

# INSPIRED *to* SERVE



**The Final Report of the National Commission on  
Military, National, and Public Service**

**March 2020**





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# LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

**A**s Commissioners of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, we are pleased to present our recommendations to the Congress, the President, and the American people in this Final Report. In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, the Congress charged this Commission with two primary tasks: (1) to “conduct a review of the military selective service process” and (2) to “consider methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service to address national security and other public service needs of the Nation.”

Because our broad mandate touches upon the life of every American, we traveled across the country, visiting urban centers, small towns, military bases, government facilities, schools, universities, community centers, faith-based congregations, and many more places across all nine census regions. We sought out views from experts, practitioners, Americans who serve as well as those who do not, and individuals with a diverse range of perspectives and experiences. We heard from passionate advocates on both sides of complex and controversial topics, such as expanding registration for the Selective Service System to all Americans, and deliberated those matters with civility and respect. Although the 11 of us come from varied backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, we stand united behind this report as a consensus product of this Commission and an expression of our desire to serve our Nation and empower our fellow Americans to do the same.

Throughout the Commission’s work, we saw firsthand how America’s extraordinary and longstanding spirit of service continues to shape the life of our Nation. Americans repeatedly step up in support of each other, offering their sweat and ingenuity when needed—without being asked and without expectation of anything in return. We commend these selfless actions, as well as past and ongoing efforts by government at all levels and by the nonprofit, faith-based, philanthropic, academic, and private sectors to promote service and volunteerism. So much has been accomplished thanks to this spirit of service; yet as a Nation, the United States has not unlocked the full, transformational potential of service in all its forms. We believe that the current moment requires a collective effort to build upon America’s spirit of service to cultivate a widespread *culture* of service—a culture in which individuals of all backgrounds both expect and aspire to serve their Nation or community and have meaningful opportunities to serve throughout their lifetime.

Taken together, our recommendations offer a revolutionary and inclusive approach to service for Americans, beginning with comprehensive civic education and service learning starting in kindergarten, service-year opportunities so ubiquitous that service becomes a rite of passage for millions of young adults, and new and revitalized service options for adults of any age, background, or experience. We envision a common expectation of service among the American people, so that no one is surprised by the questions “How have you served?” or “How will you serve?”

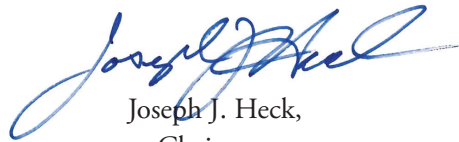
Many of our recommendations focus on efforts that the Federal Government can undertake. This is consistent with our congressional mandate and President Trump’s guiding principles and reflects the Government’s responsibility to provide for our common defense, ensure our national security, and maintain the general welfare of the United States. In partnership with State, local, and Tribal governments, the Federal Government has the ability to catalyze and empower the American people to address the needs of this Nation. These recommendations will, if acted upon, enhance the

security of our Nation, elevate all forms of service, and strengthen American democracy.

We appreciate all those whose commitment to service has made this effort possible. We recognize and thank the many individuals and organizations that have contributed their time, energy, and talent to our work. Chairman Adam Smith and Ranking Member Mac Thornberry of the House Armed Services Committee along with the late Senator John McCain, Chairman Jim Inhofe, and Ranking Member Jack Reed of the Senate Armed Services Committee were instrumental in bringing service to the forefront of public debate. We believe that our findings and recommendations will provide key congressional committees and the President with the information and impetus necessary to strengthen America's military, national, and public service infrastructure and expand opportunities to serve.

We also believe the actions recommended in this report will empower Americans with broader knowledge of the fundamental principles of our Republic, increased awareness of service options, a greater number of service opportunities, and clear and supported pathways to military, national, and public service.

Incremental changes and small improvements are not sufficient to cultivate a culture of service. Bold action is required, and we call on the Congress and the President to invest in the American people and place the Nation on a trajectory to achieve the vision: every American, inspired and eager to serve.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Congress and the President established the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017.<sup>1</sup> The Commission has two primary statutory charges: (1) to “conduct a review of the military selective service process” and (2) to “consider methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service in order to address national security and other public service needs of the Nation.”<sup>2</sup> With 11 Commissioners appointed by the President and bipartisan congressional leadership, this Commission represents the first time in history that the U.S. Government has sought a comprehensive and holistic review of all forms of service to the Nation.

The culmination of two and a half years of extensive research, *Inspired to Serve* presents the Commission’s conclusions, including findings and recommendations for legislative and administrative action. To identify and develop possible policy options, Commissioners traveled throughout the United States, visiting 22 States in all nine census regions, plus the District of Columbia; consulted hundreds of experts and stakeholders; spoke with Americans who have participated in military, national, and public service—as well as those who have not; and reviewed thousands of public comments from

individuals and organizations on the topics before the Commission. After publishing an Interim Report in January 2019, the Commission held 14 public hearings to vet a range of specific policy options before deliberating and deciding upon the final recommendations presented here.<sup>3</sup> This executive summary highlights the major themes and desired policy goals across the Commission’s broad mandate.

## COMMISSION’S DEFINITION OF SERVICE

The Commission has defined service as a personal commitment of time, energy, and talent to a mission that contributes to the public good by protecting the Nation and its citizens, strengthening communities, or promoting the general social welfare.

## Vision 2031: An Expectation of Service

The United States has a strong spirit of service dating back more than 200 years. From the earliest days of the Republic, service has been a central part of what it means to be an American—and it remains so today. Civic engagement and service are critical to the health and well-being of the Nation; by bringing people together to tackle common problems, service makes communities stronger and strengthens American democracy. Today, nearly 24 million individuals participate in some form of military, national, or public service to meet critical national needs—security, disaster response, education, conservation, health care, housing, and more.<sup>4</sup> These efforts are formidable and have transformed lives, communities, and the Nation; but in a country of 329 million, imagine what more could be done if significantly more people were inspired and able to answer the call to serve.

## PUBLIC INPUT AT A GLANCE

- > 11 Public Meetings and Forums with 41 Speakers
- > 14 Public Hearings with 68 Panelists
- > 42 Cities and 22 States
- > 69 Statements for the Record
- > 530+ Organizations Consulted
- > 4,300+ Public Comments

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*“Ours is a Nation built on pride in sacrifice and commitment to shared values—on a willingness of our citizens to give of their time and energy for the good of the whole.”*

—Sandra Day O’Connor

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The Commission envisions a bold and integrated new approach to service that builds on the strong tradition and unique spirit of service that is already alive in big cities and small towns, military bases and government offices, and schools and community organizations across America. In the Commission’s vision, every individual will be exposed to service opportunities throughout their lifetime, beginning with young people experiencing robust civic education and service learning during elementary, middle, and high school. With significant growth in the number and kinds of service opportunities, a service year will become a new rite of passage to adulthood, intensive service opportunities for young adults and mid-career professionals will abound, and new and innovative ways to engage older Americans in service to their communities and Nation will be available for all those who want to serve. By igniting the extraordinary potential for service, this new approach will address critical national security and domestic needs of the Nation, expand economic and educational opportunities, strengthen the civic fabric of the Nation, and establish a robust culture of service characterized by an expectation that all Americans participate in service of some kind, at some point in their lifetime.

Achieving this vision is not as daunting as it might first seem—the Commission engaged firsthand with myriad Americans who serve their Nation and their communities each day without expectation of personal glory or fortune. In its travels, the Commission also observed that the desire of Americans to serve far exceeds their opportunity to do so. Among Americans there is a great demand for more opportunities to serve, more knowledge about existing opportunities, and fewer barriers to service. Meeting that demand will require bold action to ensure that every American can learn about and explore potential service opportunities and choose an informed path of service. All levels of government, along with nongovernmental organizations and the American people, must break down the many barriers

that prevent many individuals from serving. In this way, the United States will commit to making service possible for every American who wants to respond to President John F. Kennedy’s call to the American people: “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”<sup>5</sup>

As its work comes to an end, it is the sincere hope of this Commission that the Nation embrace the new and integrated approach to service set out in this report. Service—beginning at an early stage and continuing throughout one’s lifetime—develops skills and leadership among those who participate; maximizes Federal investments in pursuit of local, State, and national solutions; helps develop the Nation’s workforce; and brings people together to meet the critical needs of the Nation. Perhaps most importantly, enhancing the country’s culture of service holds the promise of invigorating civic life in America and strengthening the foundations of the Republic.

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*“Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.”*

—John F. Kennedy

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The Commission challenges the Nation to cultivate this culture of service. By 2031—the 70th anniversary of President Kennedy’s call for Americans to serve their Nation—the Commission envisions that 5 million Americans will begin participating in military, national, or public service each year. In addition, by 2031 more than enough qualified individuals will seek to serve in the Armed Forces, minimizing the need for traditional military recruiting; 1 million individuals will annually take up federally supported national service-year opportunities, a more than tenfold increase from today’s numbers; and modernized Government personnel systems will attract and enable Americans with critical skills and new generations to enter public service.

The actions recommended in this report are designed to place America on a path to realize this goal, which if achieved would be as transformative as the Nation’s efforts to put a man on the moon, establish a universal public education system, and create a network of national parks across the country. These recommendations will empower Americans with broader

## WHAT IS MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE?

The Commission's enabling legislation defined military, national, and public service as follows:

- > *Military service* means active, reserve, or National Guard duty in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard as well as the commissioned corps of the Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- > *Public service* means civilian employment in Federal, State, Tribal, or local government in a field in which the Nation and the public have critical needs.
- > *National service* means civilian participation in any nongovernmental capacity, including with private for-profit organizations and nonprofit organizations (including with appropriate faith-based organizations), that pursues and enhances the common good and meets the needs of communities, the States, or the Nation in sectors related to security, health, care for the elderly, and other areas considered appropriate by the Commission.

knowledge of service options, create a greater number of service opportunities, and improve pathways to connect Americans with military, national, and public service. In presenting these recommendations, the Commission hopes to achieve its vision: every American inspired and eager to serve.

### Elevate All Forms of Service

The Commission believes that cultivating America's culture of service is a task that calls for action by all parts of American society—Congress and the President, State, local, and Tribal governments, nongovernmental organizations, and the American people. Below are detailed proposals that recognize and elevate the concept of service to a national imperative.

**Revitalize civic education and expand service learning.** In the course of its work, the Commission identified a major flaw in the American educational system: the lack of exposure to high-quality civic education for students throughout much of the Nation. Widespread and effective civic education is an essential requirement for fostering a culture of service in which Americans can identify how their own strengths, skills, and interests could contribute to the public good by addressing needs in their communities and Nation. When 22 percent of American adults cannot name any of the three branches of government, it is well past time for the country to take action.<sup>6</sup> Significantly greater Federal investment in civic education, widespread

adoption of proven, State-based best practices, and incorporation of service learning within school curricula are critical to preparing young Americans to realize their obligations as citizens and expose them to opportunities to engage in military, national, and public service.

**Coordinate governmentwide service efforts through a dedicated service council in the White House.** While the Federal Government has effective systems of military, national, and public service—which are essential for implementing key public programs and missions—prior efforts to coordinate service initiatives across the Government and to promote all streams of service have fallen short. One reason is that there is no single entity within the U.S. Government responsible for advancing whole-of-government support for service. The establishment of a Council on Military, National, and Public Service within the Executive Office of the President—with a Senate-confirmed leader and representation from relevant agencies—will facilitate inter-agency coordination and provide the policy leadership necessary to cultivate a culture of service. It will also ensure that the U.S.

Government maintains a framework for prioritizing and coordinating service across Presidential administrations.

**Promote cross-service marketing, recruitment, and retention.** The three streams of service—military, national, and public—share fundamental characteristics, yet the agencies responsible for them do not collaborate. Because current efforts to advertise

*When 22 percent of American adults cannot name any of the three branches of government, it is well past time for the country to take action.*

service opportunities and encourage participation are siloed by service agency, their impact is weakened. Joint advertising campaigns, shared market research, and cross-service incentives—either initiated or facilitated by the governmentwide service lead—will promote awareness of opportunities, encourage participation, and unite these distinct streams of service under the common goal of enhancing the lives of all Americans.

**Create a platform to help Americans discover service opportunities.** Unless a family member or close friend has served, most Americans lack knowledge and awareness of military, national, and public service opportunities. A new service platform will offer Americans a one-stop shop for exploring the wide range of opportunities in military, national, and public service. It will also help service organizations of all kinds find those Americans with the interests or skills they need to achieve their missions across the country and the world. The platform will provide young adults with the option to seamlessly transfer their information when they register with the Selective Service System, enabling them to immediately learn about ways to serve their communities and the Nation.

