn't want to have national service meets health and human services, where it would be big at the top and skinny at the bottom.

We wanted to be able to have a minimal Federal and national infrastructure and then work with governors who—I know we will hear from shortly Governor Racicot—and to make sure that we, first of all, had a decentralized approach. One-size-doesn't-fit-all. And second, that there would be accountability, but allow plenty of room for flexibility and creativity.

We did have a rocking and rolling time. That demonstration project led to the creation of AmeriCorps; a more robust program under President Clinton. I was both an authorizer and an appropriator until the House dissolved the VA/HUD appropriated subcommittee.

In 2003, I remember our confrontation, when I called the corporation's board the "Enron of nonprofits." It was stern and stark,

but it was meant to get President Bush's attention. Really, we needed to shakeup oversight and accountability at the corporation.

Now we have had the shakeup. Now we need to have a new opportunity, and I think there is a mood in the country. There is a mood in the Congress. We have got buckets of lessons learned for accountability, so let's translate that into creativity. We want to get on with it. We are going to get on with the hearing as well.

We are going to call up for our next panel to join you. If you could wait because we would like to ask you questions because some of them will be cross—thank you—cross-pollinated.

[Laughter.]

I was looking for a Wyoming word. We don't want to use a Baltimore word. We want to call up Lester Strong, the CEO of Experience Corps, representing our seniors. Michael Brown from City Year, one of the early organizations to engage young people.

The former governor of Montana, Governor Marc Racicot, who has really been a strong advocate of national service and brings the perspective of a governor and those commissions we wanted at the State level.

President of a new organization, Michelle Bouchard of HealthCorps in New York. This has been started with the assistance of Dr. Oz, and though this is a group that has not been affiliated necessarily with our national service family it fits within the framework that is really changing healthcare outcomes.

And, of course, Shirley Sagawa. And if I am the founding mother, Shirley has been the midwife.

[Laughter.]

Now a visiting fellow at the Center for American Progress. Who has done a lot of the definitive thinking on this.

We really want to hear from you, and then we will go immediately to our questions. What I would like to do is start off with Governor Racicot, to get his perspective on what it was like at the State level. That is your perspective.

Then we will go to Shirley. Then we will go to the people who actually did hands-on programs and then throw it open for questions.

**STATEMENT OF MARC RACICOT, FORMER GOVERNOR OF
MONTANA, BIGFORK, MT**

Mr. RACICOT. Madam Chairwoman, thank you for the privilege. Members of the committee, it is a delight to be here.

I was born in a very small town in Montana, western Montana. It wasn't the end of the Earth, but you could darned well see it from there, I can assure you. My father and mother spent their growing up years in the same community within which I was born.

They were, obviously, ultimately married, and I grew up to hear my father's stories. He was a loyal Democrat, by the way, Madam Chairwoman. Went to his grave, of course, with deep regret about what had happened to his oldest-born son. He told me stories about the Civilian Conservation Corps.

It just so happened that one of the corps camps was not far outside of our little town. It was one of the camps that was located in virtually every State and in several territories from 1933 to 1942. In those camps, 3 million young men worked fighting fires,

building public infrastructure on public lands, and restoring the Nation's forests, public forests by planting 3 billion trees.

When unemployment began to wane and the draft was initiated in 1940, the Civilian Conservation Corps and its camps ceased to exist, even though, obviously, my father for many decades thereafter and those that he worked with and knew in those camps were inspired by that generation of service to our country and to their communities. A period of time, I think, during which they discovered what they could do when engaged in common enterprise not only to benefit specific infrastructure projects, but to enhance the social capital of their individual communities in this country.

I was just starting high school when President Kennedy and Congress created the Peace Corps. I can remember it exceedingly well, and it reminded, of course, all Americans at that time of our proud legacy of public service. Throughout my time, all of the time I was growing up, I watched my parents help our friends and neighbors, our church, and to serve in our little community in a variety of different ways.

There were no heroes, just a vast number of the members of our community of every faith and belief—or perhaps no faith at all—who served the needs of others. It was just what everyone did.

After my time in the U.S. Army, I entered into public service at the county and the State level with the steadfast belief, because of what I had seen and witnessed growing up in this little community, that I could and should try to embrace a purpose larger than myself and make a difference in the life of my community. There were millions of other people just like me who believed and did the same thing.

I can remember with clarity when President George H.W. Bush created the Commission on National and Community Service, followed by the efforts of President Clinton and Congress to renew and enlarge the Nation's commitment to national and community service through the establishment of the Corporation for National and Community Service in 1993.

Thereafter, throughout my time serving as Montana's governor and beyond, I was engaged with the corporation in the advancement of national and community service and was privileged to be nominated by President Clinton to serve a 4-year term on the corporation's board.

It is worth noting that my colleagues during that time, among them Governor Bush of Texas, overwhelmingly supported a clear commitment to the work of the corporation. Ultimately, 49 out of 50 of those governors evinced that intent, signing on to a letter that was ultimately addressed to Congress. It is well known that President Bush continued to keep faith with his commitment to national service and to reignite the call to service throughout his presidency.

I have also served as chairman of Jobs for America's Graduates, which is a national high school dropout prevention program, and succeeded Secretary of State Colin Powell as chairman of America's Promise.

I offer this history, Madam Chair and members of the committee, to confirm the notion that government, for generations, has played an entirely appropriate role in advancing the imperative of public

service. I also refer to that history with the singular purpose of sharing what I believe each of you have also discovered as a result of your own unselfish service to your individual States and to our beloved Nation.

I could lay before you an encyclopedia of statistical information that would confirm that the public service ethic of this country is strong and alive and well. More than 1 billion volunteer service hours generated by Senior Corps volunteers. Hundreds of thousands of individuals served through AmeriCorps. Those who have worked with 1 million young high school students, participating annually in service learning initiatives provided under the auspices of Learn and Serve America.

Those accomplishments are clearly worth noting and important and impressive. They have immeasurably enriched the public and social infrastructure of this country, and they rightly should be praised and recognized as convincing evidence of our responsibility to remain committed to our national and community service efforts.

There is something larger than that to me. There is something more that commands our attention and justifies the involvement of our Government in our efforts to preserve and expand national and community service opportunities. And that is to recognize what those efforts do to refresh and inspire the spirit and the soul of this country.

The endurance of this Nation and our freedom depend upon the decency and humility of every single American. People cannot be commanded nor ordered to live in freedom. They must choose it for themselves. We are bound together and we endure as a nation because we choose, as Americans, hundreds of times every day to respect the rights and liberties of our fellow citizens.

Democracy and freedom cannot exist without the voluntary choice of every American to embrace the values of discipline, decency, and mutual respect. It is service that provides the glue that holds us together and preserves our way of life. It is what separates us from tyrants and terrorists. Surely, its enrichment is an appropriate function of our Government as it sets about to preserve and protect and defend the United States of America.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Racicot follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARC RACICOT

I was born in a very small town in Western Montana where my father and mother were raised, met each other and ultimately were married. I grew up listening to my father's stories about the Civilian Conservation Corps camp located just outside of town. It was just one of the camps that were located in every State and several territories from 1933 to 1942. Three million young men from those camps worked fighting fires, building public infrastructure on public lands and restoring the Nation's public forests by planting 3 billion trees. When unemployment began to wane and the draft was initiated in 1940, the CCC and its camps ceased to exist even though fond memories of those days have inspired more than one generation over the last 70 years.

I was just starting high school when President Kennedy and Congress created the Peace Corps and reminded all Americans of our proud legacy of public service. Throughout all of my time growing up I watched my parents help our friends and neighbors, our church and to serve in our little community in a variety of ways. There were no heroes, just a vast number of the members of our community of every faith and belief, or perhaps no faith at all, who served the needs of others. It was just what everyone did. After my time in the U.S. Army, I entered into public service at the county and State level with the steadfast belief that I could and should

try to embrace a purpose larger than myself and make a difference in the life of my community. There were millions of other people just like me who believed and did the same thing.

I remember when President George H.W. Bush created the Commission on National and Community Service, followed by the efforts of President Clinton and Congress to renew and enlarge the Nation's commitment to national and community service through the establishment of the Corporation for National and Community Service in 1993. Thereafter, throughout my time serving as Montana's governor and beyond, I was engaged with the Corporation in the advancement of national and community service and was privileged to be nominated by President Clinton to serve a 4-year term on the Corporation's board of directors. It is worth noting that my colleagues during that time, among them Governor Bush of Texas, overwhelmingly manifested their clear commitment to the work of the Corporation. It is well-known that President Bush continued to keep faith with his commitment to national service and to reignite the call to service throughout his presidency.

I have also served as Chairman of Jobs for America's Graduates, a national high-school dropout prevention program, and succeeded Secretary of State Colin Powell as chairman of America's Promise.

I offer this history to confirm the notion that government, for generations, has played an entirely appropriate role in advancing the imperative of public service. I also refer to that history with the singular purpose of sharing what I believe each of you have also discovered as a result of your own unselfish service to your individual States and to our beloved Nation. I could lay before you an encyclopedia of statistical information that would confirm that the public service ethic of our country and communities remains strong: more than 1 billion volunteer service hours generated by Senior Corps volunteers, more than 400,000 individuals served through AmeriCorps, and more than 1 million high school students participating annually in service-learning initiatives provided under the auspices of Learn and Serve America. Those accomplishments are clearly important and impressive. They have immeasurably enriched the public and social infrastructure of this country and rightly should be praised and recognized as convincing evidence of our responsibility to remain committed to our national and community service efforts.

But, there is something more that commands our attention and justifies the involvement of government in our efforts to preserve and expand national and community service opportunities, and that is to recognize what those efforts do to refresh and inspire the spirit and soul of this country. The endurance of this Nation and our freedom depend upon the decency and humility of every American. People cannot be commanded nor ordered to live in freedom. They must choose it for themselves. We are bound together and we endure as a nation because we choose as Americans, hundreds of times every day, to respect the rights and liberties of our fellow citizens. Democracy and freedom cannot exist without the voluntary choice of every American to embrace the values of discipline, decency and mutual respect. And that's where national and community service comes in: it is service that promotes decency and mutual respect. It is service that provides the glue that holds us together and preserves our way of life. It is what separates us from tyrants and terrorists. And surely its enrichment is an appropriate function of our government as it sets about to preserve, protect and defend the United States of America.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you very much, Governor.

Ms. Sagawa, you have done a lot of thinking and research. You were here when we started 18 years ago. What do you think of the Serve America Act, and how do you think we can change National Service in a way that is both fiscally sound and socially prudent and yet stimulates service and social entrepreneurship?

STATEMENT OF SHIRLEY SAGAWA, VISITING FELLOW, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS, AND COFOUNDER, SAGAWA/JOSPIN CONSULTING, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. SAGAWA. Well, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to speak before the committee. It is a great honor.

I remember so fondly 20 years ago, when we started putting the first national service bill together with your leadership, Senator McCain's leadership, and, of course, Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch. It was a bold experiment. We didn't know—would people

come forward to serve? Would it make sense to tie educational opportunity to the service? And would it really get anything done or just become sort of a boondoggle?

I think what we have learned is that this has been a great experiment and a successful one. And your looking at this bill and moving forward quickly at a time when the country is in great crisis is extremely important because our way out of the troubles that we have now needs every citizen to come forward and do what they can.

We know some important lessons from the last 20 years. First, it is that service does change lives and that there are transformative times in people's lives when service is particularly meaningful. As Senator Hatch noted, one of those times is when you are a young adult leaving high school or college. And finding your purpose is really important, and making a difference with the talents and energy that you have is something that can be transformative.

Another really important time—and I call your attention to the Learn and Serve America program and the Summer of Service proposal by Senators Dodd and Cochran—is when kids are going from middle school to high school, and they don't know what they are going to be when they grow up. That is when kids drop out. They get disengaged from school, and they decide that there is no point to learning science. And why do I need to learn to write better?

Giving them a service learning experience during that particular period of their lives can make the difference between those kids choosing risky behaviors and failure or finding that school is important and they need to continue. I hope that ends up in the final bill because it is a really important piece.

Of course, another important time is when people reach retirement age, and they need to find their purpose again. It is very exciting that Serve America includes encore service opportunities to add to the Senior Corps programs that already exist.

We know it changes people. We also know that service can solve problems, and that was another thing. We weren't really sure if it was just going to be make-work, in which case it is not worth spending Federal money on. What we found is that there are certain things that service is really good at and that perhaps better than regular employment.

One is when skills are unsupported by the marketplace. You can get somebody who can really devote time to helping a young person fill out their college applications and get into college or to help people who need legal help and they can't afford it—after Katrina they were having so much trouble getting the benefits that they were due. There are so many times when the market doesn't pay for those services and service does.

Knowing the knowledge of a local culture and community is really important in health programs, for example. Mobilizing large numbers of volunteers to do everything from tutoring to planting trees, as we heard from the governor, is another area. There are just things that service does well and that we ought to be making better use of.

The alumni who have served, who have been trained and have special skills, are, as we saw after Katrina, an amazingly impor-

tant force that we can mobilize in the wake of disasters, and I am glad the bill includes that as well.

Finally, we also know that national service has been very important in promoting the health and capacity of the nonprofit sector, particularly promoting innovative strategies to solving problems. The corporation has a strong track record of supporting social entrepreneurs. I would say the best agency in government for doing so, and that is why the Community Solutions Fund pilot program belongs there and is going to be a wonderful way to take some of these effective organizations to scale. It has been the top priority of the America Forward coalition and I am very happy to see it in the bill.

There are other pieces that are also important. The Commission on Cross-Sector Solutions to America's Problems will examine how government can work better with business and the nonprofit sector to solve problems in communities. The Volunteer Generation Fund will make it possible for organizations—faith-based, community-based, grassroots, and others—to engage new volunteers effectively.

Finally, we all know that public service spans a very large range, from volunteers who will give a couple of hours to build a playground to people like you who are giving your lives to public service as your career. We need all these different parts. This bill recognizes a slice of that kind of service, and it belongs in that continuum that begins when we are the youngest children until we can't do any more.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak to the committee today. With your leadership, we can take the next giant step toward solving many of our most pressing problems by better deploying the time and talents of Americans of all ages.

Thank you so much for your leadership.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Sagawa follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHIRLEY SAGAWA

Twenty years ago, this committee put together demonstration legislation to test a simple premise: Would young Americans serve their communities full-time for a year, or part-time for a longer period, in exchange for money for college?

The answer was an overwhelming "yes." Building on the success of this experiment, a few years later, AmeriCorps took this concept to the next level, engaging more than 540,000 Americans in service over the last 15 years.

Today you are considering legislation that would not only build on this strong track record, but expand other types of service as well. It could not come at a more critical time for our Nation. As unemployment rises, particularly among young people, community needs are also soaring. Demands on the nonprofit organizations that develop our youth, feed the hungry, and rebuild distressed neighborhoods are staggering. The work of groups that protect the environment, preserve our culture, and educate our children is needed more than ever.

