By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to strengthen the ability of programs authorized under the national service laws to build and reinforce a culture of service, citizenship, and responsibility throughout our Nation, and to institute reforms to improve accountability and efficiency in the administration of those programs, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Definitions. For purposes of this order:

(a) “National service laws” means the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.) and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (42 U.S.C. 4950 et seq.);

(b) “National and community service programs” means those programs authorized under the national service laws;

(c) “Policies governing programs authorized under the national service laws” refers to all policies, programs, guidelines, and regulations, including official guidance and internal agency procedures and practices, that are issued by the Corporation for National and Community Service (Corporation) and have significant effects on national and community service programs; and

(d) “Professional corps programs” means those programs described in section 122(a)(8) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12572(a)(8)).

Sec. 2. Fundamental Principles and Policymaking Criteria. In formulating and implementing policies governing programs authorized under the national service laws, the Corporation shall, to the extent permitted by law, adhere to the following fundamental principles:

(a) National and community service programs should support and encourage greater engagement of Americans in volunteering;

(b) National and community service programs should be more responsive to State and local needs;

(c) National and community service programs should make Federal support more accountable and more effective; and

(d) National and community service programs should expand opportunities for involvement of faith-based and other community organizations.

Sec. 3. Agency Implementation. (a) The Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service (Chief Executive Officer) shall, in coordination with the USA Freedom Corps Council, review and evaluate existing policies governing national and community service programs in order to assess the consistency of such policies with the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria described in section 2 of this order.

(b) The Chief Executive Officer shall ensure that all policies governing national and community service programs issued by the Corporation are consistent with the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria described in section 2 of this order. To that end, the Chief Executive Officer shall, to the extent permitted by law,

(i) amend all such existing policies to ensure that they are consistent with the fundamental principles and policymaking criteria articulated in section 2 of this order; and
(ii) where appropriate, implement new policies that are consistent with
and necessary to further the fundamental principles and policy-
making criteria set forth in section 2 of this order.

(c) In developing implementation steps, the Chief Executive Officer should
address, at a minimum, the following objectives:

(i) National and community service programs should leverage Federal
resources to maximize support from the private sector and from
State and local governments, with an emphasis on reforms that en-
hance programmatic flexibility, reduce administrative burdens, and
clarify Federal assistance to the respective needs of recipient or-
ganizations;

(ii) National and community service programs should leverage Federal
resources to enable the recruitment and effective management of
a larger number of volunteers than is currently possible;

(iii) National and community service programs should increase efforts
to expand opportunities for, and strengthen the capacity of, faith-
based and other community organizations in building and strength-
ening an infrastructure to support volunteers that meet community
needs;

(iv) National and community service programs should adopt perform-
ance measures to identify those practices that merit replication and
further investment, as well as to ensure accountability;

(v) National and community service programs should, consistent with
the principles of Federalism and the constitutional role of the
States and Indian tribes, promote innovation, flexibility, and results
at all levels of government;

(vi) National and community service programs based in schools should
employ tutors who meet required paraprofessional qualifications,
and use such practices and methodologies as are required for sup-
plemental educational services;

(vii) National and community service programs should foster a lifetime
of citizenship and civic engagement among those who serve;

(viii) National and community service programs should avoid or elimi-
nate practices that displace volunteers who are not supported
under the national service laws; and

(ix) Guidelines for the selection of national and community service pro-
grams should recognize the importance of professional corps pro-
grams in light of the fundamental principles and policymaking cri-
teria set forth in this order.

Sec. 4. Management Reforms. (a) The Corporation should implement internal
management reforms to strengthen its oversight of national and community
service programs through enforcement of performance and compliance stand-
ards and other management tools.

(b) Management reforms should include, but should not be limited to,
the following:

(i) Institutionalized changes to the budgetary and grant-making proc-
esses to ensure that financial commitments remain within available
resources;

(ii) Enhanced accounting and management systems that would ensure
compliance with fiscal restrictions and provide timely, accurate,
and readily available information about enrollment in AmeriCorps
and about funding and obligations incurred for all national and
community service programs;

(iii) Assurance by the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial
Officer in the Corporation’s Management Representation Letter that
its financial statements, including the Statement of Budgetary Re-
sources, are accurate and reliable; and

(iv) Management reforms that tie employee performance to fiscal re-
sponsibility, attainment of management goals, and professional con-
duct.

Sec. 5. Report. Within 180 days after the date of this order, the Chief
Executive Officer shall report to the President, through the Assistant to
the President and Director of the USA Freedom Corps Office, the actions the Corporation proposes to undertake to accomplish the objectives set forth in this order.

Sec. 6. Judicial Review. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
February 27, 2004.