### **Advance Military, National, and Public Service**

Charged with considering methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service to address the needs of the Nation, the Commission identified three primary barriers that persist across all forms of service: awareness, aspiration, and access. Each of the following recommendations addresses one or more of these barriers.

#### **Military Service**

Cultivating a culture of service is critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the All-Volunteer Force and to strengthening engagement between service members and Americans who are unfamiliar with military life. The following recommendations were crafted to increase participation in and engagement with the military by addressing identified barriers to uniformed service. By gaining greater awareness of the opportunities to serve

*A new service platform will offer Americans a one-stop shop for exploring the wide range of opportunities in military, national, and public service.*

in the military and uniformed services—in addition to accurate information about the realities of life as a service member—the American public can more effectively understand the duties and responsibilities of being an American as well as the many benefits of service.

**Improve military outreach around the country.** Expanded community-building efforts, including greater access to military bases and facilities via public tours, partnerships between National Guard and Reserve units and local schools, and enhanced promotion of military service by Members of Congress, will significantly increase engagement between the military and the broader American public, shatter myths, and provide a new generation of Americans with firsthand information about military life.

**Increase opportunities for youth to explore service.** Expanding Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) and other youth programs, along with promoting administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) Career Exploration Program—currently taken by less than 5 percent of U.S. secondary students—will enable more students to learn about citizenship and service, gain familiarity with the military, and understand how their own strengths could translate into military careers and other service options.<sup>7</sup>

**Strengthen military recruiting and marketing.** Greater investment of recruiting resources in underrepresented markets and hometown-recruiting programs, in combination with new funding mechanisms for marketing, will help the military in meeting its recruiting goals while improving the geographic and demographic balance of the Armed Forces to better reflect the diversity of the Nation.<sup>8</sup>

**Strengthen and expand educational pathways for military service.** Additional support for students pursuing certain degrees, certificates, and certifications through technical or vocational programs—such as those offered by two-year colleges and trade schools—in return for an enlisted service commitment will help the military services attract individuals with much-needed skillsets and enhance recruiting of Americans who seek to develop specific capabilities.



Source: DoD



Army soldiers check the controls of an ambulance during training in Johnston, Iowa.

**Effectively manage military personnel.** Enabling greater movement between all components of military service and between military service and the private sector—facilitated by recently enacted personnel-management authorities and expanded use of warrant officers—will offer the services a more effective approach to continual access to individuals with key skills, such as digital talent or engineering.

### **National Service**

National service programs such as AmeriCorps, YouthBuild, Senior Corps, and the Peace Corps offer many benefits to the country and local communities, including disaster relief, conservation of natural resources, housing expansion for lower-income Americans, economic development, and educational opportunities for children. Participants also benefit by learning leadership, teamwork, and technical skills; gaining exposure to people of different backgrounds and cultures; and experiencing the personal fulfillment that accompanies contributing to a cause greater than themselves.

Yet despite these benefits, most Americans are unaware of national service and the opportunities to serve and unable to foresee how a term of service could support their future plans. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act authorized expanding AmeriCorps to 250,000 annual participants; however, Congress did not appropriate funds to meet that goal,

and AmeriCorps slots remain at 75,000 per year.<sup>9</sup> The following recommendations will increase awareness of national service, promote greater access to service opportunities, and create a service infrastructure that would facilitate 1 million federally supported national service-year opportunities by 2031.

**Improve awareness and recruitment.** Funding an awareness campaign and referring those who are interested in but ineligible for military service, as well as veterans, to national service programs will help more Americans learn about and explore national service opportunities and make fully informed decisions to serve.

**Monitor the accessibility and results of AmeriCorps programs.** Collecting more complete applicant and participant data will help policymakers better understand the demand for AmeriCorps programs and their accessibility to individuals across the socioeconomic spectrum, while enabling the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to send AmeriCorps alumni a record of completion of national service that includes information on training received and certifications or licenses earned.

**Increase the value, flexibility, and use of service incentives.** Increasing the AmeriCorps and Senior Corps living allowances and the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award, exempting the Segal Award from income taxes and allowing a cash-out option, and promoting in-state tuition for national service alumni will help make a service year a viable option for those who do not have other means of financial support and will increase the value and usability of the benefits associated with AmeriCorps.

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*“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”*

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

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**Expand opportunities through national service.** Doubling the participation of opportunity youth—the 4.5 million Americans ages 16–24 who are neither working nor in school—and Tribal members in national service programs; expanding service opportunities that welcome diverse abilities, including individuals with

intellectual and developmental disabilities; and leveraging national service to reintegrate ex-offenders will help share the benefits of national service more broadly.<sup>10</sup>

**Establish new models for national service.**

Awarding national service fellowships to support individuals participating in a service year at any certified nonprofit organization will significantly expand the universe of opportunities for national service, especially in rural and underserved areas. Also, providing dedicated funding for demonstration projects will enable CNCS to test and expand other innovative approaches for national service.

**Public Service**

The Federal civil service personnel systems require urgent attention. The difficulties facing Government hiring are so severe that the Government Accountability Office identifies strategic human capital management as a “high risk” area in need of transformation if the Government is to work effectively and efficiently.<sup>11</sup> Existing practices block younger Americans and workers with critical skills from entering public service and jeopardize the ability of Federal agencies to replenish their workforce in the face of a looming wave of retirements.

Modernizing the civil service is politically and technically difficult. The public service recommendations below attempt to address near-term, urgent problems and long-term, structural issues: existing personnel processes should work better, so that agencies can function today, and the Federal personnel system should be replaced with a modern, talent-management approach to enable the Federal Government to be competitive with other employers in the future. With roughly one-third of Federal employees eligible to retire in the next five years, such changes are critical to ensure that the Federal workforce is stable, the United States retains its competitive edge, and governmental missions to serve the American public are not endangered.<sup>12</sup> Public officials and civic leaders should also recognize the work of public servants as vital to the security and well-being of the Nation and avoid negative and disparaging comments that undermine morale among the current public-sector workforce and discourage Americans from pursuing public service careers.

**Reform Federal hiring.** Updating application and hiring processes with accessible job descriptions, proactive recruiting, valid assessment methods, and greater



Source: CNCS

An AmeriCorps member tutors students in Minnesota.

flexibility for agencies to select candidates—including improved systems to connect hiring managers and applicants eligible to bypass the competitive hiring process—will improve the ability of agencies to hire much-needed, highly qualified candidates.

**Modernize veterans’ preference.** Applying preference as a tiebreaker between equally qualified candidates, and focusing its use for veterans transitioning as new entrants to Federal civilian service, will be more effective in attracting highly qualified veterans to Federal jobs in which they will likely excel.

**Expand noncompetitive eligibility.** Extending noncompetitive eligibility to all national service alumni and Federal fellowship and scholarship participants—and expanding eligibility for the Veterans Recruitment Appointment to 10 years after separation from the military—will further enable Federal agencies to take advantage of the talent, skills, and taxpayer investments in national service alumni, Federal fellows and scholars, and military veterans.

**Revamp hiring systems for students and recent graduates.** Establishing a Public Service Corps, similar to the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC), in partnership with institutions of higher education; creating a new center to streamline and expand fellowship and scholarship programs across the Federal Government; and overhauling the Pathways Programs for student interns and recent graduates will help bring a



new generation into public service and foster a pipeline of sustainable talent for Federal agencies.

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*“Any definition of a successful life must include service to others.”*

—George H. W. Bush

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### **Promote a high-performing personnel culture.**

Elevating and investing in the human resources function; developing agency workforce plans to hire, retain, and reskill qualified individuals; and empowering agencies to communicate with the public about their mission and to promote service will foster a culture in which agencies make full use of available personnel authorities to meet agency workforce needs.

**Address critical-skills challenges.** Streamlining and extending special personnel systems for Federal agency health care and cybersecurity professionals, establishing a civilian cybersecurity reserve corps, and investing in the technical skills of current employees will enable agencies to meet workforce needs amid stiff competition from private-sector employers.

**Increase the competitiveness of benefits.** Offering an option with fully portable retirement benefits, establishing a cafeteria plan for certain benefits, and improving communication about benefits will enhance Federal agencies’ ability to compete for talented workers who do not seek career-long Government employment.

**Develop and implement a new personnel system.** Expanding demonstration-project authority for the Office of Personnel Management, launching a pilot project to test a new personnel system, and rigorously evaluating these projects will establish an evidence base to inform the development of a new, governmentwide personnel system that will be competitive for current and future workforce needs.

## **Strengthen Emergency National Mobilization**

Though the Commission aims primarily to cultivate a culture of voluntary service across the country, it also recognizes the Federal Government’s vital need to organize the American people to provide for the common defense through mandatory military service in the

case of a national emergency. The recommendations below offer steps to modernize, enhance, and improve America’s system to draw on the talents, skills, and abilities of all Americans if a national emergency requires lawmakers to do so.

**Maintain a military draft mechanism in the event of national emergencies.** To meet military personnel needs in the face of future threats and to demonstrate America’s resolve to international allies and adversaries, the Nation needs the Selective Service System to remain a viable U.S. national security institution.

**Formalize a national call for volunteers prior to activating the draft.** While the United States should maintain the ability to conscript individuals into military service in response to a national emergency, the President and Congress should encourage Americans to voluntarily join the military through an official call for volunteers before resorting to the draft.

**Retain the Selective Service System’s current registration posture.** Should the Nation be faced with a crisis so significant that it must activate conscription, the Government will benefit from an active system ready to induct personnel. After considering voluntary and mandatory registration systems, the Commission concluded that maintaining an active, mandatory registration system mitigates the level of potential risk to the Nation and protects the critical functions and procedures that safeguard a fair, equitable, and transparent draft process.



Source: U.S. Coast Guard

Crew members from Coast Guard Air Station Detroit perform helicopter-rescue training.

*“If we desire peace, one of the most powerful institutions of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war.”*

—George Washington

**Convey to registrants their potential obligation for military service.** The rise in prevalence of secondary registration methods—such as enabling applicants for driver’s licenses or Federal student aid to simultaneously register with the Selective Service System—has generated high compliance rates; however, these systems have made the selective service process markedly less transparent to those registering. It is critical to ensure that registrants have a complete understanding of the potential obligations associated with draft registration.

**Ensure a fair, equitable, and transparent draft.** Common obligation shared generally through a lottery system is the foundation of a fair, equitable, and transparent draft. However, should an individual unknowingly or mistakenly fail to register, a mechanism to allow corrective registration is necessary to mitigate unduly harsh lifelong penalties to which they would otherwise be subject.

**Develop new voluntary models for accessing personnel with critical skills.** After exploring a range of options for identifying personnel with critical skills, the Commission concluded that only in the direst of circumstances should individuals be singled out for compulsory service because of their specific abilities. However, sustaining the most lethal and capable military in times of conflict requires the enhancement of voluntary mechanisms to engage such men and women, including the creation of a critical skills Individual Ready Reserve and a national roster of volunteers.

**Improve the readiness of the National Mobilization System.** The lack of institutionalized exercises of national mobilization processes, coupled with the low degree of public engagement with and awareness of the system, undercuts the effectiveness of the Nation’s draft contingency. To hold appropriate government entities responsible for maintaining national mobilization requirements and exercising the national mobilization process, the President should identify an official accountable for whole-of-government coordination. In addition, the Secretary of Defense should appoint an

official to focus specifically on Department of Defense responsibilities.

### **Expand Selective Service Registration**

In reviewing the question of whether Selective Service registration should include women, the Commission seriously considered a wide range of deeply felt moral, legal, and practical arguments and explored the available empirical evidence.

**Extend Selective Service registration to women.** The Commission concluded that the time is right to extend Selective Service System registration to include men and women, between the ages of 18 and 26. This is a necessary and fair step, making it possible to draw on the talent of a unified Nation in a time of national emergency.

*For additional detail on recommendations and implementation, please see the main report and appendixes.*

# INTRODUCTION

**T**he United States of America is a country built on service—to one another, to the community, and to the Nation. Even before the founding of the Republic, service was cultivated through participation in the colonial militias and associations dedicated to helping others. Service continued to flourish with the establishment of representative local, State, and Federal governments. Over time, and with each generation, this spirit of service has continued to grow, playing a central role in strengthening civil society and shaping the Nation’s character. Americans express this spirit in many forms, from everyday acts of kindness toward neighbors and community-organized efforts to rebuild after hurricanes, floods, or wildfires to moments of profound national unity such as emerged following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 or after September 11, 2001. Service in America is a critical ingredient of a vibrant and healthy democracy.

## COMMISSION’S DEFINITION OF SERVICE

The Commission has defined service as a personal commitment of time, energy, and talent to a mission that contributes to the public good by protecting the Nation and its citizens, strengthening communities, or promoting the general social welfare.