Fortunately, Americans are coming forward, ready to roll up their sleeves to solve these problems. The number of applicants for AmeriCorps programs and volunteer trainings have doubled or tripled over previous years.

Now is the moment.

I am honored to appear before you, and urge you to move the Serve America Act to respond to these tremendous needs and great opportunity. I speak to you as a person who has been deeply involved in national service policy—initially as a Labor Committee staff person for Senator Kennedy, then as an appointee in the first Bush and Clinton administrations, and now, as a fellow at the Center for American Progress, and as a consultant to many organizations that run national service programs.

Over the last two decades, we have learned that serving changes lives. In fact, a longitudinal study of AmeriCorps members, after 8 years, clearly demonstrates

that AmeriCorps members are more connected to their communities, have a better understanding of community problems, and are more involved in civic activities such as attending public meetings and writing to newspapers. Former AmeriCorps members were significantly more likely than the comparison group to enter careers in public service such as teaching, public safety, social work and full-time military service. AmeriCorps members experienced significant increases in their work skills, showing their experience better prepared them for the future. And importantly, the study shows that AmeriCorps alumni are more satisfied with their lives in almost every respect than the comparison group who expressed interest but ultimately did not serve.

While it is clear that serving can change the life of the server, we have also learned something even more important—that **service can be a key strategy to solve some of the Nation's most pressing problems**. For example, in the area of education, national service puts talented teachers in the classroom, offers struggling students one-on-one attention, brings supportive services and after school programs to urban schools, and creates a culture that supports learning. This success is documented in evaluations of individual programs and the stories of schools, students, and those who serve. In some cases, service may be the critical ingredient to successful school reform.

Unfortunately, these programs operate on too small a scale. They serve dozens of schools and hundreds of students, when thousands of schools and millions of students need them. A similar story can be told in the areas of energy, opportunity, and health.

It's time to take the programs showing measurable outcomes to scale. That's why we need **the issue-focused corps** in Serve America. Balancing the flexible, community-determined programming of regular AmeriCorps with these new targeted corps provides the right combination of flexibility and focus for the next stage of national service. We will be able, if these corps are authorized and funded, be able to document the impact of service on these national challenges and better understand the role that service plays in solving our most pressing problems. We will also benefit from the engagement of Baby Boomers, a valuable national resource, through the **Encore Service Program** in the act.

Another notable and surprising success of AmeriCorps is the contribution it has made to **innovation in the social sector**. When an organization takes an out-of-the-box approach to solving a problem, it often finds few sources available for sustainable funding. AmeriCorps, because it doesn't specify the strategy for problem-solving or the presumptive provider, has been a flexible source of funding and human capital to grow some of the country's most promising organizations, including Jumpstart, Citizen Schools, Experience Corps, and Habitat for Humanity.

The Corporation for National and Community Service has been an agency that appreciates social entrepreneurs and the contribution they make to social innovation. Unlike other Federal agencies, it supports organizations in a wide-variety of fields, and fosters cross-issue solutions that combine, for example, education and health, or environment and job training. For this reason, it makes sense that Serve America includes funding to support a social innovation fund network, called the **"Community Solutions Funds Pilot Program,"** that will use Federal dollars to leverage other public and private sector contributions to take our most innovative and effective organizations to scale. It will operate like this: Existing grantmakers—like community foundations, United Ways, or venture philanthropy funders—may, together with State commissions or local government partners, apply for a grant to establish a Community Solutions Fund that focuses on a specific issue (like increasing economic opportunity or reducing crime) or geographic area (like a neighborhood or a set of rural counties). These grantmakers will match the Federal funds dollar for dollar, and then make substantial, multi-year grants to enable organizations that have strong track records to grow. These organizations will raise additional matching funds of \$1 for each dollar they receive. In this way, Federal dollars will make it possible for communities to attract or expand the organizations achieving the best results against their highest priority needs. This concept, initially proposed by the America Forward coalition, could transform the way we address public problem solving in America to allow us to support the highest return strategies in a wide variety of areas.

I am also excited to see the **Commission on Cross-Sector Solutions to America's Problems** included in the legislation. The government has become highly reliant on the nonprofit sector to deliver its services. As noted in the Forward Together declaration, signed by more than 100 civic sector leaders, nonprofits are full "partners in public service sheltering the homeless, training the unemployed, educating our youth, building affordable housing, counseling families, delivering health care, giving voice to the powerless, lifting our spirits with arts and culture, and serving

uniquely as vehicles for citizen initiative in support of the common good. In the process, they contribute powerfully to our economy, employing 11 million paid workers—more than the construction industry (7.2 million), finance (5.2 million), transportation (5.1 million), real estate (2.1 million), and, with volunteers, more than all branches of manufacturing (14.4 million).”

Indeed, today’s nonprofit sector has reached record size, with the number of organizations doubling in the last 25 years. Employing 1 out of every 10 individuals, the sector is the Nation’s fastest growing employer, outstripping the rate of growth for government and business alike. Nonprofits engage one in four Americans as volunteers and two out of three families as donors, and account for more than 5 percent of our gross domestic product.

This bipartisan Commission will take on the challenge of exploring the relationship of the Federal Government with nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, as well as business, to achieve better outcomes and utilization of resources. This examination is long overdue.

There are several other important provisions I want to highlight. First, while AmeriCorps and the ServeAmerica corpsmembers will play an important role in recruiting and supervising volunteers who do not receive education awards, there is still a need to support volunteer management in other ways. The **Volunteer Generation Fund** in the Serve America Act would improve the capacity of nonprofit, faith-based, and other civic organizations and State service commissions to engage new volunteers. It is also designed to spur innovation in volunteer recruitment and management practices, with a goal of increasing the number of volunteers each year.

Second, I’m glad that service-learning is expanded in the legislation, through the **Youth Engagement Zones and Campus of Service Programs**. Over the last decades, a substantial body of evidence has emerged to demonstrate that service-learning promotes positive youth development like few other programs can, motivating students to achieve and teaching personal, social, and civic responsibility. Unfortunately, research also shows that the young people who need this the most are also the least likely to be engaged. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, disadvantaged teens are far less likely to volunteer than their peers from more advantaged backgrounds, by a 43 percent to 59 percent margin. However, those disadvantaged youth who do serve hold more positive civic attitudes, discussing politics, believing that they can make a difference, and planning to go to college at higher rates than their low-income peers who do not volunteer.

Two other important legislative changes could advance service-learning. First, **expanding and modifying the existing Learn and Serve America legislation** should be a high priority, particularly increasing the funds available for strategic investments that would build capacity for service-learning, especially in schools serving disadvantaged students.

Second, Senators Dodd and Cochran have sponsored legislation to create a **“Summer of Service”** to offer students making the transition from middle to high school an opportunity to participate in a structured community service program over the summer months. The summer months between middle school and high school can be a particularly testing time, when children are redefining themselves, and in the process making decisions that may well determine who they will be as adults, for better or worse. For working parents, too, summer months are a particular challenge. Their kids are too young for paid jobs and too old to be “babysat.” Economically well-off families can afford a host of summer camps offering learning opportunities from language immersion to lacrosse. But in too many communities, offerings for older youth are limited and prices steep, making summer a time of particular peril.

Middle schoolers who perform a “summer of service” under the bill would earn a \$500 scholarship. At a time in life when students and their families need to begin thinking about college, this feature would positively brand participating youth as college material—even those who never considered the possibility—and could set these students and their families on a course of saving and planning for college. By making the summer service experience a “rite of passage” for young people in transition to high school, whole communities could be transformed.

Third, the alumni of AmeriCorps and other national service programs represent a growing and capable resource that can meet the workload surge following a disaster and provide needed service in targeted issues of local and national concern. We saw this after Hurricane Katrina, but alumni could be more easily engaged to respond to crises and other priority national needs if a database, training and deployment systems were developed and if funding were available for living and travel expenses for Alumni volunteers ready to be called back into service. The **National Service Reserve Corps** would build such a system.

Finally, I would be remiss in not stressing to the committee the need to reauthorize the programs authorized under the National and Community Service Act and Domestic Volunteer Service Act. These programs have not been revisited for 15 years and are badly in need of updating. For example:

- We need to **increase and index the Segal Education Award**. For a year of full-time service, an AmeriCorps member receives an education award worth \$4,725, which may be used for higher education or to pay back student loans. This amount, which is fully taxable, was established in 1993 and equaled tuition, fees, and room and board at a 2-year higher education institution in 1995, the first year in which an AmeriCorps member would have been eligible to use the award. Today higher education costs have increased dramatically, with 2-year institutions charging more than \$7,000 annually and 4-year institutions costing \$17,447 in 2007. It is time to adjust the Segal Education Award to ensure it remains a means of educational access for those who make a year-long commitment to service.

- We also need to move to a system of **fixed price grants** in AmeriCorps to eliminate complex accounting requirements that contribute neither to accountability nor program quality. By specifying a flat amount per member, and requiring that grantees raise any additional amounts they need to operate a program, the same amount of leverage can be attained without forcing programs into a needlessly complex system.

- The Senior Corps programs are also in need of updating, particularly the **stipend provided to Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions**. The low-income adults who serve in these programs receive just \$2.65 per hour of service, an amount that should be increased and indexed.

- Finally, we all know that public service spans a very large range, from a volunteer commitment of a few hours to a lifetime of service. Our Nation needs both—people who take a day out of their business career to do pro bono work or build a playground, and people who, like you, choose to make a career of serving the American people through government. We can attract more of the best and the brightest to Federal service by granting AmeriCorps members the same **non-competitive eligibility for Federal service** available to Peace Corps and VISTA volunteers and supporting programs like the proposed **Roosevelt Scholars Act**, which would create an ROTC-like scholarship program to fund graduate-level education in mission-critical fields in exchange for a Federal service commitment.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the committee today. With your leadership, we can take the next giant step toward solving many of our most pressing problems by better deploying the time and talents of Americans of all ages to serve their communities and the country.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you, Shirley. That was great.

Now what I would like to do is turn to Mr. Lester Strong, the CEO of Experience Corps. Then Michelle, we'll go to you and then wrap up with Michael Brown of City Year.

We turn now to Mr. Lester Strong, the CEO of Experience Corps. Experience Corps is one of our really very interesting programs, which shows that whether you are young in age or young at heart, America needs you and people have the ability to give.

Mr. Strong.

STATEMENT OF LESTER STRONG, CEO, EXPERIENCE CORPS, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. STRONG. Thank you, Madam Chair and Senator Enzi and to the members of the committee. It is an honor to be here.

I also want to acknowledge Senator Kennedy. Having lived in Massachusetts for 20 years, he will, I think, always be my Senator. I appreciate and acknowledge his leadership, along with Senator Hatch and Senator McCain, for what they are doing for social engagement.

Experience Corps strongly supports both the Serve America Act and the Encore Service Acts and applauds this committee for taking the bold steps to promote civic engagement among the largely untapped resource of older Americans. As the CEO of Experience

Corps, I want to highlight what I think is an enormous value older adults, ages 50-plus, bring to the national and community service agenda.

Experience Corps for the past 15 years has enlisted older adults in teaching academically struggling children how to read. It is an evidence-based program that provides rigorous academic interventions by 2,000 members in 23 cities and serving 20,000 children.

I would like to tell you three very quick stories that illustrate the payoff that comes from national service by adults in their 50s and their 60s and beyond. The first story is mine. In the third grade, my teacher told my parents that I was mentally retarded and to not expect much from me either academically or in my work life.

Well, I am here today because three older adults refused to believe that third grade teacher. A barber, a mother of six children, and a local minister gave me the moral support that I needed, as well as the discipline and the study habits that helped me to become an honor student through my high school years, then a college graduate, a broadcast journalist, a nonprofit executive, and now the CEO of a major national organization.

I was lucky. But, I am sure you would agree that we can't rely on luck to rescue the millions of children struggling to find a clear pathway to a meaningful life.

My second story is about another third grader who lives in Baltimore, home of the largest Experience Corps project in the country. An Experience Corps member told me about a little boy named Sean who would always resist her help. When day after day, he would stand on the other side of the room and just watch her.

Until finally one day, when she was helping some other children, Sean come over to her and said, "I am ready. Will you help me now?" He needed to see first that it was OK to ask for help, and he also needed to watch her in order to know that he could trust her.

It was rigorous training combined with the patience and the commitment of an older adult that got Sean to read. Study after study, including the brand new research from Washington University in St. Louis that is being released today, shows that this type of intervention does work.

My third story illustrates a major point from the research, namely that Experience Corps not only works for the children like Sean, but also for older adults as well. My next story is about James McDonald, who is here with me today. Mr. McDonald and his friends in Baltimore—purely a coincidence, Senator Mikulski—

[Laughter.]

Mr. STRONG. [continuing]. Planned to retire in style with the renovation of his basement rec room. However, a couple of years later, all of his friends had passed on. The large television and the pool table just weren't enough. He had to rethink his retirement strategy.

That is when he decided to join Experience Corps. Six years later, serving as the team leader at the Barclay Elementary School, Mr. McDonald says that because of the impact that he is having on his children and the relationships with his fellow team members, he has reason to get up in the morning.

His story echoes in the research that I just mentioned a moment ago. Studies by Johns Hopkins University and Washington University in St. Louis show that Experience Corps members increase their mental acuity and their physical function as well as enjoy an expanded social network and a greater sense of purpose in their lives by serving as tutors to at-risk children.

The big point to these three little stories is to illustrate that older adults are both ready and able to have impact. When it comes to civic engagement, older adults—by virtue of their life experiences, their workplace expertise, and their emotional maturity—are ready to take on the toughest challenges in this country and to deliver on them.

Passage of Serve America and Encore Service is a critical step toward unleashing this powerful and precious asset in the service of our children, our country, and our communities.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Strong follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LESTER STRONG

Good afternoon. Thank you, Senator Mikulski, Senator Kennedy, who cannot be here today, and Senator Enzi, for convening this important hearing.

This afternoon I want to shine a light on the promise for America of an expanded, modernized national service program that engages Americans *of all ages*. I commend the Senators who have come together across party lines to craft the proposed Serve America Act and the Encore Service Act—those bills will take us toward this promise. My testimony will focus on the importance of service opportunities for an age group that, though long underrepresented within the ranks of AmeriCorps, has enormous potential to help solve our Nation's most pressing social problems.

Experience Corps is my point of reference and source of evidence and examples. It is one of many innovative, high performing programs that are partially funded by AmeriCorps, but it is one of very few that focuses on engaging adults in their 50s, 60s, 70s and beyond. We believe our mission to focus on this age group for providing high impact service is an innovation that warrants expansion and replication. I suggest that one measure of success for the new national service legislation should be the extent to which it deploys and leverages millions of older adults to serve in a wide variety of high-impact volunteer and national service programs. Along with national and local leadership for a fresh view of adults age 50 and beyond as givers, not just receivers, this legislation can unleash unprecedented talent, experience and commitment to strengthen America's communities.

