

PRINCIPLES FOR REFORMING THE MILITARY
SELECTIVE SERVICE PROCESS

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

THE PRINCIPLES FOR REFORMING THE MILITARY SELECTIVE
SERVICE PROCESS, PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 114-328, SEC.
555(c)(1)



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To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith Principles for Reforming the Military Selective Service Process, in accordance with section 555 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328), which calls for the President to establish principles for reform of the military selective service process in support of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *April 3, 2017.*

PRINCIPLES FOR REFORMING THE MILITARY SELECTIVE SERVICE PROCESS

Sections 551–557 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 established the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service. Section 555(c) requires the President to provide the Commission and the Congress with principles to guide the Commission’s review and recommendations.

Our Nation requires a strong military for our security and for the defense of American values and our interests abroad. While we have successfully transitioned from a conscripted to an All-Volunteer Force comprised of Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard personnel, and backed up by a program of selective service to meet emergency manpower requirements, sustaining this force requires prudent management.

The Nation must be ever mindful of the unpredictable global security environment that requires an effective and efficient means to provide manpower to the national security community, including military and non-military support in a national emergency. Historically, the Nation has maintained Selective Service registration to provide a hedge against the catastrophe not yet anticipated. Registration is a means to sustain preparedness, while also reminding youth that public service is a valued part of United States citizenship.

In conducting the Commission’s review and in developing recommendations, the Commission should ensure close examination of all areas outlined in section 551(b) to include the need for a military Selective Service process; the means by which to foster a greater attitude, ethos, and propensity for military services among United States youth; the feasibility and advisability of modifying the Selective Service process to leverage individuals with critical skills for which the Nation has a need without regard to age or sex; and the feasibility and advisability of tying the Selective Service process to eligibility or entitlement for certain Federal benefits.

The Commission’s recommendations and analysis for sustaining and/or modernizing the Selective Service process should be based upon the principles outlined in sections 555(c)(2). The Commission’s recommendations should also be guided by the following principles established by the President:

1. The Nation must prepare to mitigate an unpredictable global security and national emergency environment and to provide manpower by which the agencies responsible for military, national, or public service requirements can identify, recruit, and employ individuals from the entire population with skills necessary to augment existing manpower within those agencies.

2. The Nation benefits from citizens who value civic responsibility and service. Any system, process, or program should assist the government in fostering conditions that afford opportunities

and pathways to service for persons able to employ those critical skills necessary to augment skill sets during conflict or national emergency, including creating opportunities to incentivize volunteerism.

3. Any system, process, or program used to identify, register, access, and employ individuals to augment the existing federal civilian sector, military, and private sector (including the non-profit sector) should draw upon the Nation's diversity by ensuring qualified United States youth across all demographics have the opportunity to participate in military, national, and public service.

4. Any system, process, or program used to identify, recruit, and employ additional skill sets should be effective in times of peace, war, and other levels of conflict or emergency response. Associated initiatives, systems, and processes must be seamless, robust, and able to expand and contract as needed. They also should ensure the means to create pathways through service that leverages enhanced, empowered, and experienced expertise across the spectrum of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, national security, cyber linguistics and foreign language, education, health care, and the medical professions.

5. Any system, process, or program should assist in incentivizing military, national, and public service, as well as exposing the opportunities for critical education and technical training opportunities via the U.S. Armed Forces, federal and private sector, and volunteerism that set conditions to advance individual engagement; academic and technical development; and engagement in industry that leads to a well-rounded and contributory society.

6. Any system, process, or program used to identify, register, access, and employ individuals for the purpose of sustaining or augmenting the military, national, or public service must be grounded in fiscal sustainability to ensure its long-term viability and reliability to the Nation. It should also utilize best practices based on existing public and private sector systems/processes.

Together, these principles form a useful foundation to guide the Commission's review and development of recommendations with respect to the Selective Service process and means to increase participation in public service to support the needs of the Nation.