Indeed, Americans’ service to one another and to the Nation has long been an example to people throughout the world. Nearly 200 years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville traveled the country and observed, “I have seen Americans making great and sincere sacrifices for the common good and a hundred times I have noticed that, when needs be, they almost always gave each other faithful support.”<sup>13</sup> This spirit of service marked

a central element of what was, at the time, a novel approach to government—whose foundation was an involved citizenry.

The United States continues to be a radical experiment in inclusive representative democracy, unique in the history of the world. What makes it so radical and so exceptional is the combination of its ever-evolving and expanding civil society together with the open and free discourse that fuels its political system. At its best, these characteristics enable the United States to confront or prevent crises and to seize opportunities by harnessing the power of diversity of thought, respectful debate, and collaboration focused on a common purpose. But these strengths are not a given—without attention and care, they are at risk.

**It is the foundational premise of this Commission that building on America’s spirit of service in order to nurture, promote, and expand a *culture* of service is vital to securing the Nation’s future.** A civil society sustained in peacetime by a robust culture of service and a strong sense of community will be better inoculated against the myriad challenges and threats that it may face in the future. Service within and across communities breaks down cultural barriers, builds respect, and strengthens collaboration, understanding, and dialogue. And in times of crisis, participatory civil society enables people to naturally join together, contribute to their communities, and defend the Nation. Fortunately, America has—as de Tocqueville recognized—a predisposition to service on which the country can build to meet the challenges of the future, but that predisposition must be strengthened.

Such strengthening cannot take place without thorough analysis and thoughtful planning. Senators John McCain and Jack Reed along with Representatives Mac Thornberry and Adam Smith recognized the value of



Source: Habitat for Humanity



Military and national service members build homes together in Annapolis, Maryland.

all forms of service and the common thread that connects military, national, and public service. Together they led the bipartisan effort to establish this Commission—the first time in U.S. history that a government body has been charged with a comprehensive and holistic review of service. The Commission’s congressional mandate—to review the military selective service process and consider methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service to address the Nation’s needs—reflects these ambitions.

Just as de Tocqueville concluded after his travels, so too the Commission observed firsthand by visiting Americans throughout the country that this Nation is bolstered by a spirit of service and public purpose. By examining the past and envisioning the future, the Commission offers a new and integrated approach to expanding awareness of, aspiration toward, and access to opportunities for service. The recommendations that follow link military, national, and public service through investment, education, and policy aimed at inspiring and enabling more Americans to serve. Ultimately, the Commission makes service the keystone of a strategy to meet critical national needs, ensure the Nation’s security and defense, improve the quality of life for all Americans,

*The Commission’s vision is that Americans, of all ages, will become aware of and have the opportunity to lend their time, talents, and energy to the common good.*

invigorate civil society, and strengthen America’s democracy.

### Vision 2031: An Expectation of Service

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy issued a call to service for a new generation seeking direction for the decades to follow. “Ask not what your country can do for you,” he urged, “ask what you can do for your country.”<sup>14</sup> Today, although nearly 24 million individuals participate in some form of military, national, or public service, many of the 329 million Americans are either unaware of the various opportunities and benefits of service or face some kind of barrier to serving. As a result, Kennedy’s call to action is an option for too few Americans. The Commission seeks to change this reality.

The Commission’s vision is that Americans, of all ages, will become aware of and have the opportunity to lend their time, talents, and energy to the common good. By 2031, 70 years after President Kennedy’s call to action, 5 million Americans will be newly participating each year in military, national, or public service.

Some Americans will seek military or public service options; many others will participate in a national service-year opportunity, which will become a rite of passage for a large share of each rising generation. Increasingly, participating in robust service opportunities will help young Americans move into adulthood as engaged members of their communities. Options for continued military, national, and public service will be more widely available throughout Americans’ adult lives, taking many forms—as full-time or part-time military and national service members, as civil servants, as corporate employees on service sabbaticals, as emergency responders, and as community volunteers. Opportunities for older Americans will also continue to grow, ensuring that individuals have chances to serve throughout their lives.

Each recommendation in this report represents one step closer to this vision of a culture of service and is designed to set America on a trajectory to realize widespread and meaningful *voluntary* service, with every American choosing to serve in some way at some point

in life. Achieving this vision will require significant investment and bipartisan leadership in several major overlapping areas as well as robust support to those who serve, making service not only possible but also desirable.

The first and most foundational investment needed to catalyze a culture of service is federally funded and locally developed civic education and service learning. Federal funding for civic education has plummeted in the past decade, and pales in comparison to support for other subjects.<sup>15</sup> Yet without a solid base of knowledge about the principles of the U.S. system of government, many Americans are ill-equipped to become contributing members of civil society.<sup>16</sup> When civic education is reinvigorated, students across the country will gain the ability to identify social and civic problems in their community, State, and Nation and understand how they can make a difference. Schools offering age-appropriate service-learning programs will expose students to service and its many benefits, beginning in elementary school. Older students will have the chance to participate in summer- and semester-long service opportunities as they progress toward graduation. By 2031, 70 years after President Kennedy’s call to “ask what you can do for your country,” every 18-year-old will be asked—and be well prepared to answer—the following question: “How will you serve our country?”

In addition, America should launch a concerted effort to bolster military service, with the goal of increasing interest in and eligibility for military service from across society, not just from those families or regions with a legacy of military service, and to attract and retain the talent needed to maintain global competitive advantage. Increasing participation in and engagement with the military by expanding awareness of the opportunities to serve in the military, in addition to providing accurate information about the realities of life as a service member, is crucial to ensuring that the Armed Forces are truly representative of American society. By 2031, increased outreach and education regarding military service will result in more than enough qualified individuals seeking to serve in the Armed Forces,

minimizing the need for traditional military recruiting.

The Commission also proposes extending the obligation of registering for the Selective Service to all Americans, men and women, and reconceiving registration as a solemn occasion that requires reflection on the obligation to serve one’s country if called to do so in a time of national emergency. Reaffirming this common obligation will provide a mechanism to call on the depth of America’s talent in times of crisis.

In conjunction with these steps to enhance awareness of military service and to expand registration for the Selective Service, *all* young men and women—for the first time—will be introduced to various types of nonmilitary service opportunities, including national and public service. Through an innovative and integrated service platform, Americans will be invited to explore—in one place—the military, national, and public service opportunities that would best suit their interests and abilities.

With respect to national service, the Commission challenges the Nation to commit to increasing federally supported national service-year opportunities to 1 million annually by 2031, up from about 80,000 today.<sup>17</sup> Despite high demand, service opportunities available through the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and other

*By 2031, 70 years after President Kennedy’s call to “ask what you can do for your country,” every 18-year-old will be asked—and be well prepared to answer—the following question: “How will you serve our country?”*



Source: CNCS

Senior Corps volunteers support people affected by a tornado in Tuscaloosa, Alabama.



programs have remained static, and significant financial barriers prevent many Americans from pursuing national service. A new level of investment will make national service opportunities available to more Americans, while a reformed compensation and benefit system will reduce obstacles to service and encourage many more people to explore national service opportunities. The Nation's need for such service programs—in areas ranging from education to economic opportunity, from health care to environmental stewardship and community resilience—is clear.

Finally, policymakers must modernize Government personnel systems and career pathways to attract new generations and new talent to public service employment. Government at all levels must develop and invest in a public service workforce that can continue to serve the American people, contribute to the common good, and meet the critical needs of the Nation today and in the future. The civil service workforce of Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments must be able to recruit talent, particularly younger workers and those with critical skills, to obtain the individuals required for the Nation to accomplish important missions central to Americans' quality of life—ranging from safe food to accurate weather forecasts to robust national security in an era of great power competition. Further, public officials and civic leaders should refrain from disparaging characterizations of public servants, which demoralize those who currently serve and undermine the ability to recruit future public servants. It is essential that all Americans properly recognize and honor those committed and talented individuals who serve the Nation and its people through public service and who play a vital role in maintaining the common good.

The Commission believes that 5 million Americans newly serving each year is only the beginning; the true goal is a Nation in which active citizenship and a commitment to service are expected and demonstrated daily. Success will be easy to recognize—when service is the norm, rather than the exception.

*Success will be easy to recognize—when service is the norm, rather than the exception.*



Source: National Park Service

Wildland firefighters monitor fire activity at Manassas National Battlefield Park in Virginia.

### A Path Forward

George Washington declared, “It may be laid down, as a primary position, and the basis of our system, that every Citizen who enjoys the protection of a free Government, owes not only a proportion of his property, but even of his personal services to the defence of it[.]”<sup>18</sup>

These words are still relevant today.

This report presents recommendations for Congress and the President that, if implemented, will steer America on a course to achieve the ambitious goals set out above. It is the Commission's fervent belief that this bold vision of service not only will address the Nation's critical needs but also will reinforce the civic fabric of American society by strengthening the connections between Americans and creating a new common understanding of what it means to be an American. The Commission calls on the Nation's leaders and the American people to commit to an ambitious course to cultivate America's culture of service so that every American is inspired and eager to serve.



# ELEVATE ALL FORMS OF SERVICE

**T**o maximize the potential of service to enhance the Nation, the United States needs to transition from today’s siloed approach to service toward an approach that lifts all forms of service and takes full advantage of their complementary strengths. The Commission’s proposed approach starts with infusing civic education and service learning throughout the U.S. educational system, and it continues with a new forum to coordinate support for service across Government and a new, internet-based platform to connect Americans with all kinds of service opportunities.

## **Prioritize Civic Education and Service Learning**

As the Commission traveled the country in search of ways to engage more Americans in service, nearly every conversation or meeting included a passionate call to improve civic education. Leaders in military, national, and public service as well as Americans from across the political spectrum stressed civic education’s

ability to increase Americans’ awareness of, aspiration for, and access to service and recommended that the Commission develop ways to enhance and expand civic education throughout the United States. These conversations, coupled with research on the relationship between education and service, revealed an important finding: high-quality civic education plays a critical role in creating informed and engaged citizens who are more likely to make a positive impact on the Nation and their communities by pursuing service throughout their lives.<sup>19</sup>

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*“[T]he only reason we have public school education in America is because in the early days of the country, our leaders thought we had to teach our young generation about citizenship . . . that obligation never ends.”*

—Sandra Day O’Connor

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## CIVIC EDUCATION AND SERVICE LEARNING

> *Civic education* includes teaching the fundamental principles enshrined in the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, and other founding documents; deepening students’ understanding of how those principles apply to civic life; and providing experiences that intentionally prepare students for informed, engaged participation in civic life.

> *Service learning* is an instructional approach that integrates classroom teaching and reflection with community service projects. Service-learning techniques may be applied in virtually any class—including science and mathematics—and provide students with meaningful experiences by exposing them to the values of service, such as commitment, contribution to community, and collaboration.

Despite the clear importance of civic education, however, the Nation is failing to prepare the next generation of Americans to participate actively in U.S. civic and democratic life through voting, service, civil discourse, and community involvement. Federal funding for civic education has all but disappeared in recent years. Moreover, States and schools have, by and large, given precedence to other important subjects, especially science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), at its expense. Government has not met its promise of educating young Americans in the fundamental principles of citizenship.

The Commission believes that the United States must make a concerted effort to prioritize robust civic education and academically relevant, high-quality service learning at all levels of education—from kindergarten to 12th grade, and beyond.

States and local school districts bear responsibility for developing and implementing effective civic education, consistent with the primary role that these authorities play in America's public education system. The Federal Government's role—incentivizing and catalyzing efforts to deliver and innovate in civic education—is also crucial. America, as a whole, must value civic education as a critical foundation of the health and future of this Nation.

### ***The State of Civic Education***

To participate effectively as citizens, Americans need basic knowledge of the principles of American democracy, the components of the U.S. Government, and individual rights and responsibilities, as well as education in the skills necessary to participate responsibly in civic life. Yet, according to recent polling, 22 percent of American adults cannot name any of the three branches of government, and 37 percent cannot name or do not know any of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution.<sup>20</sup>

Americans' knowledge of State and local government structures and functions is also limited. For example, more than half of recent survey respondents did not know whether their State has a constitution.<sup>21</sup> Without an understanding, or even an awareness, of certain foundational

*America, as a whole, must value civic education as a critical foundation of the health and future of this Nation.*

concepts, citizens are ill-equipped to participate meaningfully in civic life.