Experience Corps was founded almost 15 years ago by John Gardner and Marc Freedman, with demonstration funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service. Its purpose is to mobilize adults age 55 and older to meet serious social and community needs. To date, our primary work has been focused on academic gains, particularly in reading, for disadvantaged children who are lagging behind in school. Nearly 2,000 Experience Corps members are active this year serving 20,000 students in 23 cities. They spend from 5 to 15 hours per week (most spend 11 to 15 hours weekly) working primarily with first, second and third graders at neighborhood public schools. About a third of the members receive stipends through AmeriCorps. We are proud that President Obama mentioned Experience Corps as a proven model in his Call to Service.

I am new to Experience Corps this year. In the past 2 months as the organization's new CEO, I have visited Experience Corps members in Boston, Baltimore and Washington, DC. I've had the privilege of seeing the highly positive and significant impact so many older adults are having on the lives of thousands of our most at-risk children. I hope my comments can convey to you how encouraged I feel for the struggling inner city children who are consistently tutored by trained Experience Corps members and the powerful conviction I have that adults in my own age group (I just celebrated my 60th birthday) can be the answer to many social ills.

I'd like to share with you a bit of personal background that explains why I feel I've found my calling in this job. In the third grade, my parents were told that I was mentally retarded and would be only marginally proficient both academically and in life. They were told that menial work was the most I should aspire to. I'm only here today because three older adults refused to believe that third grade teach-

er. My barber, a mother of one of my friends, and a minister gave me not only moral support but also taught me the discipline and study habits that helped me become an honor student for the rest of my public school years, then a college graduate, a broadcast journalist, a nonprofit executive, and now CEO of a major national organization.

The scary truth is that what very nearly happened to me happens all too frequently, even more than 40 years later. You are well aware that our schools are failing millions of children. In our Nation's 50 largest cities, only about half are graduating from high school. The statistics are even bleaker for African-American and Latino children and for all poor children. One recent report suggests that one-third of poor children enter kindergarten lagging behind their peers; and by fourth grade half of these children will not be proficient in reading. President Obama recently asked every American to complete high school and a year beyond in college or job training. I submit that the job of meeting this responsibility belongs to all generations and can be effectively advanced through national service.

Independent research shows that well-structured programs can change the school trajectory of at-risk students. Matching kids who are at risk of dropping behind or dropping out (yes, even in elementary school) with a trained Experience Corps tutor produces significant, critical reading skills and confidence. I hope these research studies encourage the national service community to both invest in organizations that can prove their impact and boost the incentives to engage more people in their fifties and beyond in critical service. We believe that a large cadre of people in this age group will be especially interested in the proposed "Education Corps," while many will also be attracted to the other three "corps"—Clean Energy, Healthy Futures and Opportunity.

Let me offer four reasons for including in the new legislation the strongest possible provisions for attracting, recruiting, and retaining older adults in AmeriCorps and the proposed new programs.

1. **The aging of baby boomers presents unprecedented opportunity.** About 78 million people were born between 1946 and 1964. Nearly 10,000 of them turn 60 every day. Research by AARP, the Corporation for National and Community Service, the MetLife Foundation and others all find that more than half of those individuals retain the idealism of their youth and want to help others. *More to Give: Tapping the Talents of the Baby Boomer, Silent and Greatest Generations*, a 2008 study by AARP of people age 44 to 79, found that most people were unimpeded by health or caring for a relative and wanted to help their communities. Of those not currently volunteering, 7 in 10 said they *had not been asked!* We cannot afford for national service to miss the opportunity to capture their talent. I've seen how teams of Experience Corps members affect individual students and the culture of entire schools—in Baltimore, Boston and Washington. The 2,000 Experience Corps members we have recruited and trained can help 20,000 students, but there are millions more who need the kind of in-depth, consistent help that can be the hallmark of modernized service programs, especially those that engage older adults.

2. **Independent research has shown that Experience Corps works for children.** Researchers at Washington University in St. Louis recently completed a rigorous, random assignment study, funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies, on the impact of Experience Corps tutoring on young students' reading ability. The results, which demonstrate significant, positive gains in student learning, particularly for those who are the farthest behind, will be released in April. They will show that this low-cost service intervention utilizing older volunteers can produce greater academic results for low-performance kids than many other educational interventions.

Research can also document something we all know from personal experience—that good relationships can transform the lives of both the people involved. It may seem a bit magical, but these good relationships result from a wide variety of factors—training, support, evaluation, a deep belief in the ability of the kids to succeed, consistency, trust, plus the time and space in which to become friends. Older adults can draw on a wide array of life and career experiences, plus patience and the deep desire to make a difference. It works.

Let me give you an example. An Experience Corps member in Baltimore told me about a young boy in third grade, a "non-reader" who was nervous and held himself apart from children and adults alike. He was unable to concentrate on any lessons. After many weeks of the pair mainly sitting at a table while the tutor chatted or read aloud to the boy, the boy confessed that he was afraid of the other third graders. His siblings were very rough at home, putting him down and beating him up for no reason. He always worried about protecting himself. His tutor began to integrate social skills with the reading program and encouraged the boy to try them out. The teacher noticed a difference in the boy's openness to her and was able to engage

him more in classroom activities. Change had begun for that boy. He started to learn to read for the first time.

3. Independent research has shown that Experience Corps works for older adults, too. Two respected universities have completed scientific studies of the impact of Experience Corps on its members. Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine reports in the March *Journal of Gerontology* that Experience Corps members doubled their level of physical activity as a result of participation in the program and that that increased activity level was sustained for at least 3 years. Washington University researchers found a significant, positive impact on mental health, physical functioning, and the maintenance of overall health. Members reported that they had a wider circle of friends and were more engaged in civic and community activities.

Washington University also documented the diversity of Experience Corps members and, by implication, of other older adults who may be interested in providing intensive service to children. The age range is from 50 to 87—two+ generations! About ½ are African-American and 39 percent white. One-third have some higher education and all have high school degrees. Incomes range from 20 percent who earn less than \$15,000 annually to 15 percent with more than \$75,000 and the rest in between.

We all need a reason to get up in the morning and for millions of people in later life, national service can be a big part of that reason. I heard a great testimonial to this aspect of service from James McDonald of Baltimore, MD. Upon retirement, James and his buddies pooled their funds to buy a big TV and other fun things to outfit his rec room. When his buddies moved or died, James was left alone with the TV, unhappy and unfulfilled. He said he blesses the day he found Experience Corps, where he has been serving as a tutor, classroom assistant and team leader for 3 days a week for 4 years. His health is good, his spirits are high and he's seen as a vital part of his Experience Corps team and school operations.

4. Engaging more people in the second half of life in national service will be good for all of us. The mobilization of adults in their fifties and beyond in service to their communities can be an antidote to the current economic downturn, the pessimistic long-term projections for the aging population, and the hidden costs of a deteriorating safety net. For people who have finished their full-time midlife careers, some of them prematurely due to the economy, service positions offer purpose, dignity and modest, but for some people essential stipends, to cover the additional costs of service activities outside the home. For people who want to move to non-profit or public sector service work, the national service training and experience can be a valuable stepping stone to a job. Over time, research indicates that the continued activity and health benefits of engaging in public purpose service or work will reduce the increase in demand on Medicare. Most important, over time, the high-impact services will help prevent the devastating social and economic consequences of children who don't learn, families that don't have jobs or homes, gaps in health care and wasted energy.

I have offered some reasons to recognize the importance of emphasizing the 50 and older age group as part of the new and very welcome Congressional initiative to encourage service by all ages, for all ages. The term "shovel ready" has entered the American lexicon, meaning ready to have significant impact immediately. I submit, when it comes to civic engagement, America's older adults are "shovel ready." Their life experiences, their workplace expertise and their maturity have prepared the healthiest and best educated generation to take on the toughest challenges America faces, and to deliver. Passage of the ServeAmerica Act is a critical step in unleashing this precious asset in service of our children, our communities and our country.

In conclusion, I thank the committee for your attention to my testimony and to the following provisions that we believe are important to realizing the goal of robust citizen service in America:

- The Education Award under AmeriCorps may be transferred to another person and available for up to 20 years. (The transfer could be made through an approved educational savings account.)
- The timeframe for providing service and receiving the education award should be extended, particularly for those serving part-time (the preference of most older adults).
- The Corporation should study, report and address additional incentives and barriers for participation by the 50+ population.
- The proposed Volunteer Generation Fund should be used in part to mobilize for service the 50+ population.

- Congress should encourage the Corporation to provide a substantial percentage of grants under Subtitles C and G to programs targeting adults age 50+, including programs with an intergenerational workforce.

Senator MIKULSKI. Before we go to Michelle, Mr. Strong, you need to introduce my Baltimore resident.

Mr. STRONG. I would be happy to introduce Mr. McDonald, who is sitting right here.

Senator MIKULSKI. How do you do, Mr. McDonald?

[Applause.]

Now we are going to turn to Michelle Bouchard, president of HealthCorps, a very interesting new organization that is really having an impact changing health outcomes.

**STATEMENT OF MICHELLE BOUCHARD, PRESIDENT,
HEALTHCORPS, NEW YORK, NY**

Ms. BOUCHARD. Thank you so much, Madam Chair and Senator Enzi and the committee members, for inviting me here today to speak along with these inspiring people in support of national service and to talk about how HealthCorps is promoting service in the field of wellness.

A special thanks to you, Madam Chair, for reaching out to our founder—heart surgeon, Oprah show health expert, Dr. Mehmet Oz, who wishes he could be here today and sends his best to all of you. As a member of the ServiceNation Leadership Council, Dr. Oz joins many others who endorse service throughout the United States.

HealthCorps' mandate is the promotion of integrated wellness—eating smart, staying active, thinking positive—to students and communities across the country at the grassroots level. HealthCorps is more of a movement than a program because we empower and provide opportunities for teenagers, teachers, administrators to devote time to changing the health of America.

At this time more than ever, service cannot only be an agent of change, it can be a powerful tool for mental resilience. When I was a kid growing up and times got tough, my mother would say to me, “Lose yourself in a cause greater than yourself.” And it works, Senators. People are happier when they focus on others.

HealthCorps' heart is its team of coordinators—recent college grads who give 2 years of service as peer mentors to high school students in 44 schools across 7 States. These passionate young people are destined for careers in medicine, nursing, and health policy. I have one sitting right behind me today, I am proud to say. They could go straight on to their grad degrees, but choose first to impact young lives.

Fashioned after the Peace Corps, HealthCorps deploys each coordinator to a specific high school where he or she works 5 days a week, teaching our health curriculum. The coordinators go far beyond the call of duty, however. They become role models.

HealthCorps works because kids influence kids best. In classrooms, coordinators drive home our message—“Value your body. It is the most important thing you will ever inherit.”—and spread the word.

HealthCorps is not just about our coordinators doing service, it is about inspiring the students to do service learning as well by

participating in and organizing wellness events, such as community health fairs and step contests, and through a partnership with USA Mentoring, we will be mobilizing volunteers of all ages to do one-on-one mentoring in our high schools as well.

We know what we are doing is working. Our first study has come out, and we show we significantly decrease consumption of soda and significantly increase physical activity. We are expanding the conversation from campuses to communities. We are reaching 22,000 students right now and well over 70,000 when you include the community members and the family members.

Demand for the program outstrips our supply—our ability to supply it. In 5 short years, we have grown from 2 schools in the Northeast to 44 schools in 7 States. Next year, we plan to be in 65 schools in 12 States. There are hundreds of schools in all 50 States that would like our support if we could provide it.

Additionally, we have begun exploring how we can make a difference in shifting the paradigm from treatment to prevention and how the HealthCorps Advisory Board can help establish baseline requirements for an integrative health coach curriculum, accredited degree, and licensed profession.

If we reach our goals, and we think we will, we will activate communities through our hundreds of local grassroots wellness events every year. The founding principle behind this activation is service—convincing people to give some of their time to show others simple changes that will endure for life and make this Nation a healthier, happier one.

The HealthCorps model is shovel ready. It can scale quickly and make a difference on the ground immediately. We are also positioned to serve as a hub for other community initiatives by working with partners like the National Association of Community Health Centers, which is here today. We plan to give HealthCorps students the opportunity to do service learning at clinics and encourage graduating seniors to consider applying for AmeriCorps clinic internships as well.

We are strategically partnered with hundreds of nonprofits and organizations across seven States, far too many to name here. We invite all our partners to participate in our events because we know it is going to take a village to spark a wellness movement.

HealthCorps' mission transcends an individual approach. We embrace a holistic community approach to health, focusing significant work on changing the physical environment in the school and the community as well. For example, we are working with the CDC, and we hope to launch a Fit Town Challenge this fall, a 12-month wellness challenge to 5 large American communities with HealthCorps programs to see who can actualize the greatest change to create an environment conducive to wellness.

In schools, coordinators campaign for the removal of sodas in vending machines, healthier choices in the cafeteria, and access to farmer's markets. In New York City, in partnership with Commissioner Frieden and New York City DOHMH, HealthCorps, students have surveyed local bodegas as a way to identify locales needing healthier choices.

It is easy for HealthCorps to be inspired by the concept of service. We are supported by two amazing active boards of unimagi-

nably busy people at the very top of their professions who still find time to give back, like Dr. Oz and Dr. Mike Roizen from the Cleveland Clinic, as well as celebrity athletes and performers and artists.

My great staff, which many of them sit behind me, I am proud to say today, inspire me every day with the service they exhibit in their own personal lives. Many of them have spent time at Teach for America as grassroots activists and HealthCorps coordinators. They are great. But as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., once said, “Everybody can be great because anybody can serve.”

I thank you all for your time and the recognition of HealthCorps as well as all these programs of national service.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bouchard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHELLE BOUCHARD

Thank you, Chairmen and committee members, for inviting me here today to speak in support of national service and to talk specifically about how HealthCorps is promoting and inspiring service in the field of wellness. I am deeply indebted to Senator Mikulski for reaching out to our founder, heart surgeon and Oprah Show health expert Dr. Mehmet Oz, with her kind invitation less than 2 weeks ago to join the conversation on integrative medicine and how it can address the rise in chronic illnesses in at-risk communities. That conversation led to my participation today. I have offered Dr. Oz’s Senate HELP Committee testimony as Appendix I. As a member of the ServiceNation Leadership Council, Dr. Oz leads the health service initiative and joins many other national and cultural leaders and celebrities who endorse national service throughout the United States.

WHO WE ARE

HealthCorps was started 5 years ago in an effort to save our children who are destined for shorter life spans than those of their parents if we don’t take immediate action.

HealthCorps’ mandate is the promotion of integrated wellness—eating smart, staying active, thinking positive—to students and communities across the country at the grass roots level. We view HealthCorps as more of a movement than a program because we empower and provide opportunities for future practitioners, teenagers, teachers and school administrators to devote time to changing the health of America. At this time more than ever, service can not only serve as an agent of change, it can serve as a powerful tool for mental resilience. When I was a kid growing up and times got tough, my East Texas Mother would say, “Lose yourself in a cause greater than yourself.” And it works. People are happier when they focus on others.

HealthCorps’ heart is its team of Coordinators, recent college graduates, who give 2 years of service as salaried health coaches and peer-mentors to high school students in 44 schools across seven States. These passionate, bright young people are destined for careers in medicine, nursing and health policy. They could go straight on to their graduate degrees—but instead choose first to cut their teeth in the front lines of high schools—impacting young lives.

WHAT WE DO

Fashioned after a Peace Corps model, HealthCorps deploys each Coordinator to a specific school where he or she works 5 days a week with the principal and faculty to integrate our curriculum and afterschool activities into the traditional scholastic program. These Coordinators go far beyond the job description and call of duty, however. Many spend extra hours tutoring their students in academics and helping them with college or job applications. They coach sports teams and run after school clubs. They become an accessible and trusted resource to the kids. HealthCorps’ unique activism model works because kids influence kids best.

In classrooms, Coordinators use personal anecdotes, fun activities and current events to drive home our message—value your body—it’s the most important thing you’ll ever inherit. And spread the word. Each school year we reach approximately 500 students through our in-school seminars and extracurricular activities—such as cooking clubs, expert guest speakers, pedometer competitions and yoga classes.

HealthCorps is not just about our Coordinators doing service. It is about inspiring the HealthCorps students to do service learning as well—by participating in and organizing community wellness events. And by going out and spreading the word to younger kids and senior citizens. At Lehman High School in the Bronx, Coordinator Luke Martin takes his HealthCorps Students to Hunts Point Middle School to teach the younger kids stretching and cooking lessons that they have learned through HealthCorps. We even expect them to audit their refrigerators at home, taking the health conversation into families all over America.

Through a partnership with USA Mentoring, founded by former New York First Lady Matilda Cuomo, we will be mobilizing volunteers of all ages to do one-on-one health coaching in our high schools as an extra support for our mandate.

Through community and school-wide events, the program influences another 1,000 administrators, family members or friends. Our Coordinators and HealthCorps students organize community health fairs, step contests, Professional Development Nights, Parents Nights and more. In three boroughs in New York City and at Brown Stadium in Cleveland, OH, on Saturday, May 30, approximately 10,000 people will participate in our “Highway to Health” Fairs.

WHAT WE DO WORKS

We know what we are doing is working. Our first efficacy study, which will be presented to an international conference this June, shows we significantly decreased students’ consumption of soda and significantly increased their physical activity. As Dr. Andrew Weil’s testimony on February 26th pointed out, soda will prove to be the number one culprit in the childhood obesity crisis and subsequent epidemic of Type II diabetes. Our most popular seminar shows students the actual amount of sugar that they are drinking in one can of soda and asks them whether they would eat it in its solid form.

We also know we are expanding the conversation from campuses to communities. In Bryn Athyn, PA, the pedometers handed out through HealthCorps to the high school students created a “pedometer craze” in the entire town.

WHERE WE WANT TO GO

Demand for the HealthCorps program outstrips our current ability to supply it.

In 4 short years HealthCorps has grown by word of mouth among school administrators and local governments from two schools in the Northeast to 44 schools in seven States. Next year, we plan to be in 65 schools in 12 States. There are hundreds of schools in all 50 states that would like our support if we could provide it.

Similarly, there is a strong spirit of service on America’s college campuses and college seniors are motivated to serve their community before returning for graduate or medical studies. Last year, we received 20 applications for each available Coordinator position. This year, we expect to receive 30+ applications for each available Coordinator position.

We anticipate a buoyant future with 1,000 schools in 50 states by 2012, where we’ll reach 300,000 students and 750,000 family members and friends.

In the not too distant future, through a potential retail alliance, we believe HealthCorps can play a part in shaping how consumers navigate their grocery store—analogueous to a “Consumer Reports” recommendation.

Additionally, since our participation in the February 26th Senate hearing on Integrative Medicine, we have begun exploring how the members of the HealthCorps Advisory Board can help to establish baseline requirements for an “integrative health coach” curriculum and accredited degree. This licensed health professional could communicate simple but invaluable messages that could hasten a patient’s recovery, prevent a healthy person from developing a disorder, and assist a chronic disorder patient from developing disease. We support the establishment of a profession based on prevention rather than surgery or prescriptions.

WHY AND HOW WE SHOULD BE A MODEL FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

If we reach our goals, and we believe we can, we’ll activate communities through hundreds of local grassroots wellness events a year. And the founding principal behind this activation is service—convincing people to give some of their time to show others what they have learned—in our case how to embrace simple changes that will endure for life and make this Nation a healthier happier one.

The HealthCorps model is a “shovel ready” service program. It can scale quickly. It can adapt to the unique health concerns of individual geographies and neighborhoods. It can start making a difference on the ground immediately.

The HealthCorps model is also uniquely positioned to serve as a hub or anchor for other community wellness and health initiatives. By working with the partners

like the National Association of Community Health Centers (“NACHC”), we plan to soon give HealthCorps high school students the opportunity to do service learning at clinics in their communities. Also, our Coordinators will actively encourage graduating seniors to consider applying to do service at a clinic as a NACHC “Community Healthcorps” intern, funded through AmeriCorps.

We are strategically partnered with hundreds of non-profits and other organizations across the seven States such as Donna Karan’s Initiative Urban Zen, The United Federation of Teachers, The David Lynch Foundation, The Tiger Woods Foundation, The Kellogg Foundation, The Children’s Aid Society and The Food Bank, the fitness industry and far too many to name here. We invite our partners to participate in all our community and school events because we know it is going to take a village to spark a wellness movement and fire up more people to give of their time and effort.

HealthCorps’ mission transcends an individual approach to curing poor lifestyle habits. We embrace a holistic community approach to health (psycho/bio/social)—focusing significant work on changing the physical environment in the school and community.

We are embarking upon several projects in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”), and are hoping to launch a “Fit Town Challenge” this fall—A wellness challenge to five large American communities with HealthCorps programs over the next 12 months to see who can actualize the greatest change in their towns to create an environment conducive to wellness. We will work with media partners to bring this challenge to a broad American audience.

In schools, many HealthCorps Coordinators campaign for the removal of sodas in vending machines and the replacement of fried fatty foods in the cafeteria with more whole grain products, fresh produce and offerings of dark green lettuce and healthy seeds and nuts. Some students have also developed school and community gardens. In New York City, in partnership with Commissioner Frieden and New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“DOHMH”) HealthCorps students have surveyed offerings in local bodegas, as a way to identify neighborhoods needing more access to healthier choices.

At HealthCorps, Senators, it is easy to be inspired by the concept of service. We are supported by active board members who give of their time and expertise—like Dr. Mike Roizen, Integrative Medicine visionary and Head of Anesthesiology for the Cleveland Clinic—people with unimaginably busy lives at the very top of their professions who still find time to give back. Celebrity athletes and performers have also joined HealthCorps in our national service mantra by speaking at community events and using the media to spread our message.

I am supported by a seasoned staff of great folks who walk the talk and inspire me with their service in their personal lives every day. They have spent time at Teach for America, as grassroots activists and as HealthCorps Coordinators.

But as Martin Luther King, Jr. once said **“Everybody can be great . . . because anybody can serve.”** I hope HealthCorps may contribute in some way to inspire more Americans to lose themselves in causes greater than themselves. I thank you for your time, and for your recognition of our program as well as all programs of national service.

Senator MIKULSKI. That was excellent. Thank you.

Now we want to turn to Michael Brown, the CEO of City Year. City Year was one of the first programs that really reached out to young people in a very new and contemporary way, brought them into service. We would like to hear your views on the current legislation proposed by Senators Kennedy and Hatch and how you have seen City Year’s participants’ lives were changed.

I think what emerges from listening to these stories is that when people volunteer, their lives are changed, and many go on to the career in which they volunteered—health, education, other community services. And then the lives of the community is changed.

Well, City Year is kind of—if we are the founding mothers and fathers, you are kind of the granddaddy of the social entrepreneur.

**STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BROWN, CEO, CITY YEAR,
BOSTON, MA**

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

We would not be on the verge of a dramatic expansion of national service without your tremendous leadership over the last 15 years. We are so tremendously grateful.

Ranking Member Enzi, thank you for the bipartisan spirit and the speed with which you are moving this forward. It is incredibly exciting to see what is about to happen to the national service movement.

Senator Dodd, your experience rooted in the Peace Corps has been promoting national service now for a generation that is moving us forward that is just at a rapid rate.

And Senator Hatch, your investment in this has been extraordinary. As you mentioned, rooted in what was originally a spiritual journey now translated into the civic space. Your friendship with Senator Kennedy is a source of inspiration for all of us.

There is a grateful field sitting behind me, and I had to sort of go through all that because we are tremendously grateful for this investment. Also Senator Harris Wofford is here, who is a tremendous leader, and we wouldn't be here today but for his leadership as well.

I am from Boston, and I have had the full measure of Senator Kennedy's idealism and support behind City Year. City Year would not be in 20 cities today and had 10,000 graduates without Senator Kennedy every step of the way supporting the young people of City Year.

I speak to you today not only as the CEO of City Year, which I founded with Alan Khazei in 1988, but also as a co-leader of three coalitions that strongly support the Serve America Act—Voices for National Service, ServiceNation, and America Forward. We are tremendously inspired by President Obama's commitment to expanding opportunities for Americans to serve and by the leadership of Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch and the bipartisan group of Senators who came together to introduce this legislation.

In 1994, Congress created a dynamic and devolved national service system. Innovative governors' service commissions and non-profit organizations, including Public Allies, the Bay Area Community Resources, Habitat for Humanity, Youth Build, and many others, have mobilized Americans in service through a wide variety of successful program models that are responsive to State and local needs.

We need to expand opportunities for Americans to serve through these effective programs, and we also need a new platform to engage the American people in addressing some of the most persistent problems facing our country. The Serve America Act, by strategically expanding national service, can play a vital role in expanding opportunities for people at every life stage to put their idealism and their civic skills to work to solve specific national challenges.

It is especially important to provide opportunities for America's youth to serve. A new study, "The Quiet Crisis," reports that youth unemployment hit 21 percent. For African-American youth, that number is now 36 percent.

At the same time, applications for national service organizations like Teach for America and here at City Year are at record levels. National service programs stand ready to engage Americans, young

Americans in particular, in productive work at low cost and with no new bureaucracy.

At a time when the brave men and women of the U.S. military are putting their lives on the line overseas to protect our freedom and values, Americans should be asked to serve on the home front as well, addressing the major national problems of our time.

Consider the high school dropout crisis. Every 26 seconds, a young person drops out of high school, producing 1 million dropouts every single year. The resulting price tag is more than \$150 billion for each cohort of dropouts, who are three times more likely to be unemployed and eight times more likely to be incarcerated.

According to recent research by Johns Hopkins University, just 15 percent of the Nation's schools produce nearly half of the Nation's dropouts. We know where these schools are and which students need the help most.

It is possible to identify likely dropouts as early as the sixth grade by three off-track indicators—low attendance, poor behavior, and course failure in math or English. We also know how to get them back on track, by getting the right interventions to them in the right time.

In the case of City Year, our corps members are deployed full time in teams to work against these off-track indicators in high-poverty schools, helping children through academic support, school climate activities that improve attendance and behavior, and after-school programs that re-inforce classroom learning and promote community service.

Our corps members are in the schools from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m., when the last afterschool program ends. That change of having caring adults in their lives throughout the day can be a transformative resource for a school.

This is just one of the many examples in which national service could be scaled as part of a dedicated Education Corps established under the Serve America Act using a set of common metrics and data that could be aggregated nationally.

Similarly, the Opportunity Corps would enlist Americans to address poverty by providing job training and financial literacy and by building housing for families struggling to make ends meet.

A new Clean Energy Corps would improve energy efficiency in low-income homes and care for the environment, building the green economy and mobilizing Americans as stewards of our natural resources.

A Healthy Futures Corps could improve access to healthcare and increase health literacy for low-income Americans.

In addressing each of these issues, national service participants would bring a unique resource—skilled, committed, affordable, and often full-time human capital. There are also millions of Americans who cannot serve full time, but who can make vital contributions to communities by volunteering their time.

A new Volunteer Generation Fund in the Serve America Act would expand the supply of volunteers to nonprofits and build the capacity of organizations to manage and deploy them. Organizations like the Points of Light Institute HandsOn Network stand ready to deploy thousands of new volunteers to meet pressing community needs.

The Serve America Act will also establish a Community Solutions Fund, also known as the social innovation fund, to invest in and scale the proven innovative solutions that are already having an impact in communities across the country.

In addition to these new initiatives in the act, I want to thank you and thank the committee for taking up reauthorization of national service. We have shared a number of ideas with the committee to simplify the AmeriCorps program, including expanding the use of fixed-price grants, streamlining member reporting requirements, and increasing the Segal AmeriCorps award. Reforms will move service in America forward, stimulate community volunteering, and increase the diversity of those who serve.

In closing, I want to share with you three final thoughts about the importance of passing the Serve America Act. First, the Serve America Act funds programs on a competitive basis and places a premium on expanding programs that show results.

Second, we know that national service leverages significant private investment. Over the past 15 years, more than \$2 billion has been invested in AmeriCorps programs by corporations, philanthropies, and private citizens. At City Year, we have had over \$100 million invested by the private sector, and nine companies have invested more than \$1 million in us. The Serve America Act will leverage billions more in private support for national and community impact.

Finally, in addition to the significant benefits that national service participants deliver to communities, an investment in national service is also a long-term investment in American citizenship itself. The Serve America Act at its peak will triple the number of national service participants to a quarter million members annually.

Every 4 years, a million more Americans will have had an intensive service experience that will transform them into citizen leaders for life. That is a powerful investment in the civic skills and leadership of each new American generation.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing national and community service.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Brown follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BROWN

I am honored to be invited to testify before the committee today. I want to thank committee Chairman Senator Edward Kennedy, Ranking Member Senator Michael Enzi and Senator Mikulski for the invitation to testify today, and for holding this important hearing on "The Next Generation of National Service" and the Serve America Act.

As a Bostonian who has known and benefited from the full measure of Senator Kennedy's tremendous idealism and public spiritedness for over two decades, I want to begin by saying how deeply grateful I am to the committee chairman. Since we founded City Year in 1988 Senator Kennedy has been our greatest champion, and his dedication to public service has been a deep source of inspiration. All of us at City Year and in national service organizations across the country are deeply grateful to Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch for their visionary leadership in crafting a bold new platform for service in our country, the Serve America Act.

Senator Mikulski, as the "godmother of national service," every American community owes you a debt of gratitude for your steadfast dedication to providing opportunities for the citizens of this country to serve. Senator McCain, thank you for your leadership in championing the growth of AmeriCorps for over a decade through the McCain-Bayh bill, and your original co-sponsorship of the Serve America Act. Senator Dodd, thank you for your deep commitment to growing service opportunities

for all ages, based on your own transformative experience as a returned Peace Corps volunteer. Thank you Senator Harkin for your deep commitment to national service programs across the country.