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*“We have a democratic republic—a form of government that relies upon knowledgeable, engaged citizens—that is operating without enough knowledgeable and engaged citizens to sustain it.”*

—Emma Humphries, *iCivics*

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Data on students is limited but similarly disheartening. The U.S. Department of Education's National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) civics assessment, often referred to as the “Nation's report card,” is the sole nationally representative test of student understanding of civics concepts, but it is administered only sporadically.<sup>22</sup> Results from 2014—the most recent data available—show that by the end of middle school, students' understanding of basic facts is limited; less than one-quarter of eighth grade students received a rating of “proficient,” indicating that they understand and could explain the purposes that government should serve.<sup>23</sup>

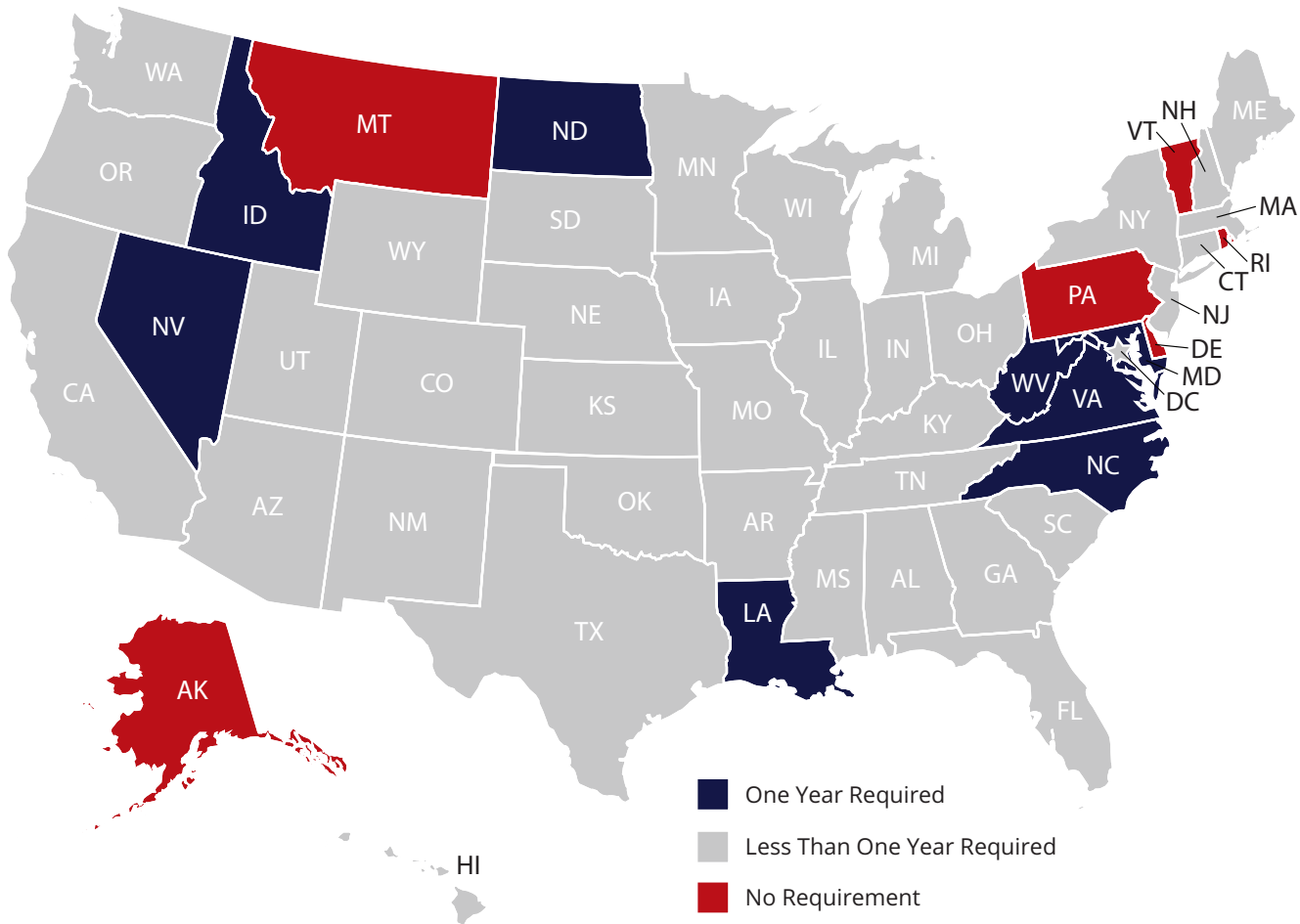
### ***Inadequate and Inconsistent Policies***

The U.S. education system prioritizes local control. The governments of the States, District of Columbia (DC), and U.S. territories and possessions set curriculum standards—and some delegate this responsibility to local school districts. As a result, educational standards vary across the country. Nevertheless, every student in the United States, regardless of their location, should graduate from high school with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to thoughtfully and responsibly engage in their community and Nation.

Although all States and DC mandate some form of instruction in U.S. government or civics between kindergarten and 12th grade, the Commission found that six States do not make a dedicated civics or U.S. government course a condition of high school graduation. While 44 States and DC do require such a course,

Figure 1: High School Civic Education Requirements by State

As of 2019, 44 States and DC require students to take a civics or U.S. government course as a condition of high school graduation, but only eight of them require a full year of instruction. Six States have no such graduation requirement for their students.



Source: Commission research.

most of them are satisfied with a single semester of instruction.\*

The assessment of K–12 civic education also varies among States and school districts. The Commission found that only 22 States require high school students to be tested on civics or U.S. government before they graduate, and even fewer make social studies assessments

part of their efforts to hold schools accountable, thereby limiting the ability of policymakers and the American people to identify and address the challenges faced by underperforming schools.

Service learning, too, receives inadequate and inconsistent support from States and localities. Service learning enables students to apply their academic knowledge and skills to help their communities. Indeed, students who participate in service-learning opportunities demonstrate better academic performance, a deeper understanding of

\* Twelve States require students to take a civics or U.S. government course, but do not specify the course's length.

### *Ashley's Story*

I was always drawn to teaching social studies, but found it challenging to connect the materials to students' lives. Focusing on civics, and specifically adopting a curriculum that addresses our political system and how we govern, has given me a true purpose in my teaching. The Center for Civic Education program, *We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution*, allows me to foster critical thinking, public speaking, and research and writing skills, as well as advanced knowledge of the Constitution and our rights as individuals. Students dive deeply into controversial historical political questions and challenges we might face in the future, simulating congressional hearings in local, State, and national competitions. My students have won the State competition several times and also participate in local election campaigns, assist with the polls on election days, and advocate for local issues. Ultimately, the value of civic education cannot be overestimated. It is vital that the students of today are provided with the education needed to be the active, engaged citizens of tomorrow.



civic responsibility, and a stronger ethic of service.<sup>24</sup> Yet the Commission found as of 2019, only 13 States have incorporated service learning into their high school social studies curricular standards.

To make civic education policies across the country more consistent, some States and civic education organizations have developed and called for greater support for standardized frameworks and assessments. For example, representatives of 21 States joined with 15 national organizations committed to advancing social studies to develop the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, which offers rigorous guidance for K–12 instruction in civics, economics, geography, and history.<sup>25</sup> While most States have incorporated the C3 Framework into their existing social studies standards, the Commission found that 21 States and DC have not.

#### **Lack of Investment**

Schools need funding to prioritize and teach civic education. Moreover, funding enables teachers to receive the professional development necessary to

provide quality instruction to students. Unfortunately, investment in civic education and service learning has declined significantly in recent years.

Federal funding reserved specifically for civic education programs peaked at about \$150 million in fiscal year (FY) 2010, with the largest portion coming from the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching American History (TAH) Grant program. From 2001 through 2011—when Congress eliminated it—the TAH program awarded about \$100 million annually to school districts across the country to partner with universities, nonprofits, museums, and others to create effective professional development programs for K–12 teachers.<sup>26</sup> As of 2019, however, the U.S.

Department of Education and civic education advocates estimate that the Federal Government spends only about \$5 million annually on civic education.<sup>27</sup> Compared to the amounts spent on other important subjects, Federal funds dedicated to civic education are minimal. Notably, the Federal Government spends over \$3.2 billion in support of STEM education.<sup>28</sup> Though the nonprofit community focused on civic education

*Compared to the amounts spent on other important subjects, Federal funds dedicated to civic education are minimal.*



is growing, foundation funding alone cannot offset the reduction in Federal investment.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, the Federal Government devotes limited funds to service learning. In 2011, Congress eliminated the \$39.5 million appropriated to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) for its Learn and Serve America program, which awarded grants to educational organizations for service-learning-related projects and professional development.<sup>30</sup> This program served about 1 million students annually across the Nation and provided about 35,000 elementary and middle school teachers with direct funding to implement service-learning projects in their classrooms.<sup>31</sup>

While these funding reductions may seem small in the context of America's broader education system, they send an important signal to policymakers and education leaders throughout the Nation. In an environment characterized by competing curricular demands, an acute teacher shortage, and financial challenges in many jurisdictions, limited Federal investment in civic education makes it increasingly difficult for teachers and schools to treat this essential topic as a priority.<sup>32</sup>

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*“Learning to be a good citizen is learning to live to the maximum of one’s abilities and opportunities, and every subject should be taught every child with this in view.”*

—Eleanor Roosevelt

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Despite these unfavorable conditions, a handful of States have recently acted to revamp civic education in ways that could serve as a model for the Nation. Illinois, for example, set new standards for high school civic education that incorporated several best practices, including classroom discussion of current and controversial events, service learning, and simulation of the democratic process.<sup>33</sup> Importantly, Illinois also allows schools to use public-private partnerships to tap into private-sector resources, enabling greater innovation in the classroom.<sup>34</sup> In Florida, the Sandra Day O’Connor Civics Education Act requires that all middle school students complete one semester of civic education, receiving credit only by successfully passing the course

and a standardized, statewide content knowledge assessment.<sup>35</sup> Florida also developed elective service-learning courses, which provide students with additional opportunities to engage in community service during the school day.<sup>36</sup> Massachusetts requires its middle and high schools to offer at least one student-led, nonpartisan civics project that is consistent with the curricula, ensuring that students are given the opportunity to use their academic skills in practical settings.<sup>37</sup> Each of these States has shown that progress can be made, that work still remains to be done, and that States can respond to the changing educational needs of the Nation.

## Findings and Recommendations

Jump-starting a nationwide revitalization of civic education and service learning requires a significant financial commitment from the Federal Government. With additional funding, States and school districts could expand civic education, service learning, and related professional development programs, in partnership with colleges, universities, nonprofit organizations, and other civic education stakeholders. Dedicated funding would also enable schools to hire additional staff to teach civics, integrate service learning into the classroom, and offer extracurricular activities, field trips, and other enrichment opportunities to students.

The Commission calls on Congress and the President to bolster the Federal investment in civic education and service learning by adopting the recommendations below. By appropriating \$450 million each year to civic education and service-learning funds, the Federal Government will recognize both as national priorities and will lay the foundation to ensure that students at all levels have access to high-quality civic education and service-learning opportunities.

**1: The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate \$450 million per year for civic education and service learning.**

**1a. Create a Civic Education Fund.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress create a Civic Education Fund and provide an initial investment of \$200 million each year to State

educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations, via the U.S. Department of Education, to develop and implement best practice curricula that incorporate civic education, applied civics, and service learning across the K-12 experience and to provide teacher development opportunities in civic education, applied civics, and service learning. The goals, by 2031, are all K-12 students exposed to civic education and all students in 4th, 8th, and 12th grades test at or above “Proficient” in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test in civics.\*

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the U.S. Secretary of Education to create a dedicated position or office within the U.S. Department of Education responsible for overseeing and administering the Civic Education Fund and coordinating other civic education and service-learning initiatives of the Federal Government.

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*“The ability of our citizens to become effective and contributing members of our society requires them to be empowered through knowledge of their government and institutions that ensure the well-being of our society.”*

—Alhassan Susso,  
2019 New York State Teacher of the Year

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\* The term “State educational agencies,” unless otherwise specified, refers to government educational agencies within each of the 50 States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories and possessions of the United States. The term “local educational agency” includes tribally sanctioned educational authorities, as that term is defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.

By appropriating significant financial resources, the Federal Government would signal its commitment to civic education as a national priority. In addition, providing seed funding to educational authorities to promote civic education would spur the development of innovative practices more likely to achieve the goals of civic learning. To help school districts with fewer resources, a portion of the fund would be distributed as formula grants to local school districts in high-need communities, with the remainder available as competitive grants to school districts, States, and nonprofits. Moreover, as indicated in Appendix B, an appropriate portion of the grants would be devoted to professional development programs in applied civics—a form of service learning that is essential to quality civic education.

**1b. Create a Service-Learning Fund.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress create a Service-Learning Fund and provide \$250 million each year from the above appropriation to SEAs, LEAs, IHEs, State Service Commissions, and nonprofit organizations, via CNCS, to develop and implement service-learning programs and opportunities for hands-on community service for K-12 and postsecondary students across the country. The goals, by 2031, are all K-12 students receiving in-class service-learning experiences, 1 million 6th to 12th grade students participating in a Summer of Service program each year, and 1 million 9th to 12th grade students participating in a Semester of Service program each year.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CNCS to create a dedicated position or office within CNCS responsible for overseeing and administering the Service-Learning Fund.