I also want to give a special thank you to our “City Year Senators” on the committee for your strong support for City Year programs across the country, including Senator Casey for your support for City Year Philadelphia, Senator Gregg for your support for City Year New Hampshire, Senator Murray for your support for City Year Seattle, and Senator Reed for your support for City Year Rhode Island. A special thank you to Senator Brown, not only for your support for two City Year programs in Ohio, but especially because Senator Brown is a City Year dad and we are proud that his daughter is a City Year alum.

Operating in 19 U.S. cities and Johannesburg, South Africa, City Year unites young people of all backgrounds for a year of full-time service, giving them skills and opportunities to change the world. The name City Year reflects that idea that just like young people participate in freshman, sophomore, junior and senior years as vital parts of their development, we believe that young people should be challenged to give a “City Year” of service to their community and country, as a civic rite of passage to build a strong democracy. All of City Year’s more than 1,500 U.S. corps members are proud members of the AmeriCorps national service network. To date, City Year has graduated more than 12,000 alumni, who have dedicated nearly 20 million hours of service in high poverty schools, neighborhoods and community centers nationwide. Our vision is that one day the most commonly-asked question of a young person will be, “Where will you do your service year?”

I speak to you today not only as the CEO and co-founder of City Year, which I founded in 1988 with Alan Khazei, but also as a co-lead organizer of three national coalitions that represent widespread support for and endorsement of the Serve America Act: Voices for National Service, ServiceNation and America Forward.

The mission of Voices for National Service is to support the growth and development of AmeriCorps and national service by mobilizing the field to educate our Nation’s leaders and the American public about the power and impact of national service. ServiceNation, a campaign to inspire a new era of voluntary citizen service in America, is a coalition of more than 130 organizations representing more than 100 million Americans. It is organized by Be the Change, City Year, Civic Enterprises, and The Points of Light Institute. ServiceNation was honored that Senator Hatch and Caroline Kennedy, on behalf of her uncle, Senator Kennedy, publicly announced their bi-partisan introduction of the Serve America Act at the ServiceNation Summit on September 12 in New York City. America Forward, organized by New Profit, Inc., is a coalition of results-oriented entrepreneurial nonprofits presenting the Nation’s leaders and citizens with new, innovative ideas for solving our domestic problems.

On behalf of Voices for National Service, ServiceNation and America Forward, I am pleased to attach to this testimony a copy of a letter endorsing the Serve America Act and signed by 412 nonprofit organizations working nationwide to make America stronger.

We endorse the Serve America Act because national service is a great American invention and institution—and the Serve America Act will make it stronger. National service gives Americans of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to participate in the creation of “a more perfect union,” and to channel their civic passion and energies to address some of our Nation’s most pressing problems.

The idea of national service has had strong bipartisan leadership and support in the White House and the Congress, from the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps under President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to the establishment of the Peace Corps under President Kennedy, and through the administrations of President George H.W. Bush, who founded the Commission on National and Community Service and the Points of Light Foundation, President Clinton, who launched the Corporation for National and Community Service and AmeriCorps, and President George W. Bush, who founded the USA Freedom Corps and expanded AmeriCorps. We are all tremendously inspired by President Obama’s commitment to expanding opportunities for Americans to serve. We believe that the groundswell of bipartisan support surrounding The Serve America Act indicates the growing desire of Americans to be part of solving the great challenges we face as a nation.

Congress has created a dynamic and devolved system of national service that has included a wide variety of successful program models and approaches and has been tremendously responsive to State and local needs. National service participants, deployed through innovative State service commissions and nonprofit organizations, have taught, tutored and mentored children, built affordable housing, created and refurbished trails and parks, weatherized low-income housing, helped low-income

citizens gain access to health care and contributed to the health and well-being of our communities in many other important ways.

We need to expand opportunities for Americans to serve through these effective programs, and we also need a new platform to engage the American people in addressing some of the most pressing and persistent problems of our time. The Serve America Act, through a strategic expansion of national service, can play a vital role in expanding opportunities for people at every stage of life to serve and to put their idealism and civic skills to work to solve specific national challenges. It will augment—not replace—the impact of the foundational Federal investment in national service through the Corporation for National and Community Service and its programs, including AmeriCorps. These programs are critical and enable States and localities to direct resources to the specific needs and priorities of their communities.

It is no secret that we face tremendous challenges as a country, many made worse by the declining economic climate. The need for more opportunities in national and community service is greater than ever—both to address essential needs and engage Americans, especially young Americans, in productive work. A new study, “The Quiet Crisis, The Impact of the Economic Downturn on the Nonprofit Sector,” reports that phone calls to the United Way for basic needs, such as securing food, shelter and warm clothing are up by more than 10,000 calls a month compared to 2007, while financial contributions to nonprofits are declining. The study also reports that youth unemployment has already hit 21 percent—and for African-American youth that number reaches 36 percent. Unemployment, even among college graduates, is at the highest level ever. At the same time, applications for national service organizations like Teach For America and City Year are at record levels. National service programs stand ready to engage young Americans in productive work at low cost, and with no new bureaucracy.

We are at a moment in our country where we must marshal every available resource to address the mounting challenges we face. From the economic downturn to the crisis in education, we must call on every American to join the cause, to step forward and lend a hand. At a time when the brave men and women of the U.S. military are putting their lives on the line overseas to protect our freedom and values, Americans should also be asked—and provided with the opportunities to—serve on the homefront as well to confront the Nation’s most pressing domestic challenges and exemplify our Nation’s values. And the truth is Americans are stepping forward to serve—Teach For America has 35,000 applicants for just 4,000 positions—11 percent of the entire Ivy League’s senior class and 25 percent of Spelman College’s applied this year alone. Applications to City Year have increased 180 percent over last year. Peace Corps applications have risen 16 percent. Millennials and boomers are stepping forward in record numbers to serve.

We need to tap into this tremendous civic energy—and provide more opportunities for Americans to meet America’s challenges by focusing their service on solving major national problems. That is what the Serve America Act does.

Consider the high school dropout crisis, which retired general Colin Powell has called a “national catastrophe.” Every 26 seconds, another student gives up on school, producing 1 million American dropouts annually. The result is a price tag of more than \$150 billion for each cohort of dropouts—who are three times more likely to be unemployed and eight times more likely to be incarcerated. Students who drop out of high school earn on average \$1 million less over their lifetime than their peers who complete high school and go on to college.

According to recent research by Johns Hopkins University, just 15 percent of the Nation’s schools produce nearly half of the Nation’s dropouts. We know where these schools are, and we know which middle schools feed into them. We also know which students need help the most—it is possible to identify likely dropouts as early as the 6th grade by three “off-track indicators”: low attendance, poor behavior, and course failure in math or English. We also know how to get them back on track to graduate—by getting the right interventions to them at the right time. Dr. Robert Balfanz of Johns Hopkins University, the lead researcher on the Johns Hopkins study, has stated that, in solving the dropout crisis, “There is a key role to be played by national service.” Dr. Balfanz states that “we need to mobilize the young adults in this Nation to work together to give their near peers—who are half a generation younger than them—the leg up they need to stay in school, to complete their courses, to learn how to behave well, by being a role model, and to say it’s worth it.”

Research shows that continuous support from trained and dedicated adults working in schools as tutors and mentors works. We also know it works because we’ve seen it work—at City Year and at other national service programs across the country, including Citizen Schools, College Summit, Communities In Schools, Jump Start, and Teach for America.

In the case of City Year, corps members are deployed full-time in teams throughout the school year to work in high-poverty schools, helping children through direct academic support, including literacy and math, school climate activities that improve attendance and behavior, and afterschool programs that re-inforce classroom learning and promote community service. Based on this model and the results of our work in schools, we have received requests from local school superintendents, including New York City Department of Education Chancellor Joel Klein and District of Columbia Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee, to scale our program significantly as a means of ensuring school success and keeping students on track to graduate. Our Whole School Whole Child program is just one example of the many important national service approaches that could be scaled as part of a dedicated Education Corps, established under the Serve America Act, using a set of common metrics and data that can be aggregated nationally.

Similarly, an Opportunity Corps could enlist Americans of all backgrounds to address both urban and rural poverty through increasing access to job training and placement resources, increasing the financial literacy of economically disadvantaged individuals, building or improving housing—assistance needed more than ever as our Nation faces a significant economic recession and more and more families find themselves unable to make ends meet.

A Clean Energy Corps would improve energy efficiency in low-income homes and care for natural resources, building the green economy and mobilizing Americans as stewards of the Nation's natural resources. A Health Corps could improve access to health care and increase health literacy for low-income Americans.

In addressing each of these issues, national service participants would bring a unique resource: skilled, committed, affordable and often full-time human capital. Corps members in the Education Corps, for example, would provide a diverse workforce serving full-time in schools—in large cohorts and in the unique role of working with students from the first bell at 8 a.m. through the close of the afterschool program at 6 p.m.—which increases the adult to student ratio in schools, at the required scale and intensity. That would be a transformative resource for high poverty schools across the country.

National service can also promote workforce readiness as corps members receive extensive training to prepare them for their service that can also benefit them in their future careers. National service corps members are motivated, understand hard work, are focused and efficient, and gain practical experience in problem solving and working with people from diverse backgrounds. Their “real world” experience at a young age will serve as a valuable asset to both themselves and their employers for years to come.

There are also millions of Americans who cannot serve full-time, but make vital contributions to communities by volunteering part-time through religious organizations, mentoring or nature conservation programs, at food banks or in homeless shelters—and many more people who are ready to serve but opportunities for them to do so may be limited due to lack of capacity on the part of nonprofits in recruiting and managing volunteers. A Volunteer Generation Fund in the Service America Act would expand the supply of volunteers to nonprofits as well as build the capacity of nonprofits to utilize these volunteers, resulting in an influx of many more citizens of all ages in service to meeting the needs of their communities. Organizations like the Hands On Network and Points of Light Institute are ready to tap the Volunteer Generation Fund to deploy thousands of new volunteers to meet pressing needs.

Similarly, many Americans want to apply their professional skills and experience to address critical needs in health and education across the globe but cannot commit to long-term assignments such as the 2 years required by the Peace Corps. A strengthening of Volunteers for Prosperity, an initiative established in 2003 as part of the USA Freedom Corps, would expand opportunities for short-term service to provide assistance across the developing world in identified areas of need, while enhancing America's international standing.

The Serve America Act will also establish a “Community Solutions Fund” (or a Social Innovation Fund) to invest in and scale the proven, innovative solutions that are having an impact in communities across the country. The Fund will promote greater innovation in the social sector and evaluate performance based on results. And because citizen service so often generates new ideas and solutions, the act establishes Innovation Fellowships to enable individuals who have completed either a civilian national service experience or are veterans to launch a new civic initiative. The act will also call on the Boomer generation to use its experience to innovate for the common good with the help of Encore Fellowships.

And just as the government regularly assesses economic progress through standard indicators, the Service America Act would establish a Civic Health Index—a critical new tool for taking the Nation's civic pulse across the areas of volunteering

and community service, voting and civic engagement, and understanding of U.S. history and government, among other categories. The resulting information would inform policymakers and communities alike as to the Nation's civic health at the local, State and national levels and promote progress towards strengthening the civic habits of our democracy.

In addition to considering these new elements of national service, I want to thank the committee for taking up the reauthorization of The National and Community Service Trust Act and the underlying bills. It is very important to update the architecture on which these new ideas will be built. Nearly 16 years have passed since the enactment of the act, the last national service bill. Since then, the field has learned many lessons that can be drawn on to optimize the organization and structure of the existing programs and prepare the national service infrastructure for expansion. Through reauthorization, Congress has the opportunity to make changes that will unleash program potential. Reforms will allow more Americans to serve, stimulate community volunteerism, increase the diversity of those serving, and modernize the program to recognize new needs and resources resulting from the changing demographics and economic circumstances.

If AmeriCorps is to achieve the scale described by President Obama, nonprofits and State commissions must have greater flexibility to effectively administer the program. Current requirements are administratively burdensome and in many cases prohibitively expensive, making AmeriCorps nearly inaccessible to small nonprofits. We have shared a number of ideas with the committee to reduce the administrative burden and simplify the AmeriCorps program. These ideas include revising the formula for AmeriCorps assistance and approved national service positions, expanding the use of Fixed Price Grants, streamlining member management reporting requirements and increasing the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

The post-service Segal AmeriCorps Education Award was established in 1993 and because the formula for calculating it was set in statute, its value has been frozen while the cost of higher education has skyrocketed. As students and their families are being priced out of the college market, the AmeriCorps Education Award has remained static at \$4,725. The Education Award should continue to be a valuable and compelling incentive for young people to serve and we support indexing the award to increase its purchase power.

Another challenge is that the Education Award is viewed differently than most other forms of scholarships and fellowships—including Pell grants and the G.I. Benefit—and is subject to Federal taxation. According to the Congressional Research Service, the AmeriCorps Education Award can be taxed at a rate of 15 percent or more. As a result, AmeriCorps members see the value of their college aid drop to \$3,528 or less after taxes. Senators Dodd and Cochran have introduced legislation that both increases the value of the award and makes it tax deductible, ensuring that the full value can be applied to the pursuit of higher education.

In closing, I want to share with you three final thoughts about the importance of passing the Serve America Act.

First, the Serve America Act funds programs on a competitive basis and places a premium on expanding programs that show results—in helping children succeed in school, in reducing energy usage, in providing access to healthcare, in helping people gain the skills they need to climb out of poverty.

Second, we know that national service is highly cost effective and leverages significant private investment. Over the past 15 years, more than a billion dollars has been invested in AmeriCorps programs by corporations, philanthropies and private citizens. At City Year, nine companies—ARAMARK, Bank of America, Cisco, Comcast, CSX, Pepperidge Farm, PepsiCo, Timberland, and T-Mobile—have each invested more than a million dollars and engaged their employees in thousands of hours of community service. The Serve America Act will leverage billions more in private support for service and community impact.

Finally, in addition to the significant and immediate benefit that national service participants deliver to communities, an investment in national service is also a long-term investment in American citizenship. An independent study funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies and conducted by Policy Studies Associates found that City Year alumni, compared to similarly situated individuals in the national population, were 65 percent more likely to be engaged in volunteer activities and 45 percent more likely to vote, and that more than 90 percent of alumni reported that their service experience contributed to their ability to work as part of a team and work with people from diverse backgrounds. Three-quarters of alumni reported that their service experience contributed to their ability to solve problems in their communities. The Serve America Act will, at its peak, triple the number of national service participants to 250,000 members annually—meaning that every 4 years a million more Americans will have had an intensive service experience that will transform

them into citizen leaders for life. That is a powerful investment in the civic skills and leadership of each new American generation.

This landmark legislation comes at a pivotal juncture for us as a nation. We face an economic crisis of historic and worldwide proportions with millions of lost jobs, and millions of lives in economic peril with profound social implications. At the same time, there is a significant desire on the part of Americans—young and old, from all walks of life—to help address the challenges facing the country through serving their communities and building a stronger future for all of us. The Serve America Act will provide a transformational investment of resources to enable Americans to act on their desire to serve and put their passions and skills to work to address critical issues that will have a significant and restorative impact on our country both in the near-term and for many years to come.

Thank you for your leadership on national and community service. I hope you will give the Serve America Act your full consideration and pass and fully fund it.

Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you very much, Michael.

To our committee, we have been joined by Senator Dodd and also Senator Isakson of Georgia. As you know, Senator Dodd has been in and out because of banking responsibilities, and I think you might have to return.

Also what is so interesting is here on the committee, many of your Senators have served. Senator Dodd in the Peace Corps. I have spoken often about the fact that I have a master's degree in social work. I taught at the very first VISTA training school in Baltimore, did my own volunteer work. Would go into the Baltimore city jail on Monday nights to work with women to help them do their discharge planning, all the way through to the grassroots group I started that stopped a highway and transformed a neighborhood.

Senator Hatch's call to service as a Mormon. Senator Rockefeller is a VISTA volunteer. Of course, the people like John McCain who served in our military.

We are all called to service in different ways, and I think what you have said as a panel and what we who, ourselves, have served in our own way, it was transformational. It changed our lives.

Instead of leading off with questions, how about if I turn to you, Senator Dodd? Then go to Senator Enzi, and then we will go back and forth.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. Well, thank you, Senator.

I will be very brief, and I apologize to our witnesses and to my colleagues for not being here at the outset to hear all of this.

I want to thank Senator Mikulski, first of all, for her leadership here. Second—obviously it has been pointed out by many—I'd like to thank my friend, Senator Kennedy, who cares so deeply about these issues we've worked on together over the years. I know many of you on the panel here already and have worked with you at various times over the years on these issues.

Barbara Mikulski has said it well. This joins a lot of us together, regardless of how we come to the table. The fact is we have journeyed through various experiences that have led us to the conclusion that there is nothing more ennobling and nothing that contributes more to our country than to invite people to serve their Nation.

I don't think each generation is substantially different on this issue. I think every generation wants to be asked. As Harris Wofford has heard me say probably a million times over the last 40 years, when I have been asked why did I join the Peace Corps, the very simple answer I have given for 40 years is someone asked me to. An American president did.

He invited a generation of us to be involved in something larger than ourselves, and it was tremendously exciting to be asked. Some went into the military. Some went into domestic programs here at home. Others went into the Justice Department. People found different ways to serve their country.

Over the years, I have felt a deep resonance with this desire to serve. Ronald Reagan was the one American president in the last 25 or 30 years that increased the Federal budget for the Peace Corps every single year during his 8 years in the presidency. This issue transcends traditional politics when it comes to support for these efforts.

I would just mention briefly and Thad Cochran and I have introduced a series of bills called Service for All Ages, and Mr. Strong knows about this because the Experience Corps program is a great example—in fact, Mozelle Vann, who is one of your members, came and testified when Thad Cochran and I introduced our three bills with Rosa DeLauro, congresswoman from the New Haven area of Connecticut.

We have what we call the Summer of Service, the Semester of Service, and the Encore Service Program, the idea being to reach out and invite people of all ages to participate. Now, we believe very strongly that even young children can learn the great joys of giving at a very young age. A Summer of Service or a Semester of Service would provide exactly that opportunity.

We can't talk about expanding service opportunities without talking about the AmeriCorps program. Last year alone, 75,000 AmeriCorps members gave back to their communities. They brought reinforcements—recruiting another 1.7 million community volunteers to work alongside them. Which is why my friend, Thad and I also introduced a bill to raise the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award each year as the cost of college increases. It's an idea that has caught on and we're pleased it was incorporated into the Serve America Act.

Obviously, the Peace Corps is something that I have a special affection for. I was also a Big Brother, involved in the Big Brothers program nationally a number of years ago; I feel very strongly about these types of domestic programs.

Finally, the Peace Corps is a special program to me. We have some ideas that I have shared with Senator Mikulski about how we might move beyond where we have been for 40 years and work to increase our engagement with the volunteers and return volunteers. The great goals of the Peace Corps always focused on engagement, which we have never done as well on as I think the President intended when he authored the program.

Harris told me and my colleagues a wonderful story, about that day in 1961, when the first volunteers gathered on the South Lawn of the White House, and President Kennedy gave them a great farewell to go off into Africa to do their work. He went back into

the Oval Office, as Harris tells the story, and with a small group of people there said,

“This is going to be a remarkable program.”

“And just think, 45 or 50 years from now”—basically where we are—“there will be a million people who will have returned from serving their country overseas, getting to know the world better, getting the world to know us better, and coming back and educating their neighbors and friends in communities as a result of their experience.”

Well, about 180,000 of us, far short of the million that President Kennedy envisioned in 1961, have come back as volunteers. It has contributed, I think, in no small measure to our own incredible benefit as individuals, not to mention, I think, the country as well. How we can expand that opportunity is something we would like to include as part of this effort.

I thank all of you for what you are doing. As well, it is good to see all of you. Marc, it is good to see you. Alan, whom I know so well. And others—Michael, we thank you for your service as well.

Madam Chairman, I look forward to working with you, doing whatever I can do in the coming days to help this become a reality.

[The prepared statement of Senator Dodd follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

First, thank you to Senator Mikulski for allowing me to come and speak quickly about the important role that national service will play in meeting the challenges that we face.

Senator Kennedy and Senator Mikulski share my commitment to service. I am so pleased to have the opportunity to work so closely with both of them to expand service opportunities for all ages.

I want to apologize for not being able to stay longer and listen to the compelling testimony of the witnesses before us today, but I am glad that I am able to speak for a moment about the unique moment in which we find ourselves.

As you may know, a few weeks ago Senator Thad Cochran and I re-introduced our “Service for All Ages Initiative.” We are joined by my good friend Representative Rosa DeLauro in the House of Representatives in introducing these bills. I would also be remiss if I did not mention that I am a proud original cosponsor of the Serve America Act.

When Congresswoman DeLauro and I introduced these bills, we heard from three phenomenal women from Connecticut who all served their communities in very different ways, but all told the same story—that engaging in meaningful service had changed their lives.

I heard from Mozelle Vann, from Hamden, Connecticut, who tutors elementary school children in literacy. She’s one of more than six thousand older Americans engaging in service in Connecticut.

She told us about the creative ways she has helped one student, Bobby, improve his reading. She saw, one day, that his eyes were jumping around the page, from line to line, when he read. So she brought into school brightly colored pipe cleaners to put beneath each line that Bobby was reading—and he became more focused and his reading improved.

That's the kind of results we get from service. That's the kind of change that we make in the lives of others when we give of ourselves.

We also heard from Latoya Braham, a senior at the University of Connecticut. She volunteers with Big Brothers Big Sisters, as I did many years ago.

She told us that she's come so far in her life-but that she remembers where she's from. She feels she must give back to her community-and she wants to encourage others to do the same. Through her service, she's engaging others in service.

I share, with these remarkable women, a commitment to service. My service in the Peace Corps was the opportunity of a lifetime, and it helped me realize how important it is to give everyone the opportunity to serve.

Those of us who serve, we know that we are linked by our common experiences.

We are tied to the communities in which we serve.

We are committed to expand service opportunities to others.

And, especially during times like these, we cannot forget the impact service can make.

Whatever the challenge, we know that there are dedicated Americans ready to meet it. This is our nation's most precious resource-the resolve of its citizens.

Our responsibility, today, is to provide opportunities for *ordinary* Americans to do *extraordinary* things. From middle school students to retirees, we ought to give everyone the opportunity to serve their communities.

And so, the Dodd-Cochran Service for All Ages Initiative, and the Serve America Act, will do just that. Regardless of age, income, or ability, if Americans have the desire to serve-we want to give them the opportunity to do so.

I'm pleased that our President has made such a strong commitment to national service, and I look forward to passing legislation that will expand service opportunities to people of all ages.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Senator MIKULSKI. Did you have a question?

Senator DODD. Well, you know—

[Laughter.]

We will submit our questions. I have several of them, obviously. The one thing I think is important to recognize is that for every dollar spent on service, you receive a much greater return—some people are not impressed with how much good comes out of this.

I think with AmeriCorps, one of the things we have learned—and with City Year—is how many additional people we encourage to serve, the sort of radiation effect. In addition to the ones who serve through AmeriCorps, we also engage a million other volunteers. For every dollar spent, we are told that there is about a \$4 return on our investment.

Senator MIKULSKI. Is that a question?

Senator DODD. That is a question. To what extent do you feel that it is valuable to discuss these dollar numbers in response to those who raise the issue that this effort and initiative, may have some costs associated with it? Because, if you are only impressed by budgetary numbers, then I think these numbers here directly

contribute to that argument. Any particular comments you want to make on that, Michael?

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Senator.

We have engaged over a million young people—I am sorry. We have had 10,000 people in our program, and a million volunteers have been leveraged through it by sort of—it is hundreds of millions of dollars of value-added.

In addition, the human capital that goes through organizations like City Year and so many others, they get trained up, and they are now part of Public Allies, and they are part of Citizen Schools, and they are leading other organizations. Essentially, there is a training element that is happening with regards to national service.

We know that there is going to be a need for many more leaders in the nonprofit sector, and national service is a way of getting that leadership cohort ready.

Senator DODD. That is great. Thank you.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you. Senator Enzi.

Then after Senator Enzi, we are going to go in the order of arrival—Hatch, Isakson. Then I will turn to Senator Murray, and I will be the wrap-up before the votes. Keep your seatbelts on.

Senator Enzi.

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Madam Chairman. This has been a very inspiring hearing.

I will get right to my questions. I have been impressed with the faith-based initiative, but Mayor Goldsmith, you have had more involvement with what is actually in these programs. Has the inclusion of faith-based programs served a purpose? Has it been useful?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Thank you, Senator.

We have consciously over the last 8 years attempted to level the playing field. There are two ways that this comes about. The one is in terms of regulations. The other is in terms of bureaucracy because, as you know, a small organization, faith-based or otherwise, often doesn't have the wherewithal to deal with the bureaucratic rules that the Federal Government requires.

Over the last several years, we have involved more and more faith-based organizations, and this bill will allow us to even more simplify the process of dealing with—between the Federal Government and those organizations.

Last, as your question suggests, Senator Enzi, the most frequent path to service is through a religious institution. It is the most common path of service.

The extent to which we can leverage those organizations in their homeless work or the domestic sheltering work or their food pantry work, we gain a lot of participation. We are making steady progress, and I think we could do a better job.

Senator ENZI. Thank you. Very helpful.

Governor Racicot, a neighbor. I loved your comment about not being at the end of the world. I am from Wyoming. I have approximately the same view.

[Laughter.]

Wyoming and Montana are very rural, in fact, I think frontier. Our largest city, of course, is Cheyenne. It is slightly over 50,000

people, and every city that we have, you can go outside and you can see the whole thing at once.

Of course, when I am talking about cities, we have 14 cities where their population exceeds their elevation.

[Laughter.]

Since you have served as the governor of Montana, could you comment on the unique challenges confronting rural communities as they seek to encourage volunteerism and civic engagement?

Mr. RACICOT. Well, they are unique, unique problems, of course, with a great many people spread out over large distances. Of course, if you are going to utilize an equation or a mathematical formula that is built upon a national scale, you may not always be able to draw comparisons that are meaningful and effective.

In addition to that, of course, as you in Wyoming, we have a great many Native populations in the State of Montana. We have 13 different tribes and 7 different reservations. As a consequence of that, we have Native populations that are there, and they obviously need to be served just like virtually every other American community. We have unique opportunities to do that, but it is not always contemplated or hasn't been always contemplated that those populations may be some of the most commanding in terms of need and necessity.

There are special challenges. To be quite honest with you, Senator Enzi, we found those were surmountable. If we were aggressive, if we were open, if we were persistent, we were heard, just as others were heard. We had just as much opportunity to take advantage of the resources that were offered.

We utilized them for specific needs from fighting fire to mentoring young people in our rural communities. Frankly, there is an equality of opportunity here, even in rural States, for those of us who believe in the program and its ultimate capacity.

Senator ENZI. Thank you.

We have limited time. I kind of have to skip around here, and I would like to call on Chairman Solomont.

There are a number of proposals for expanding the scope of programs authorized in the national service statutes. Given this expansion, what advice would you offer on how to improve or build on these programs while strengthening the financial accountability and respecting the fiscal limitations? As the accountant of the Senate—

Mr. SOLOMONT. Well, one of the unique characteristics of the Corporation for National and Community Service is the bipartisan board that was created when the corporation was originally created in 1993. The board has played a very important role in oversight, I think, as Madam Chair knows.

Because when there have been management concerns or concerns about how we have managed our resources, I think that that has heightened the attention of the board. We have a very active Management, Audit, and Governance Committee that really rolls up their sleeves and gets into the weeds on these issues quite a bit.

We are now faced with the challenge of allocating funds that have been entrusted to us through the stimulus package, \$200 million, which will increase AmeriCorps by about 16,000 members. We are proceeding responsibly and steadily and not trying to manage

more than our capacity allows us. I think that will set us on the glide path to create a better capacity to manage the kind of growth that this legislation will provide.

Senator ENZI. Thank you, and my time has expired. I will submit questions for the others. I appreciate everybody's participation.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you, Senator Enzi. If you are here before the vote, we might be able to have another round then.

Senator HATCH.

Senator HATCH. Well, thank you, Madam Chairman.

I just want to compliment all of you for the work you are doing, for what you have done all these years, for what it means to our country, what it means to those of us up here who are constantly trying to find ways of making our humanitarian concerns go farther and farther and farther. And I just want to pay respect to you.

I will submit any questions, Madam Chairman, that I have. I am just grateful that you would chair this hearing. Again, I will mention my friend Senator Kennedy. I know he wishes he could be here with us today, and I was so pleased to see him honored on his 77th birthday. It was quite a soiree there the other night and enjoyed being there with Elaine.

I think too few Americans really know what you folks do, and frankly, we need to get that out there more. Hopefully, this bill will assist in many ways to get more people involved so that we can truly continue to be the great country that we are.

My own faith, along with the Catholic Church, they have combined together all over the world in humanitarian concerns, millions and millions of dollars. Food, clothing, pharmaceuticals, you name it. Right the minute it happens, they are ready to go.

You folks are in that same category. I mean, you really, really do an awful lot of good, and I just want you to know how much I love and respect and appreciate you.

Thanks, Madam Chairman. Appreciate it.

Senator MIKULSKI. Senator Murray.

Senator MURRAY. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman, for your leadership on this and for holding this hearing.

Thank you to all of you for the tremendous work you do throughout all of your communities.

I come from Washington State, and one of the things I am most proud of is my constituents' willingness and energy to get involved and help in their local communities. Even though this economic downturn has really hurt a lot of people, there are still an awful lot of people who are willing to get out and help and volunteer in their neighborhoods around the State.