This Federal investment would help State and local authorities pilot programs for Summers of Service, Semesters of Service, and service-learning programs in



their schools. Adopting extended service-term frameworks can encourage students to develop a greater appreciation of how civic action can address social problems, to cultivate important skills for future education or careers, and to pursue service in the future. Incentivizing States and school districts to implement dedicated service terms may also foster an expectation that service is a requirement of maturity and promote a nationwide culture of service in which most, if not all, students serve during their school years, thereby establishing the foundation for a lifetime of service.

Dedicated resources are essential for the success of service-learning programs, as current funding limitations curtail educators' ability and willingness to implement this pedagogical approach. With additional funding, schools would be able to meet the materials and transportation costs associated with service-learning programs without relying on teachers to pay for such expenses out of their own pockets. Additional funding would also enable school districts to provide teachers with the time and support needed to develop their service-learning skills and to build service-learning activities into their curricula. The Service-Learning Fund would, therefore, help lower financial barriers and incentivize schools and educators to actively promote and incorporate service learning into classrooms across the Nation.



Source: National Archives

Students learn through hands-on exploration at the National Archives.

*“There are many young people who are civically engaged who are passionate about engaging other people around them; however, they may not have the support or the resources to be effective.”*

—Ananya Singh, high school student & Youth Advisory Council Mentor, National Youth Leadership Council

## 2: Improve NAEP participation and information sharing.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend the law to require States to participate in the NAEP civics assessment, require the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to publish results of the NAEP civics assessment both in the aggregate for the Nation and separately for each State, and require schools to administer the NAEP civics assessment every two years.

Currently, States receiving Title I funds are required to participate in NAEP reading and mathematics assessments only for the fourth and eighth grades and can opt in for additional subject testing. As a result, the NAEP civics assessment is not mandatory and has not been administered regularly. When it is administered, it is often provided only to eighth grade students. Furthermore, results from the NAEP civics assessment are not disaggregated by State and present only the national average.

A requirement for all States to administer the NAEP civics assessment and for the National Center for Education Statistics to disaggregate its results would produce several benefits. These include a better understanding of the positive outcomes of new civic education programs and more widespread distribution of information to parents and other stakeholders on the state of civic education in their area. Stakeholders can use this information to determine whether their States are making adequate progress toward excellent civic education. Most importantly, the disaggregation of results would incentivize State lawmakers to focus their attention on improving civic education.

### 3: Create civic education and service-learning award programs.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds for the U.S. Secretary of Education to create an award and recognition program to highlight both excellence in the delivery and teaching of civic education, applied civics, and service learning and excellence by students in addressing community needs through civic education, applied civics, and service learning.

This program would include awards and recognition for States, districts, schools, teachers, and students (individually or as a group). A select committee would be created by the U.S. Department of Education to assess candidates' applications and select finalists. Through this recognition program, excellence in civic education and service-learning programs not only would be highlighted for a national audience but also would provide a blueprint that could be replicated by other States, districts, schools, teachers, or students throughout the country.

### 4: Fund the development of civic education and service-learning curricular resources.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds for the Library of Congress, Institute of Museum and Library Services, and National Archives to coordinate the development and distribution of information on civic education and effective citizenship produced by the U.S. Government.

Experts suggest that students who engage with primary source documents, guided by subject-matter experts, have a better learning experience. However, many students do not have access to these resources. This initiative would enhance existing online resources and support the distribution of hard copy material to local libraries, schools, and polling locations, particularly in rural areas.

### 5: Integrate best practices in civic education, service learning, and applied civics.

- >> The Commission recommends that SEAs, LEAs, schools, and nonprofit organizations explore ways to provide quality, research-based civic education, applied civics, and service learning to K–12 students, and to prepare teachers to teach these subjects and use these methodologies. To accomplish these goals, the Commission encourages SEAs, LEAs, schools, and nonprofit organizations to consider the best practices endorsed by the Commission.
- >> The Commission recommends that IHEs and nonprofit organizations explore ways to integrate quality, research-based civic education and service-learning methodologies into curricula, consider best practices, and prepare teachers to use service-learning methodologies.
- >> The Commission recommends that State Governors and legislatures consider amendments to State law to stimulate robust civic education and service learning for their students.

Following extensive research, analysis of practices and legislation across the 50 States and DC, and conversations with educators, officials, and advocates, the Commission endorses a comprehensive set of best practices for both civic education and service learning to be used in primary and secondary schools.

The Commission has also developed provisions that State legislatures may use to guide enhancements to K–12 civic education and service learning in their respective States. These best practices and provisions are set forth in Appendix C.

The Commission also promotes the importance of continuing civic education and service learning in post-secondary education and endorses a set of recommendations to improve civic education and service-learning efforts at that level. These recommendations are also set forth in Appendix C.

## 6: Issue a resolution honoring and supporting teachers.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress issue a resolution to honor and express support for the work of teachers to inspire civic engagement through their dedication as public servants and to issue a call to Americans to join the profession of teaching.

Teachers are critically important to the Nation's success and to the development of an informed and engaged citizenry, eager and inspired to serve. Yet, many teachers across the country today feel underappreciated and undervalued, leading them to strike or leave the profession. Furthermore, teachers choose to teach despite pay so low that nearly one in five must take a second job during the school year to make ends meet.<sup>38</sup> A congressional resolution honoring and supporting teachers, in concert with the other proposals described in this section, would demonstrate the Nation's commitment to and appreciation for teachers, their work, and their sacrifice.

### *A Foundation for a Lifetime of Service*

Congress and the President directed the Commission to seek out and listen to the American people before deliberating and deciding upon recommendations.

Many members of the public—in different regions and from different backgrounds—made a convincing case that civic education is an essential component for achieving the mission of expanding participation in military, national, and public service. Engaging all young Americans with high-quality, robust civic education and service learning will lay a foundation of interest in and capability for serving the community and the Nation and will enhance the effectiveness of many of the subsequent recommendations in this report.

### **Designate a Governmentwide Lead for Service**

The Commission believes that the country has a tremendous opportunity to harness the power of the American people to address national and community needs. To do so effectively requires that there be someone entrusted with giving a voice to service—someone with the stature to make service a national priority.

Almost every Presidential Administration in this century and the last has launched hallmark initiatives focused on service. Administrations have proposed methods to attract individuals to various streams of service, reform the Federal civil service, better provide for military service members, create new national service initiatives to address local needs, and catalyze service activity in the private and nonprofit sectors.

Yet there has been no sustained effort to create a

## FROM THE CLASSROOM TO CONGRESS

AP Government students from Hightstown High School in New Jersey became the first known high school class to draft a congressional bill and have it signed into law. After learning about unsolved civil rights crimes from the 1950s and 1960s, the students drafted a bill that would create a board to review and release the records of such cases to the public. Guided by AP Government teacher Stuart Wexler, the students persuaded Members of Congress to sponsor the bill and helped move it through committees in both houses of Congress, where it was eventually brought to the floor for a vote. On January 8, 2019, President Trump signed the Civil Rights Cold Case Records Collection Act into law.<sup>39</sup>



Source: <https://press.colldcaseact.com/photos>



## MODERN PRESIDENTIAL SERVICE MILESTONES

- > John F. Kennedy created the Peace Corps.
- > Lyndon B. Johnson launched Volunteers in Service to America, the longest running federally supported domestic national service program.
- > Richard Nixon ended the draft and established the All-Volunteer Force.
- > George H. W. Bush signed the National and Community Service Act of 1990.
- > Bill Clinton launched AmeriCorps and established the Corporation for National and Community Service.
- > George W. Bush created the USA Freedom Corps.
- > Barack Obama signed the Serve America Act of 2009.

Source: Various sources.<sup>40</sup>

focal point for these efforts or to unlock the potential of valuable cross-service initiatives—including ways to attract individuals with critical skills to serve their communities and the Nation.

No single entity within the U.S. Government provides policy leadership and facilitates interagency coordination to advance whole-of-government support for service. Similar concerns about coordination and leadership in other policy areas that cross department and agency boundaries—such as drug control, national security, and environmental quality—have spurred the President and Congress to create interagency councils within the Executive Office of the President (EOP) to provide this essential support.

Establishing an interagency council within the White House, chaired by a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed official, would elevate all streams of service and provide a forum for encouraging coordination, communication, and promulgation of best practices across military, national, and public service as well as advancing joint efforts to promote service. Importantly, since these streams of service have a vital need for critical skills—essential for maintaining competitiveness and

*No single entity within the U.S. Government provides policy leadership and facilitates interagency coordination to advance whole-of-government support for service.*

addressing evolving and complex national challenges—this proposed council would play a key role in harmonizing critical-skills efforts across the Government. The combination of these missions—elevating service and boosting critical skills—has the potential to transform the effectiveness of the Government in meeting the needs of the Nation and the American people.

### 7: Establish and fund an interagency Council on Military, National, and Public Service.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress establish and appropriate funds for a Council on Military, National, and Public Service in the Executive Office of the President, to be headed by an Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service.

#### 7a. Award cabinet rank to the President's service advisor.

- >> The Commission further recommends that the President award cabinet rank to the Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service.

The Commission's research and discussions with experts, stakeholders, and Americans who serve have revealed that the Nation has the potential to realize considerable synergies by pursuing and coordinating cross-cutting service initiatives. Likewise, the Commission has found that individuals who serve in one way are often inclined to participate in other kinds of service. For example, almost half of new recruits to the Armed Forces give "helping others" as their primary reason for joining the military,<sup>41</sup> making them highly likely to contribute meaningfully to the Nation and its communities in other ways. Yet initiatives designed to cut across service streams are rarely pursued, owing to bureaucratic challenges and other factors.

Furthermore, there is significant overlap among the different service streams in their efforts to engage and solve important



national problems. For example, both public servants and military service members play important roles in confronting national security challenges, while both national service members and public servants contribute to the conservation of public lands. Addressing the Nation's critical needs depends on well-functioning, effective streams of service, which themselves require that critical-skills talent be developed and maintained. To foster an ethos of service for all Americans while more effectively addressing those critical needs, public servants need a strong framework to coordinate across agencies and harmonize their efforts—and such coordination requires leadership from elected and appointed officials.

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*“Service’ is at the heart of an involved citizenry who take pride in their country and want to contribute to it in some way. It is also at the heart of a society that values such participation by its members.”*

—Dakota Wood, *The Heritage Foundation*

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The Federal Government relies on numerous institutions to fulfill its duties. Presidents look to their Cabinet and White House staff for advice, conflict resolution, enhancement of administrative coherence, and “political support for programs and policies.”<sup>42</sup> Organizations within the EOP such as the National Security Council (NSC), National Economic Council, Council on Environmental Quality, and Office of National Drug Control Policy provide “institutional depth to the Presidency” on select topics.<sup>43</sup> These interagency councils assist the President with policy implementation, oversight, and guidance on discrete issues while helping to resolve policy disputes and fostering coordinated efforts to address policy challenges across relevant Federal agencies. They are time-tested vehicles for advancing policy agendas and ensuring that specialized knowledge is maintained during administrative turnover.

But initiatives that cut across military, national, and public service do not fit coherently or comfortably within existing interagency structures. Within the EOP, military service and national service fall under the purview of separate interagency councils—the NSC (for the military and Peace Corps) and the Domestic



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Members of the Interagency Working Group on Cooperative Development meet at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, DC.

Policy Council (for CNCS). These existing councils have extensive and wide-ranging concerns that tend to overshadow issues associated with promoting service. Today, public service does not have a natural home in the EOP, though the Office of Management and Budget takes an interest in issues related to personnel policy. In short, there is a great risk that the concept and practice of service will get lost among other issues and thus the Government will not pursue policies or programs that could significantly improve Americans' lives.

The idea of providing a focal point for service within the White House has precedent. For example, President George W. Bush established the USA Freedom Corps. Announced during President Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address, USA Freedom Corps was created to coordinate “community and national service policy across 12 Federal agencies,” with a goal of ensuring that service remained a national priority.<sup>44</sup> USA Freedom Corps also made it easier for Americans answering the President's call to service to find volunteer opportunities.<sup>45</sup> President Bush's attempt to lift up and coordinate service—building on the efforts of his predecessors from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Bill Clinton—showcased the value placed on service by the Nation's leadership. Yet the absence of formal, institutionalized leadership focused on all streams of service remains a systemic barrier that contributes to many, if not most, of the challenges identified in this report. Indeed, the

USA Freedom Corps, though successful, did not last beyond the Bush Administration.