The problem that we are seeing is that people don't always know where to go to get matched up with the right kind of opportunities, and programs like AmeriCorps only serve a percentage of those people who do want to volunteer. The organizations that do coordinate volunteering opportunities are often flooded with a lot of requests and don't always have enough help to address those requests.

We have worked to try and address this in the Serve America Act through the Volunteer Generation Fund, but I wanted an opportunity to hear from you, Mr. Solomont and Mr. Goldsmith. How have service organizations and the Corporation been working to

utilize so many people today who are willing to help out, but might not be available for an intensive program like AmeriCorps?

Mr. SOLOMONT. Thank you, Senator.

One of the ways is by focusing on the importance of making the leveraging of volunteer efforts through the AmeriCorps program part of the accountability to which we hold our grantees. We understand that we are not only providing AmeriCorps members to assist in not-for-profit organizations, but we are providing AmeriCorps members for the very purpose of engaging people at other levels of service.

We have looked at the use of technology to try to reach folks through both volunteer.gov and to create a platform where people can go to find other opportunities for volunteering. We think that the social innovation fund, by finding the next generation of great social entrepreneurs, some of whom are at this table, and building to scale some of the next generation of ideas will also provide new vehicles for engaging volunteers.

I am sure that the vice chairman would add to that.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. No, I think Alan said it well, Senator. I would just emphasize that several years ago, we asked ourselves this very question, which is every dollar we spend should help a community organization reach out and incorporate more community volunteers. We made it part of the peer evaluation of the grants. We keep score in terms of how much leveraging occurs.

Areas where we can further this work, whether it be—as Alan mentioned, we have been very active in using Web 2.0 tools to get more individuals involved, technologies, as you are well aware of. We need to do a little bit better job in training small organizations, who often need our help, but flounder a little bit on how to do it.

It is an explicit part of our mission and, actually, we think the very purpose of the organization.

Senator MURRAY. I have been talking to the Washington Commission for National and Community Service and service organizations across my State, and I am sure they are telling me exactly what all of you are hearing. Right now, there is a spirit of volunteerism despite the tough economy, but a lot of our service organizations' budgets are being cut because of that tough economy right now.

If some of you could comment on what impact you are seeing as a result, I would appreciate it. Anybody?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Just one—the organizations can comment on it, but one quick response that Chairman Solomont made earlier, which is this bill allows us to make a fixed grant. Without going into the technicalities, it will make it much easier both to comply with the regulations and to proceed in a tough time. It makes it more flexible for the organizations to go forward.

There is a big change. It is a little technical, but there is a big change in how we are allowed to operate under this bill, which will ameliorate that situation somewhat.

Senator MURRAY. Right.

Mr. SOLOMONT. I would just add a point. One of the arguments for including national service in the stimulus package was to try to shore up the not-for-profit sector, which is a much larger piece of our economy than I think most people realize and which is under

extraordinary pressure and is also providing front-line service to people who are most victimized by this economy.

And so, we have made the argument, and I would propose that this is an argument that we should amplify, that national and community service is not just a nice thing to do to engage people, but it is really an important part of tying this economy together. I think it will be demonstrated particularly in this time of economic crisis.

Senator MURRAY. Anybody else want to comment?

Mr. Brown.

Mr. BROWN. Senator, it is a time of dissonance, where, on the one hand, more Americans want to come forward to serve more than ever. City Year applications are up 180 percent. Teach for America has 35,000 applicants for 4,000 spots. At the same time, because of the economy, nonprofits are cutting back, and that includes service organizations, and there aren't as many donations to go around.

In the new study that just came out, "The Quiet Crisis," it said that Call Centers United Ways are getting 10,000 more calls a month across the country just because of the issues of homelessness and related issues of the economy. That is why this legislation is critical. It is important to scale existing organizations, as Alan said, and the stimulus bill as well.

I think what is uniquely possible right now is also working with the Department of Education that all of these forms of government and private sector can come together in a unique way because of the capacity that has been built over the last 16 years. It is essential that we all work together to try to meet those needs and especially in our communities that are hurting around the country right now.

Ms. SAGAWA. If I could say one thing about the service infrastructure and that is, the State commissions are a really vital piece of making sure that all the programs of the corporation are strong and effective in States. They are going to have a lot more work because of this bill, which is good, because we want to push it out into the communities and into the States.

They are going to need more support in order to do the important work that they have been given to do. I know that some of them are really struggling with State budgets now, and I just want to underline that.

Senator MURRAY. OK, an excellent point.

Senator MIKULSKI. Governor Racicot, did you want to comment on that part of it?

Mr. RACICOT. I don't think that I could improve upon the information that has been provided, Senator. Thank you very much.

Mr. STRONG. I would add one quick comment, and that is in terms of the older adults, what we are seeing is that they are able to step forward and offer—and really step into the gap, where there is a need for volunteerism. Even in this tight economic time, they still are coming forward, and we expect that trend to continue.

Senator MURRAY. Well, I thank you. My time is up, but I just am really pleased that the President has put this forward as an initiative that he is truly behind and wants to get signed into law.

I want to thank you, Senator Mikulski, for your leadership on moving us to get it to the floor and get it passed. I think, at a time

when a lot of people are hurting, that we have to take advantage of the spirit of volunteerism that is in this country today and make sure that those people are getting the services they need.

Thank you to all of you.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, thank you, Senator Murray.

Because of the President's initiative, the compelling human need out there, the incredible Obama effect that is generating thousands and thousands of people who want to volunteer, and the fact that this is actually a bipartisan framework—it is Kennedy-Hatch—it will be the intention of this committee to have a markup next week, and the week thereafter to be on the floor and to have this completed before the Easter/Passover break.

And the reason for that is to have the changes in the Serve America Act reflected in this year's appropriations to keep the momentum going that was provided by the stimulus. So, we can move forward with the stimulus and then the 2010 appropriations next October.

Before I go to my questions, many people have mentioned that in the audience is Harris Wofford. I would like to formally recognize our former colleague, Senator Harris Wofford, who was the second CEO of the Corporation for National Service.

Senator, why don't you stand up? You certainly deserve a round of applause.

[Applause.]

The first CEO was Eli Segal, and as they say in the Jewish tradition, a very happy and blessed memory. I believe the education award also carries the Segal name.

I am going to ask about the education award because that hasn't come up in this moment where there are so many people willing to serve. When the bill was first done, we wanted to recognize two problems of the 1990s. One was converting the "me generation" to the "we generation," where we wanted to inculcate what de Tocqueville called the habits of the heart in a new generation of Americans.

But the other, an ongoing problem, was student indebtedness. We've recognized that for many of our young people, the cost of higher education either was a deterrent to go or that their student loans was like their very first mortgage. We came up with a modest grant that was equal to the average cost of tuition at a college or a university that was a land-grant college, essentially a State university.

That grant has not changed for more than 15 years. I turn to the chairman and the vice chairman for comments about this grant. No. 1, people say, and we will hear it in the markup and we will hear it on the floor, why should we pay people to volunteer?

And No. 2, why should we raise it? And dare you say that it be tax free?

Mr. SOLOMONT. Well, you have highlighted a number of things that I think that we on the board support and have supported for a long time, and we thank the sponsors of the bill and folks who support the idea of raising the Segal education award. It is long overdue. We would also like to see it tied to the Pell Grant so that we don't have to wait for new legislation to do that.

I also wanted to point out that there have been some other things done in other legislation, which have helped to recognize the value of service to this Nation and the appropriateness of acknowledging that through helping people with their higher education. I believe there was a bill that was enacted that forgives some of the college loans in return for certain types of service.

I am pleased—we actually met with the Department of Education recently. The Department of Education approved AmeriCorps as one of the service experiences that would qualify for student loan forgiveness.

We think that criticism of service as paid volunteers is probably an old argument. When we see the bipartisan enthusiasm today for this legislation and for expansion of service generally and also an acknowledgment of its value and also the collateral benefit of adding to education of young people, I hope that we can look forward and not back at some of those criticisms.

One of the key participants in service are college students themselves. One of the things that we have talked about, and I can't remember if it is in the bill now or not or in which bill, but increasing the number—the requirement for work-study students, for universities and colleges to focus a certain amount of their work-study resources to encouraging students, rather than to provide service to their libraries and cafeterias, to actually do some work in the communities surrounding colleges and universities.

I thank you for raising that point, Madam Chair.

Senator MIKULSKI. Mr. Goldsmith, you are an old hand at this. Did you want to amplify that, or does that stand?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Is "old hand" a term of affection, Madam Chairman?

[Laughter.]

Senator MIKULSKI. It is. But we are going to come back to 2003.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. All right, thanks. I am sure we will.

Very quickly on both points, the latter point first. We made a very intentional effort to look at these AmeriCorps slots as folks who work at a very minimal level of income in order to manage other volunteers, unpaid volunteers. We know these 75,000 manage 4 million individuals, and it is a small amount of money in order to accomplish that. We don't look at this as paid volunteerism, and I think the facts support it.

Madam Chairman, I think the other question is enormously complicated. The implication of your question is correct. The value of the education award has diminished dramatically. In addition to it being diminished dramatically, it is also taxed.

It presents a situation where actually some individuals don't even take advantage of it, and it also presents an administrative nightmare because, essentially, the education award and the stipend are connected, and it is kind of a hydraulic. One will limit the other. You kind of have to guess where they come out because you make a grant, and it hits the trust.

I think that given the chair's commitment to service as a pathway to education, we might ask the question eventually how we do we look at the larger issues of service? The President has endorsed a loan forgiveness for service. Maybe over time, this program needs

to be expanded and moved to the Department of Education. Not the service agenda, but the education award.

It is just there is much more we can do with education than we can manage with the small amount of education dollars we have in our trust, and I totally endorse the Senator's implication. We would like to do a better job. It is simply a financial issue to us.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, might we invite you to do this? I would like, as we proceed to our markup and on the floor in discussions with the House, for you all to give us a memo, if you will, on the flashing yellow lights that you already have organizationally to administer it and the students' reaction to it. In some ways, it might put them into a different income bracket and make them ineligible for other aid. Whatever are your lessons learned, please include them in the memo.

And then, No. 2, what would be some of those recommendations? Because since 1993, there have been new avenues for this, such as, the 2007 bill, the education reform bill that we did that offers debt forgiveness if you go into public service.

Let us take a look at it, and then let us work with you all at the Corporation. Right now, I think we should keep what we have got through the markup, and then we can always revisit it.

Let me then go to one other question managerially, and then I am going to go to the service programs. Some of these questions I am raising because while you heard today the yea-sayers to this new bill, there are naysayers within the Senate and within this committee. So I am raising some of the naysayers' concerns.

One of which, goes back to 2003. In 2003—not to rehash it in any way, but 2003, the corporation had a bureaucratic boondoggle. They over enrolled 20,000 volunteers and didn't have the money to pay for it and almost killed AmeriCorps and almost killed the spirit of AmeriCorps.

Senator Bond was the chairman of the subcommittee, and I must really salute him. When he and I had VA/HUD and we had national service, he was an excellent partner on this. So we had to jump in. We raised hell about the board, caused a shakeup, etc.

Having said that, let me go to where we are now. You have got stimulus money, but you have got all these people, as you have said, who really want to serve. My question is, No. 1, does the money match the number of volunteers? No. 2, do you have the administrative structure to handle both the stimulus money and also to handle this incredible new demand for people who want to serve?

And No. 3, can we address the incredible community need that is bubbling up. It is almost like a tsunami of need in our community. Much was said about what is happening in the calls coming in to United Way. I met with my Baltimore United Way. It is stunning, stunning what is going on.

First, does the money match the need? And second, do you have the infrastructure to both manage the money, bring in the volunteers in significant volume, but then get it out in a wise and prudent way in terms of meeting the need in the community?

Mr. SOLOMONT. First of all, I think we should acknowledge that the management difficulties that were encountered some years ago were a great embarrassment to the agency and to the board. I

think the board, at your urging, got much more involved in dealing with them, and there was a shakeup for the corporation.

I want to compliment the previous chair, who provided a lot of leadership during that time, absorbed a lot of criticism, but I think Chairman Goldsmith then really helped us through one of the most difficult times for the corporation.

Going forward, I would say that the need is probably greater than any amount of money that we can apply to it. I think there were folks who had hoped that there would be a larger amount of money applied to national and community service in the stimulus package, but I think we are all restrained by a sense that it didn't make any sense to get more money than we had the capacity to put to work.

Senator MIKULSKI. Because capacity is a big issue, and I am going to turn to Shirley Sagawa about that. Capacity is a huge issue, whether it is at the national level or for governors, who are really so stressed themselves right now.

Mr. SOLOMONT. Well, I think the watchword, as we look forward to an expansion of service programs across the board—not just with the stimulus, but with the 2010 budget and beyond, and with this legislation—is to pursue growth responsibly and gradually so that we always have the capacity to put it to work in that way.

We are just going to have to take a slightly longer term view of this, and we are not going to be able to grow AmeriCorps to 250,000 members overnight. We do think there is a great need and desire for that level of AmeriCorps membership. So, I think we are looking at establishing a glide path of funding in order to reach that.

I can assure you that the senior staff under acting CEO Nicky Goren's leadership is very focused on building capacity to put this to work in a way that I think the board will be satisfied is prudent and so would you, Madam Chair.

If I may apologize, speaking of higher education, I am supposed to get an award as a friend of—

Senator MIKULSKI. You have to go?

Mr. SOLOMONT. Back in Boston. The one requirement is that I showed up. And I am afraid if I don't leave the hearing, I will miss the plane.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, go ahead. That is OK.

Mr. SOLOMONT. I apologize, but I reiterate my gratitude to you for your leadership and for calling this hearing.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, thank you. And good luck. What is the award?

Mr. SOLOMONT. I am fortunate enough to serve on the board of trustees of my alma mater, Tufts University, and because of whatever contribution they think I have made to higher education, I am being given an award as a friend of education.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, you sure are.

Mr. SOLOMONT. Thank you.

[Laughter.]

I am going to leave the tough questions for Steve.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Now I am unencumbered by his presence.

Senator MIKULSKI. Now he's giving—there you go.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Now I will tell you what the real situation is.

Senator MIKULSKI. Now I give it to the vice chairman. I think this is what Obama is going to start to do with Biden. That is OK.

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Just very quickly, let me make a couple of points. I think your question is a serious one that deserves a serious answer. I don't mean to suggest Alan's wasn't. I mean a serious ongoing—

Senator MIKULSKI. Would you like to do this in writing?

Mr. GOLDSMITH. Yes, because we have a lot more to do, and this bill will help us do many of those things. We need to be careful on how—we have a COO, as an addition to CEO. This bill and this year's appropriation will allow us to actually have an IT system that supports the field. We need to have an outside management consultant come in.

We can rethink the way this organization is managed as a result of this bill, and we take the responsibility of doing it. We are better off than we were before you admonished us, and we are not yet ready to manage—

Senator MIKULSKI. Sure. That was 10 years ago. We really learned that if we don't have our capacity in place and we don't have a focused board to deal with it—but I know the board is very focused now—it can present problems.

Why don't you do a memo for us about capacity? We authorizers will then share that with Senator Harkin's appropriations' staff. And while we are authorizing, we are also looking at what we need to do with the 10 appropriations so that we don't create hollow opportunities.

To pass an authorization that does not have the resources behind it just makes us feel good. We want to do good, which means we have to then do the authorizing and the appropriations, but in a way that achieves these managerial efficiencies and stewardship that Senator Enzi has been so excellent in articulating and standing sentry over. Why don't you give that to us in writing?

Let me go to some of the service aspects. I want to go to those who are doing the service, both you, Mr. Brown and to Mr. Strong, because you have been part of AmeriCorps. Then I will come back to you, Michelle.

Within the Serve America bill, there is the establishment now of separate corps. The Experience Corps stays the same. There is the Education Corps, the Clean Energy Corps, the HealthCorps, and so on.

Based on your experience, would you endorse that being in the bill, and would you give commentary on whether it be separate or part of AmeriCorps?

Mr. BROWN. I think it is the perfect next step for national service, Madam Chairwoman. The existing AmeriCorps framework is so responsive to State and local needs and has really let 1,000 flowers bloom.

Now at the same time, we know we have major national challenges in education, healthcare, clean energy, and poverty. It is essential that there be a national component to national service and that national service shows that it can actually move the needle on something.

That is where we will get national service one day at a major scale. We will get to that million-person level when national service can be that focused on common metrics throughout the country.

That is what these new corps do. They provide an opportunity for common metrics. I think that will allow a scaling up. I also think it is a responsible scaling up. We are going to 250,000 members. It is a 175,000 increase over 4 years. And so, I think that those capacities can be built over time.

I know for the high school dropout crisis, all the research is basically saying that unless we bring a transformative new resource, such as young people into the schools, we can't get the job done. They need to be brought in in large enough cohorts.

And finally, I think there is an opportunity with these new corps to be very strategic because someone now at the Corporation for National Service can say, "I have got 100,000 possible new members to put into education. How can I work strategically with local school districts around the country that want to scale up a specific resource, and how can I work with the Department of Education, Secretary Duncan?"

I think that is a whole new way of using national service resources.

Senator MIKULSKI. The vote is starting.

Mr. Strong.

Mr. STRONG. I would only add, Madam Chairman, that what I see that it does, in addition to what Michael is saying, is that I think it is a powerful catalyst for each one of these categories. What it does is that it gives a framework within which we can really draw more and more service support for each of these critical sectors.

I concur that I think it is a valuable——

Senator MIKULSKI. Experience Corps, for example, in Baltimore has been focused on education. You talked about the work of Barclay School that has been ongoing for a while. And really, they kind of grow up and grow old together.

In addition to education, is Experience Corps involved in other activities as well?

Mr. STRONG. Certainly the original vision for Experience Corps was to serve multiple needs. However, at this moment in time, we feel that we have really begun to develop best practices in the area of education. We really have begun to make a scalable model that we think really has significance for the country.

Our intention certainly for the medium term is to stay focused on education because we think we can have a major impact in that area.

Senator MIKULSKI. That goes to what Mr. Brown has said.

Let us go to health, and we also want to acknowledge that the national community HealthCorps is here, and they already have made a very big footprint.

You know, the country and the Congress is obsessed with outcomes. Certainly Congress is, and they talk a lot about educational outcomes, and you have worked to help. In health, whenever we talk about health reform, we talk about insurance reform. That is not a bad thing to talk about, but it doesn't get us to health reform.

Now speaking as a grassroots community organizer myself, I wonder, Michelle, if you could tell us what you did to improve the health outcomes of the students in the schools that you have been in. You have worked with a tough population, which is teen and preteen. They are used to schoolmarmish lectures, those god-awful movies about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables.

We won't even talk about sex education. No, no, no. Not at this hearing. You know, health education tends to be deadly and dull.

Ms. BOUCHARD. Well, our program——

Senator MIKULSKI. Did your work——

Ms. BOUCHARD. Pardon?

Senator MIKULSKI [continuing]. The work of the volunteers improve health outcomes?

Ms. BOUCHARD. It certainly changed their behaviors. We know that now. Actually, Dr. Oz is going to present the results of this first study, and it has decreased their amount of soda consumption. If you heard Dr. Weil speak on the integrative hearing, he believes that soda will be the No. 1——

Senator MIKULSKI. Yes, but what you said was that when you were here the other day, you talked about how young, energetic people went in, and they had new, edgy ways of communicating with teenagers.

Ms. BOUCHARD. Yes.

Senator MIKULSKI. You got them focused. Well, if you said to a strapping young male, "Eat your broccoli," you know, they would turn green all right.

Ms. BOUCHARD. That is right. Especially if I said it, as a 47-year-old.

Senator MIKULSKI. In the 30 seconds before I have to leave, what did you do?

Ms. BOUCHARD. We went in and we made the lessons intrinsically fun. They were fun. Because kids don't want to learn lessons, and they don't even want to do something if you say, "Hey, this is good for your body." They don't care. They want to have fun. Our messaging to the kids from other young people is fun.

Senator MIKULSKI. But, it did improve health outcomes?

Ms. BOUCHARD. It did, yes.

Senator MIKULSKI. You also said it started a pedometer craze or a walking craze?

Ms. BOUCHARD. Yes. Actually, it spread out to the community. In fact, in Pennsylvania at one school, the coordinator gave out pedometers to the other students, and it started a craze in the town because everyone wanted a pedometer.

Senator MIKULSKI. See, I think these new corps are identifying things. When we look at something that would go across agencies from national service to education to health and human services, where we looked at not programs, but communities, this is going to make a difference.

Thank you.

Before I go, Ms. Sagawa, you are, again, experienced in this, and we have talked about the corps. There are some very unusual and innovative things in here. The Community Solutions Fund pilot program, is this venture capital? Don't tell me this is TARP meets national service.

[Laughter.]

Ms. SAGAWA. With a lot more accountability.

Senator MIKULSKI. I knew that would wake everybody up.

Ms. SAGAWA. It is like venture capital. It is based on venture philanthropy, which focuses very much on outcomes and focuses on scaling organizations that have achieved results.

This would be capital that would be leveraged through funders to go to organizations that have proven they work. They are ready to scale, and their challenge is finding growth capital. This is a way for the Federal Government to leverage \$3 for every \$1 it invests.

Senator MIKULSKI. Which is what we talked about earlier.

Ms. SAGAWA. Yes, which we really need. It is a way of solving problems that is kind of different for the Federal Government but could be a great model for other areas if it is successful. That is why we call it a pilot program.

Senator MIKULSKI. How much are we talking about?

Ms. SAGAWA. Well, I haven't seen the final numbers in the bill. It is a modest investment, I think, initially of around \$50 million? I think there is a lot of potential for it to grow.

What is great about it is it would allow for both national funds to tackle big issues that the whole country is challenged with. One of the great things about AmeriCorps has been its national direct fund, which allows organizations like City Year and Experience Corps that operate in more than one State to not have to apply to every single State to get the money they need in order to grow.

That is one thing the fund would do, and the other would be local communities could decide our big problem is teen pregnancy, or it is crime in this neighborhood. Then they could bring the best solutions to scale, whether they are homegrown or something that they learned about that is half way across the country that could be imported.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, thank you. I think that answers the question.

We are going to adjourn the hearing, not because we couldn't have another round, and we certainly had some questions for Governor Racicot.

First of all, I want to thank everybody in this room—especially, everybody on the panel. Thank you for your service and your dedication.

To everybody in this room, you wouldn't be here if you are not involved in some way. To quote our President, everybody in this room makes a difference. You do it every single day. Let us work together and let us make change. Everyone makes a difference when we work together. Let us make change. Time to turn the page.

Thank you.

This committee stands in recess, subject to the call of the Chair.

[Additional material follows.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WENDY KOPP, CEO AND FOUNDER OF TEACH FOR AMERICA

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of S. 277, the "Serve America Act." Teach For America greatly admires and appreciates the work that you and this committee are doing to expand national service opportunities. I applaud the leadership that Senators Kennedy and Hatch have so ably demonstrated in moving forward with this bill. Both Senators have led by example—their own careers are testaments to public service. I would also like to express my sincere admiration and respect for the presiding chair, Senator Mikulski, for her unwavering dedication to national service throughout her career, through personal service to VISTA, public service as an elected official, and as the self-proclaimed "Godmother of Community Service." Of course I would also like to recognize and thank President Obama for his leadership in renewing a national spirit of service.

Teach For America exists to address educational inequity—the reality that in our Nation, which aspires so admirably to be a land of equal opportunity, where one is born still largely determines one's educational outcomes. Despite plenty of evidence that children growing up in poverty can excel academically—when given the opportunities they deserve—the stark reality in our Nation today is that many of the 13 million children growing up below the poverty line do not achieve at acceptable levels for our community or our country.

Educational inequity is one of our Nation's greatest injustices, and in these challenging economic times it is even more crucial that we continue to invest in proven strategies that work to close this achievement gap. Indeed, for the long-term economic strength of our country, we must redouble our efforts in ensuring that all of our Nation's children have access to a high-quality education.

Fortunately, the Serve America Act is being proposed at a time when our Nation's future leaders are yearning to answer the need for excellent educators. Over the last few months, more than 35,000 outstanding recent graduates of all academic majors and career interests have applied to Teach For America, determined to channel their talent and energy against educational inequity. Not only do these numbers set a new record for us, but Teach For America is attracting a higher quality pool of recruits than ever before. For example, over 11 percent of all seniors at the Ivy League colleges applied this year. And continuing a trend that has been growing for several years, Teach For America also received large numbers of applicants from exceptional Historically Black Colleges and Universities, including a remarkable 25 percent of the graduating seniors from Spelman College and almost 9 percent from Morehouse College.

Teach For America will select around 4,000 rare leaders from among these applicants and will train and support them to teach successfully for 2 years in our Nation's highest poverty communities and then to work throughout their lives, from inside and outside of schools, to increase educational opportunity in America. With the help of this act, we will be able to grow that number further and to increase our corps members' immediate impact raising student achievement as well as their long-term impact leading some of the country's most innovative organizations working to expand educational opportunity.

Indeed, I am particularly excited that the act will help to grow the number of great teachers in our schools through the Education Corps Fund, which is focused on increasing student academic achievement. Research has consistently shown that having a great teacher in the classroom is the most important factor for students' academic success and the Serve America Act will provide additional incentives to bring more high-caliber leaders into the classrooms that need them most, both by providing more AmeriCorps slots and thus increasing the number of education awards, as well as growing the value of the education award itself.

For the recent college graduates who become Teach For America corps members, the ability to work as teachers directly after college puts them on a path to a lifetime of service. Through nearly 20 years of experience, I have seen that teaching successfully in an underserved community is transformative for so many of our Nation's top young people. While only 1 in 10 corps members say they were considering a career in teaching before they joined Teach For America, two-thirds continue to work full-time in education as alumni. This re-inforces for me the importance of investing young people in service.

I am also excited that the act encourages innovation in the nonprofit sector. From my vantage point I have seen many of our talented alumni meld their dedication to service with their entrepreneurial spirit to create some of the most innovative and successful social enterprises in education, like the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) and The New Teacher Project. At Teach For America, we aim to facilitate

the growth of the next generation of social innovators who will help us to realize educational equity. I believe the Community Solutions Funds provision of this legislation will help make that happen, while also encouraging promising social entrepreneurs to focus on solving local problems. And I look forward to the findings of the commission created by this legislation to study and improve how the Federal Government, nonprofits and the private sector can work together to meet challenges effectively.

Certainly there is no investment with a greater long-term return than an investment in the education of our Nation's children, and I am so pleased that this committee has taken the leadership to harness the burgeoning desire of people across the country for public service and direct it towards the injustice of educational inequity. We can solve educational inequity—the only question is whether our response to the problem will be big enough and effective enough. With the help of the Serve America Act, we are determined to make it so.

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR HATCH TO STEPHEN GOLDSMITH AND ALAN SOLOMONT

QUESTIONS TO STEPHEN GOLDSMITH

Question 1. The Serve America Act represents a significant new investment in volunteer service programs on the part of the Federal Government. In addition to increasing resources, this legislation will amplify the mission and role of the Corporation for National and Community Service. While the bill is also intended to enhance the role of State governments in volunteer service, the Corporation will clearly be given more responsibility under the new programs.

What action has the Corporation taken to prepare for this increase in both its mission and its role?

Question 2. In this age of bailouts, stimulus packages, and omnibus spending bills, I think many of our constituents are more concerned than ever about how Congress and the Federal Government use taxpayer funds. As a co-author of the Serve America Act, I believe that a modest investment in volunteer service is not only justified, but necessary under the current economic conditions. That said, I believe we'd be shirking our responsibility if we did not act to make sure that any new programs are undertaken in a prudent and cost-effective manner.

How, in your view, can we ensure that we generate the highest return on this new investment in service?

QUESTIONS TO ALAN SOLOMONT

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How, in your view, can we ensure that we generate the highest return on this new investment in service?

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR HATCH TO STEPHEN GOLDSMITH

Question 1. As you know, many of the most effective service efforts in the country are spearheaded by faith-based and church-sponsored organizations. In recent years, the Federal Government has pursued initiatives that have allowed these groups to compete with secular organizations for funds and assistance in providing non-religious services. It is my hope that this will continue with the passage of the Serve America Act. While I do not believe we can accord faith-based groups any special treatment or status in these programs, I believe we need to make sure they are given a fair shake as they compete for funds.

In your opinion, how can we best ensure that faith-based groups are treated equally with their secular counterparts in terms of getting support to provide vital human services?

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR HATCH TO THE PANEL

Question 1. While working on the Serve America Act, one of my top priorities was increasing accountability in our service programs. As with any Federal Government program, I believe that we need to be results-oriented. After all, if we aren't focused on achieving specific results and accomplishing specific goals, why are we creating new programs? So, as we're discussing what the new generation of national service will look like, I'd like to hear some of the panel's thoughts as to how we'll measure the success of national service going forward.

Two years from now, after this legislation is enacted, what does success in the service field look like? Will it be measured in terms of the number of Americans serving? Or will it be a track record of success in addressing one or two big problems?

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR HATCH TO MARC RACICOT

Question 1. As we work to foster more volunteer service, I believe that we need to harness the ingenuity and inventiveness of the American people. Toward that end, I think we've crafted a bill that will have enough flexibility for groups and individuals to come up with their own ideas on how to best serve the people in their communities. As we work to address our nation's problems, I think innovation and new ideas will be invaluable assets.

What are some of the best examples of innovation that you've seen in the area of volunteer service and how can we best utilize these ideas while both limiting the investment of resources and maximizing potential benefits?

[Editor's Note: Responses to the above questions were not available at time of print.]

[Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