### **Proposed Structure**

The Commission proposes that Congress authorize a Council on Military, National, and Public Service within the EOP. The Council would be chaired by a new Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service, who would be appointed by the President and subject to Senate confirmation. This official would serve as the President's primary advisor on issues related to military, national, and public service. Several of the Council's members would be permanent, including agency heads with a strong nexus to military, national, and public service, and attendance could expand as needed based on the issues under consideration. The Council would receive a direct appropriation from Congress to ensure that its work continues to be prioritized across Presidential administrations.

### **Proposed Responsibilities**

The Council's primary responsibilities would be (1) to advise the President and coordinate executive branch action on policies and initiatives to foster an increased sense of service and civic responsibility among all Americans; (2) to promote and expand opportunities for military service, national service, and public service; (3) to develop and oversee cross-service initiatives that require interagency coordination; and (4) to cultivate pathways for Americans to develop critical skills and use those skills to help the Nation and its communities through military, national, and public service. In its role as advisor to the President, the Council would develop and recommend policies of common interest to Federal agencies for increasing Americans' participation in military, national, and public service in order to address national security and other needs of the United States. In coordinating among agencies, the Council would serve as a forum in which Federal officials responsible for military, national, and public service programs could cooperate and develop interagency, cross-service initiatives. And because critical skills are developed and used to meet the Nation's needs across all streams of service, the Council would act as the interagency lead for identifying and coordinating whole-of-government efforts to address gaps in critical skills that endanger key missions.

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*"In mapping a national culture of service to the 21st century, it is important to recognize that increasingly, students are graduating college with advanced skills that they want to use in creating change."*

—Chris Kuang, *Coding It Forward*

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In addition to this general charge, the Council would be assigned several specific pressing tasks that have not been undertaken because no such entity has existed. Among these are coordination and oversight for joint awareness, marketing, and recruitment initiatives involving military, national, and public service; reevaluation of benefits for individuals who participate in service; assessment of the impact of service on the needs of the Nation and individuals; and consultation with representatives of State, local, and Tribal governments, as well as nongovernmental organizations, to develop and implement initiatives to promote military, national, and public service.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Council would provide regular reports and analyses to the President and Congress, beginning with a Military, National, and Public Service Strategy. This quadrennial document would review existing initiatives related to the Council's responsibilities, ways in which service could address the needs of the Nation, and proposals to address any deficiencies identified by the Council. The Council would also issue a quadrennial Report on Cross-Service Participation. In addition, the Council would prepare, for inclusion in the President's annual budget submission, an analysis of Federal spending for initiatives consistent with the priorities of the President under the Military, National, and Public Service Strategy. This analysis would provide the Council with a key mechanism to evaluate the contributions of agencies toward governmentwide service and critical-skills priorities.

### **High-Level Leadership for Service**

This Commission is the first to be charged by the Federal Government with comprehensively and holistically identifying and addressing the needs of military, national, and public service. Its broad focus has enabled

the Commission to identify challenges that have gone unaddressed—and promising opportunities that have not been seized—all because no single entity is responsible and empowered to act. Establishing a permanent Council on Military, National, and Public Service at the highest level of the Federal Government would create the consistent locus of accountability and action necessary to foster more effective systems of service that would better meet evolving national needs.

### Create a Service Platform

In considering options to foster a culture of service and increase participation across all components of service, the Commission recognized that many service organizations face challenges identifying candidates interested in or eligible for service. As a result, the Commission believes there is significant value in creating a “one-stop shop” for service opportunities. A service platform, accessed by website and mobile application, would promote awareness and access by informing individuals about service opportunities and connecting service organizations with potential talent.

### 8: Establish an internet-based service platform to connect Americans with service opportunities.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate multiyear funds for an internet-based service platform under the supervision of the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.

There have been numerous efforts to develop nationwide service systems over the past few decades. The approaches varied, but all sought to advance the notion of national service. For example, the George W. Bush and Obama Administrations began or extended Federal service portals through executive action that did not continue into the following Administration. In addition, the national service advocacy organization Service Year Alliance has developed an online platform for people to search for national service opportunities. The proposed service platform is an iterative improvement of these attempts to harness the Nation’s spirit of service: a crucial difference is that it would build in access to opportunities and organizations in military and public service, in addition to national service.

### How It Works

Low awareness and lack of access are key obstacles preventing more Americans from actively serving the Nation, as many Americans are unfamiliar with available service options. The service platform presented below would address these issues by directly connecting Americans with available service opportunities and service organizations.

The service platform would enable individuals to view all available opportunities and learn about organizations and ways to serve, and it would match them with service organizations and opportunities. It would also enable participating service organizations to identify and more easily recruit candidates to meet their needs. Among the opportunities they might offer are full-time positions, fixed-term service programs, service sabbaticals, and emergency response commitments. Potential service organizations include the U.S. military services; Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments; and national service programs, such as AmeriCorps, the



Source: CNCS

An AmeriCorps member provides environmental stewardship in Baltimore, Maryland.



Peace Corps, FEMA Corps, and certified nonprofits and nongovernmental organizations. Rather than hosting these opportunities directly, the service platform would act as a focal point where service organizations could advertise and inform registrants how to apply.

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*“Invest in a singular ‘one-stop shop’ website and brand to advertise all national service opportunities in the United States—military, national and public service careers.”*

—Kaira Esgate, *America’s Service Commissions*

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The service platform is envisioned as a tool, not an independent organization; therefore, another entity should create, promote, oversee, and maintain it, including helping with external coordination. After conducting preliminary vetting of organizations that might serve as a governmental host, the Commission identified the Office of Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget, Corporation for National and Community Service, Department of Defense, General Services Administration, and Selective Service System as possible choices. The Commission also considered as potential host a nongovernmental organization, as well as a new Federal agency.

Regardless of which organization ultimately serves as governmental host, the platform could play an important role in ensuring the national security of the United States: beyond simply increasing awareness, aspiration, and access, it would provide an easy means for interested Americans to contribute in the event of a national emergency. In particular, the Council on Military, National, and Public Service could create an option enabling participants who are willing to serve during a crisis to volunteer information about themselves—including their skillsets and certifications.

### **Individual and Organization Participation**

Americans could participate with the service platform by voluntarily sharing their basic personal data. This would include contact information and, to determine eligibility, details on educational background and skills. Separately, individuals who register with the

Selective Service System would have the opportunity to decide whether to also share their information with the new service platform through a convenient—but completely voluntary—process.

The platform would provide service organizations with a new method to identify and contact qualified candidates, raise their profile, and reach more diverse networks. Under this model, all Federal Government agencies and U.S. military and uniformed services would be required to participate in the service platform. The Council on Military, National, and Public Service would promulgate regulations governing Federal entities’ participation. While the Federal Government cannot mandate the participation of external organizations, the Council on Military, National, and Public Service could develop standards and procedures to encourage it.

The platform described above would ultimately create a one-stop shop for individuals to access service opportunities across Federal, State, local, and Tribal entities, as well as certified nongovernmental partners. By making Americans more aware of these opportunities, and making it easier for individuals and organizations to connect, the proposed service platform would take an important step toward strengthening the culture of service in America and unlocking the benefits of service for the Nation and communities.

### **A Path Forward**

The three major reforms discussed in this section—revitalized civic education and service learning, renewed leadership at the highest levels of Government, and a platform enabling any American to find a service opportunity—will support and deepen the culture of service across the country. In addition, these measures will facilitate implementation and offer accountability mechanisms so that the benefits of the following proposals to advance military, national, and public service can be fully realized.

*Please see Appendix B for additional details and implementation guidance on civic education and service learning, the governmentwide lead service authority, and the online service platform recommendations. See Appendix C for best practices and provisions concerning civic education and service learning.*



# ADVANCE MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

**S**ervice has been a part of the Nation's core values and social fabric since its founding. Together, military, national, and public service touch almost every aspect of American life and help meet the Nation's many critical needs. The men and women serving in the Armed Forces provide for the common defense of the United States; national service members use their time and talents to enhance government capacity and mitigate a myriad of challenges faced by communities; and civil servants provide critical functions for the common good. While great work is being done across the Nation in each of these areas, cultivating a culture of service in the United States requires immediate action and continued attention as well as a frank discussion of the many barriers that prevent Americans from engaging in, and experiencing the benefits of, service.

During the course of its travels and through its research, the Commission considered whether service should be mandatory or voluntary. Some Americans suggested requiring young adults to serve the Nation in some way, with a choice of military, national, or public service. They argued that such a program would help unify Americans through a common service experience, contribute to personal and professional growth, and aid in solving the Nation's problems. While the Commission believes in the value of service to individuals and the Nation, it ultimately concluded that policymakers should make every effort to promote voluntary approaches to service, reserving mandatory service as a last resort only in response to national emergencies and to ensure the common defense.

*The Commission's goal is to bolster a shared ethos of service among Americans.*

The Commission's goal is to bolster a shared ethos of service among Americans. In its research and discussion over the past two and a half years, the Commission identified three overarching and interconnected conditions that underlie an individual's participation in service: *awareness*, referring to their understanding and knowledge of service opportunities; *aspiration*, their motivation for entering service; and *access*, their ability to act on and realize their aspiration by entering service. Those who currently work to promote service across the Nation—military recruiters, nonprofit organizations, and human resources managers, to name only a few—engage in these key areas every day. For example,



Source: City Year

City Year AmeriCorps members in Cleveland, Ohio, pledge a year of their lives to national service.

military recruitment efforts include awareness-raising advertisements, both targeted and broad; nonprofits seek to inspire individuals to serve by highlighting the benefits to self and others; and the Federal Government seeks to make best use of its available authorities to increase access to public service careers. While the influence of awareness, aspiration, and access on participation in military, national, and public service is not uniform, policies that seek to create a greater ethos of service should address each factor by capitalizing on opportunities for improvement and offering solutions to existing challenges.

Lack of awareness affects service in many ways. Military service arguably enjoys the most widespread recognition, yet Americans often have skewed or incomplete knowledge of what it means to serve in uniform, leaving them unfamiliar with the full range of career opportunities and benefits available to those who serve. National service, because it is decentralized and struggles to promote a unified brand, goes widely unrecognized. Most Americans are not familiar with the plethora of programs available, particularly through AmeriCorps. And while almost every American interacts in different ways with public servants on a regular basis, many agencies fail to actively recruit. As a result, the Government is perceived as a monolith, and the diverse opportunities it offers are not understood.

Aspiration to serve requires a baseline understanding of available opportunities and their potential benefits. Simply put, Americans unaware of national service programs cannot aspire to serve in them. Similarly, the misperception that most military service members are in combat arms reduces the likelihood that Americans will aspire to serve as military doctors, lawyers, electronic technicians, or human resources managers. And those who denigrate the value of civil servants and what they do for the security and well-being of the Nation, or wrongly assume that every Government employee is linked to political leadership or has a partisan agenda, are not only unlikely to engage in public service themselves but are also discouraging others from aspiring to public service.

Finally, the Commission recognizes that too often when Americans are aware of ways to serve the Nation and aspire to do so, they are turned away because of systemic challenges in accessing service opportunities. The inability to meet eligibility standards in the military, a

demand for national service that far outstrips the supply of funded opportunities, and overly complicated and obstructive governmental hiring processes form significant barriers to service.

The recommendations highlighted below are designed to remove those barriers and improve Americans' awareness of, aspiration to, and access to service. The Commission believes that their adoption will inspire more Americans to serve and enhance pathways to and increase opportunities for service.

## MILITARY SERVICE

### Background

As the Commission considered ways to foster a culture of service across the country, one vital goal was to provide for the continued defense of the Nation through voluntary military service. For nearly five decades, the country has relied on the All-Volunteer Force—a group of individuals willing to raise their hands and volunteer to serve in uniform—to protect and defend American interests. However, current trends in propensity and eligibility endanger the health of the All-Volunteer Force. Civilian and military communities are increasingly isolated from each other, leading to misunderstandings as well as a continued narrowing of



Source: DoD

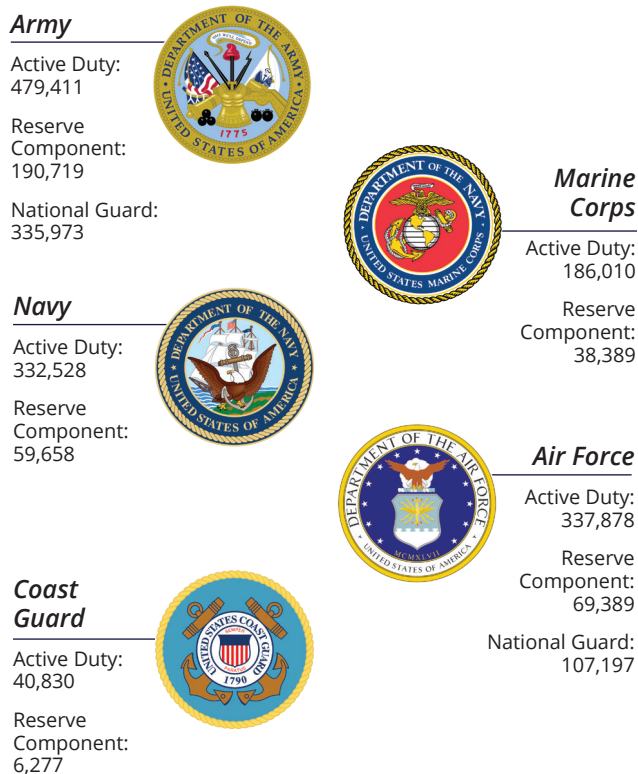
Soldiers await extraction during a live-fire training exercise at Al-Asad Air Base, Iraq.

the population from which participants in the military are drawn. The Commission firmly believes that policy changes designed to increase awareness of the military among a wider population, to encourage greater willingness—or aspiration—to join the Armed Forces, and to improve Americans’ access to service opportunities can drive the cultural shift required to counter these trends. Policy recommendations introduced in this section will enhance the Nation’s ability to attract to the military the qualified personnel—including persons with specialized skills—that are critical to the long-term success of the All-Volunteer Force.

Military service offers valuable benefits not only for American society but also for individual Americans. The Commission heard countless stories from service members emphasizing what they themselves had gained, ranging from educational opportunities to career advancement to the unifying nature of military service. Military service members also develop an important set of life experiences and skills during their term of service, and in fact after leaving the military they tend to earn higher incomes than their civilian counterparts.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, the Commission acknowledges the challenges some current and former service members have identified, such as the pressures felt by their families and the lasting physical and mental costs of their military service. Given the need for and value of military service to the Nation, policymakers should commit to improving the experience for all military service members and veterans.

The 1970 report of the President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, known as the “Gates Commission,” laid out its recommendations on the future of the U.S. military: it argued that “a return to an All-Volunteer Force [would] strengthen our freedoms, remove an inequity now imposed on the expression of the patriotism that has never been lacking among our youth, promote the efficiency of the Armed Forces, and enhance their dignity.”<sup>47</sup> At the same time, however, the Gates Commission expressed concern over the societal effects of a system in which the burdens of military service were not shared broadly.<sup>48</sup> This concern proved prescient, as today a relatively small segment of society serves in the military. Though the United States has been engaged in sustained warfare for nearly two decades, just over 0.5 percent of the U.S. population

**Figure 2: U.S. Military Personnel by Armed Service**



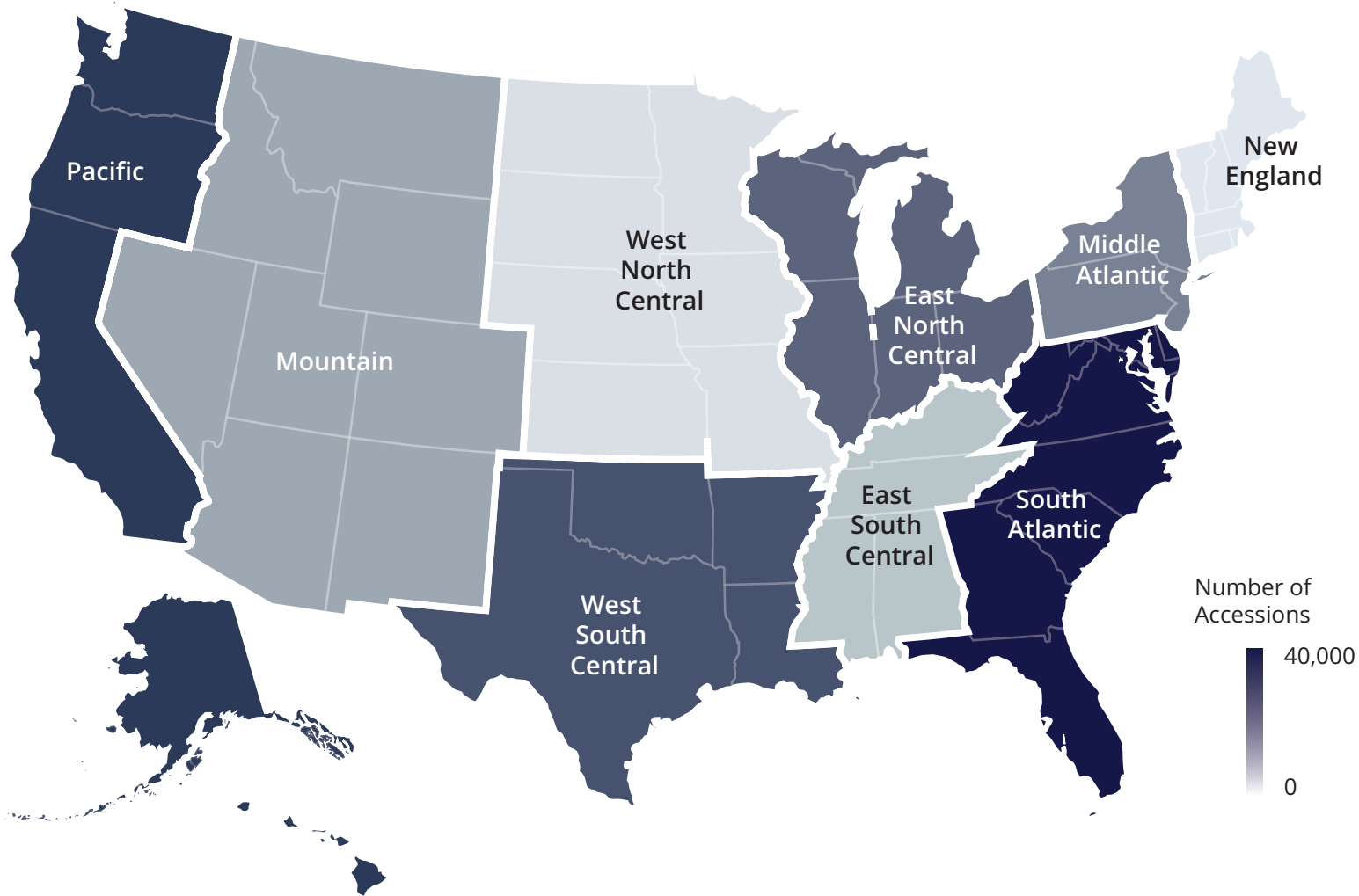
Note: The Space Force was established as a separate armed service in December 2019 and will initially be staffed by U.S. Air Force personnel.

Sources: Various sources.<sup>49</sup>

has served in the active or reserve components at any given time during that period.<sup>50</sup> As Secretary of Defense Robert Gates pointed out in 2010, “No major war in our history has been fought with a smaller percentage of this country’s citizens in uniform full-time”—and as a result, a growing number of Americans feel that service is “something for other people to do.”<sup>51</sup> Moreover, service in the military has effectively become a family business. Veterans today are more than twice as likely as the general public to have a son or daughter who has served or is serving, demonstrating both the significance of military exposure for generating propensity and the small portion of U.S. society participating in military service.<sup>52</sup>



Figure 3: New Active Duty Enlisted Accessions by Census Division, FY 2017



Source: Table B-46, “Non-Prior Service (NPS) Active Component Enlisted Accessions, Quality, and Mean AFQT, FY17,” CNA, accessed December 9, 2019, [http://cna7.cna.org/PopRep/2017/appendixb/b\\_46.html](http://cna7.cna.org/PopRep/2017/appendixb/b_46.html).

*“The civilian-military divide erodes the sense of duty that is critical to the health of our democratic republic, where the most important office is that of the citizen. While the Armed Forces retool for the future, citizens cannot be mere spectators.”*

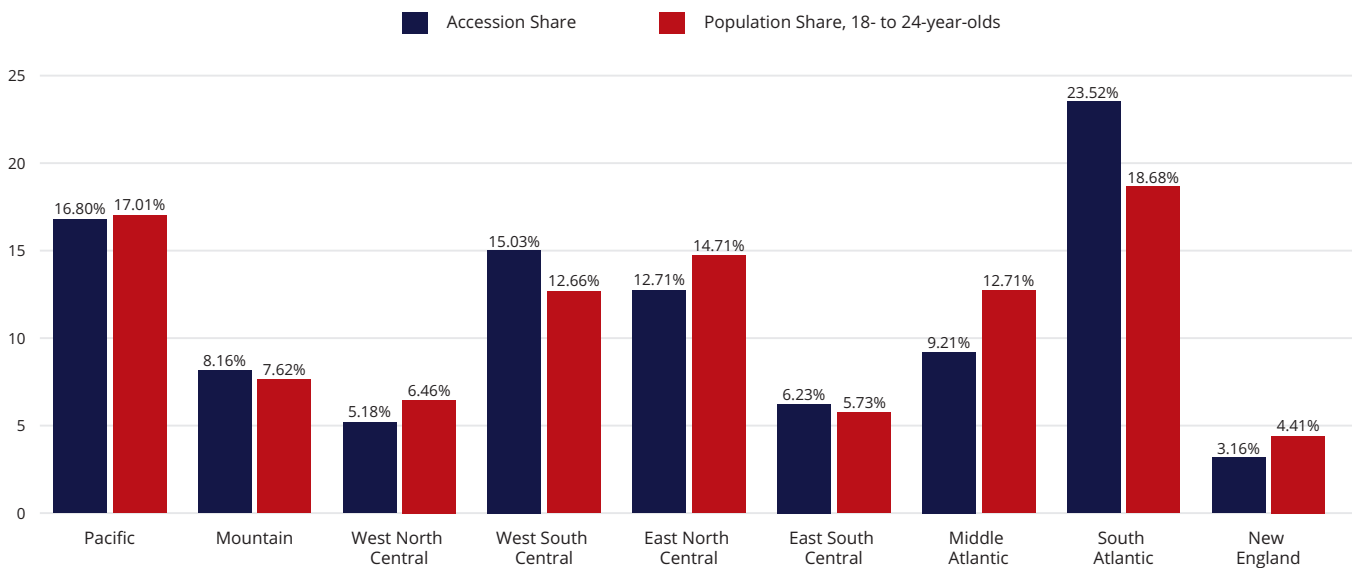
—Karl W. Eikenberry and David M. Kennedy,  
New York Times op-ed, 2013

The frequently cited civil-military divide has specific repercussions for the All-Volunteer Force and American society, especially in light of the significant increase in likelihood of enlistment when individuals engage with service members and veterans.<sup>53</sup> As former Acting Under Secretary of Defense Tony Kurta has noted, the civil-military divide “increasingly impacts our ability to effectively recruit and sustain the force, . . . threaten[ing] our ability to recruit the number of quality youth with the needed skill sets to maintain our



**Figure 3a: Percentage of New Active Duty Enlisted Accessions versus Percentage of U.S. 18- to 24-Year-Old Population, by Census Division, FY 2017**

The South Atlantic and Pacific divisions account for the greatest percentage of new active duty enlisted accessions. They are also the most populous divisions. More than half of the U.S. census divisions produce a share of the new active duty enlisted accessions smaller than their share of the 18- to 24-year-old population; four divisions—the mountain and three southern divisions—produce a larger share.



Note: 'New' refers to personnel with no prior military service.

Source: Table B-46, "Non-Prior Service (NPS) Active Component Enlisted Accessions, Quality, and Mean AFQT, FY17," CNA, accessed December 9, 2019, [http://cna7.cna.org/PopRep/2017/appendixb/b\\_46.html](http://cna7.cna.org/PopRep/2017/appendixb/b_46.html).

advantage over any near-peer competitor.”<sup>54</sup> In fact, in 2018 the Army failed to meet its recruiting goal by 6,500 even after spending an additional \$200 million on bonuses, increasing the use of eligibility waivers, and lowering its goal from 80,000 to 76,500.<sup>55</sup>

Although the general public is far more aware of opportunities for military than for other service, this broad knowledge often lacks depth and, in many cases, accuracy.<sup>56</sup> Many Americans do not know basic facts about the military services, do not understand the

difference between officers and enlisted personnel, and have little comprehension of the range of roles and lifestyles available in military service.

A number of elements play a role in awareness, including public perceptions of military service, recruiting and marketing, media portrayals of military service, the civil-military divide, and youth education. Those who have limited interactions with service members draw their views instead from the dramatized accounts found in television ads and movies—a primary source

of many Americans’ misperceptions of military service.<sup>57</sup> The uneven concentration of military bases and recruiting stations may also contribute to lower awareness across certain geographic regions. For instance, the American South and West are home to many bases and have strong traditions of military service and also furnish a disproportionate share of enlisted military recruits, even when accounting for the regions’ larger overall population.<sup>58</sup>

The lack of familiarity and interaction, particularly in subgroups of the population whose propensity to serve in uniform is already low, is one of the key challenges to boosting that propensity and aspiration—especially since 41 percent of youth have never considered military service.<sup>59</sup> A 2016 Department of Defense (DoD) report on the attitudes of American youth related to the military underscored this challenge, noting that “a significant portion of the youth market is neither willing nor equipped to truly consider whether the military is in line with their aspirations.”<sup>60</sup> C. J. Chivers, a journalist for *The New York Times*, observes that “we have hardwired the vast majority of our population not to worry, not even for a moment, about being called to participate in our country’s wars.”<sup>61</sup>

While there are many drivers of aspiration, military leaders are seriously concerned that propensity

to serve in the military remains low, exhibited in only about 14 percent of youth.<sup>62</sup> The role of influencers—parents, relatives, educators, and others who regularly engage with American youth—is also critical to fostering aspirations to serve; influencers who are knowledgeable about the military are more likely to encourage military service, and veterans are almost twice as likely to recommend service as nonveterans.<sup>63</sup> Those testifying before the Commission also expressed concerns over a disconnect between what younger generations value and how they perceive the military, particularly regarding the treatment of women and LGBTQ individuals.<sup>64</sup>

Even if American youth are aware of and interested in service, in order to access military opportunities, they must be able to show that they are qualified. Today 71 percent of youth ages 17 to 24 cannot join the All-Volunteer Force without a waiver, as they fail to meet eligibility criteria in areas including physical and mental health, grooming standards, criminal records, education and aptitude, and drug use.<sup>65</sup> Current standards for military service often disqualify those from the lowest socioeconomic backgrounds who lack access to quality education, nutrition, and health care. In addition, larger national trends such as increasing obesity rates have an impact on eligibility.

While the recommendations below address the key

**Figure 4: Military Recruiting Market: A Small Share of America’s Youth**



The figure above depicts the Army Marketing Research Group’s estimated proportion of 31.8 million youth that are military eligible, of high academic quality, and indicate a desire to serve. Of the 9.1 million youth who meet initial military accession standards, only 4.4 million also reported getting high academic marks. Separate nationwide surveys of 17- to 24-year-olds indicate an average of 14 percent of youth possess a desire to serve. Thus, the Army Marketing Research Group estimates only 465,000 of youth are eligible, of high academic quality, and interested in military service—the ideal target recruiting audience for the military services.

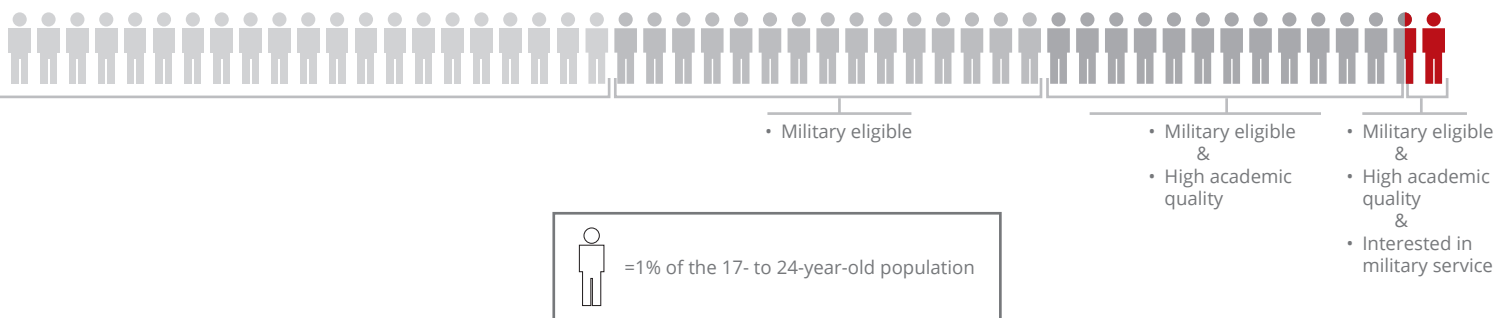
barriers related to awareness, aspiration, and access, the Commission recognizes that fostering a culture of military service is ultimately “tied to the strength of commitment one feels to the Nation and its military institutions.”<sup>66</sup> The Commission therefore urges the Nation’s leaders to continue to prioritize a military that is representative of the Nation it serves and open to all citizens. The Department of Defense “must continue to work to improve the acceptance of military service by all communities as a valued career choice for their sons and daughters” and “create opportunities for all young Americans to be able to visualize themselves serving as part of the All-Volunteer Force in the United States military.”<sup>67</sup>

**Findings and Recommendations**

The Commission finds that the civil-military divide has contributed to many trends that prevent young adults and Americans with critical skills from considering military service. To address this phenomenon, the Commission encourages Congress and the military to improve outreach around the country, increase opportunities for youth to explore service, strengthen military recruiting and marketing, develop educational pathways for military service, and more effectively manage military personnel.

**Improve Military Outreach Around the Country**

The Commission found that few young Americans have more than superficial familiarity with the military, possessing only vague knowledge of the breadth of opportunities available through military service. For example, a 2016 DoD-sponsored survey determined that nearly half of young adults ages 17–35 could not name the four largest branches of the military, and only 17 percent could name all five.<sup>68</sup> Some of this ignorance may be explained by the physical civil-military divide. About one-third of military families live in communities on gated military bases. Due to security measures added in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, these bases have become less accessible to the American people. Opportunities for socializing—schools, child care, sports leagues, and so on—frequently occur on base, so military families’ interactions with those who do not serve in the military are further limited.<sup>69</sup> This trend is particularly troubling because research shows that exposure to the military increases the odds of enlistment.<sup>70</sup> To heighten awareness, the military should work to expose all Americans to military lifestyles and opportunities, by taking steps that include increasing the ability of those not affiliated with the military to visit military environments.



Source: Army Marketing Research Group, presentation to the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, December 14, 2017.

*“The U.S. can increase the propensity for Americans to serve by educating them about all the great opportunities. Make public service, or military service, part of the discussion at high school and college orientation. I was fortunate enough to be from a ‘military family,’ so I was aware of the great opportunities growing up; however, many of my peers had no idea you could be a nurse, engineer, or communications specialist in the military. There’s a huge misperception that everyone in the military shoots people or blows things up, which is simply not true.”*

—Public Comment

Recruitment relies on a more targeted approach to deepening individuals’ understanding of the military. In an austere recruiting environment, the military services seek the most cost-effective allocation of their recruiting resources. Currently, the military tends to focus on recruiting from areas where propensity to join has previously been high. In FY 2016 nearly 40 percent of all new active duty enlisted accessions came from just five States, and 68 percent came from the South and West.<sup>71</sup>

Though efficiency is important when taking on a challenging mission, repetitive recruitment—drawing consistently from high-propensity populations—also has negative effects. Specifically, it limits the potential to reach new and diverse populations and to widen the pool of future recruiting prospects. Given the trends in eligibility for and awareness of military service, the

military will find it increasingly difficult to meet personnel requirements by recruiting primarily in areas of the country with high exposure to the military.

**9: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to increase public understanding of the military, and particularly of the broad spectrum of career opportunities available and represented in military service, by increased outreach to communities.**

**9a. Facilitate military outreach to areas of the country with low propensity.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to increase tours of military bases and facilities; to evaluate access restrictions at military installations in order to allow—to the greatest extent practicable, given security requirements—increased and regular civilian access to military installations; and to increase outreach to community-based cadet and youth programs, including traditional athletics, video gaming clubs, and other youth organizations.

## *Lonnie’s Story*

As a young man just out of high school in a small hometown, I worked as a painter, butcher, and warehouseman, but they were not satisfying to me. One day, my mother suggested that I think about the U.S. Army. I did and spent 39 years serving our country as a soldier before working as a civilian for the Department of the Army at Fort Campbell in Kentucky. I started as an air traffic controller and after four years doing great technical work, I realized that to make it in the Army I would need a degree so I went back to school and then reentered the service. I am proud that I served as an air traffic controller, a safety officer, and a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot. The Army was a great and challenging career for me, and my children experienced other cultures and what life was like outside the United States of America. If I could reset time, I would do it all again.





- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to utilize existing authority to develop recruiting incentives that are targeted to areas with lower rates of propensity and recommends that Congress extend the temporary authority which expires on December 31, 2020,<sup>72</sup> to December 31, 2023.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President and State Governors call on State and local educators to eliminate barriers to access by military members, including recruiters, and to grant the same access to school activities as is afforded to representatives of higher education, technical trade training programs, and similar groups that provide information to students and their families on career opportunities.

These proposals for expanding recruiting presence in low-propensity areas require investments in areas of the country with little exposure to the military. On field trips, school or community groups in middle and high school would travel onto military bases, escorted by a military point of contact, to meet with service members who represent a range of military occupations, thereby developing awareness of military career options.

## **9b. Utilize the National Guard and Reserves to increase local outreach.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to develop pilot programs that utilize Guard and Reserve units—particularly in areas with lower rates of propensity and exposure—to partner with school districts, schools, and community service organizations in order to develop long-term relationships that build understanding, increase exposure, and share information on military service; to promote increased

understanding of the tradition of citizen service to the Nation; and to provide opportunities for mentorship to youth interested in careers with both civilian and military applications.

Along with the military departments investing additional resources in low-propensity areas, National Guard and Reserve units, because of their unique geographic dispersion in communities across the country, have an opportunity to serve a primary role in engaging with local communities and schools. These proposals further empower the National Guard and Reserves to take on this mission while performing their assigned duties.

## **9c. Increase congressional participation in military outreach.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Members of Congress as well as Federal, State, local, and Tribal officials use their offices and goodwill to increase awareness of, and call on youth to consider, military service opportunities. The Commission further recommends that Members of Congress support and participate in military outreach in their districts, including assistance for constituents to apply to the military service academies each year.

Members of Congress can also play a larger part in supporting and participating in military outreach in their districts, including assisting constituents in applying to the service academies each year.<sup>73</sup> By participating more fully in military engagement with local communities, Members of Congress can help ameliorate existing geographic and demographic disparities in military service and divides over how it is viewed.

## ***Increase Opportunities for Youth to Explore Service***

Even among youth who have been exposed to military service, aspiration to join the Armed Forces remains relatively low. Efforts to promote youth aspiration should go beyond tactics to increase exposure, striving to educate and inspire by providing more meaningful opportunities to explore the nuances of military service.

Youth cadet programs across the country provide one means of sparking a desire to serve in the military, as well as helping participants in developing skills, leadership, and confidence. There are currently a range of cadet programs that aim to educate and develop young Americans. The Civil Air Patrol exists as the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, and the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) is a federally administered program aimed at developing citizenship, while programs such as the Sea Cadets and Young Marines are non-Federal entities with informal connections to the military services.

Youth exposure to the military and its ability to expand other employment possibilities and educational prospects can also be increased by promoting the administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Career Exploration Program (ASVAB CEP)—a version of the military's standardized aptitude test that offers career and educational guidance to students.

## THE ASVAB CEP

The ASVAB CEP is a test administered by DoD to help students identify their strengths and postsecondary school and career options.<sup>74</sup> Used since 1992, it highlights student interest areas and aptitudes in more than 1,000 occupations, such as cook, chemist, architect, teacher, lawyer, and librarian. The ASVAB CEP is free and on average takes only 90 minutes to complete, making it a powerful tool for students and schools.

Another challenge confronting efforts to increase military service opportunities for youth is the high rate of ineligibility for service. According to recent estimates, fewer than one-third of 17- to 24-year-olds are currently eligible for military service without a waiver; many are disqualified for medical reasons, such as poor physical fitness and nutrition. The enlistment waiver process is designed to support a more complete review of the applicant, incorporating the views of medical professionals into a more holistic consideration of their talents and abilities. However, between half and three-quarters of disqualified applicants never apply for a waiver.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, the military's current eligibility requirements may exclude a segment of technically minded individuals.<sup>76</sup> Moving forward, DoD should

take additional steps to widely disseminate information on eligibility standards and the waiver process.

## 10: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to expand opportunities for youth to explore military service.

### 10a. Expand and strengthen JROTC and other youth cadet programs.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to develop a basis of allocation for JROTC units that would ensure a fair and equitable distribution of JROTC units in school districts across the United States and recommends that Congress support an increase in JROTC units to no fewer than 6,000 by 2031. The Commission further recommends that Congress expand the JROTC curriculum to include an introduction to relevant national and public service opportunities.
- >> The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense, acting through existing programs, including JROTC, cadet corps, Starbase, and Youth Challenge, partner with educators and community service organizations in providing service-learning opportunities for youth both during the K-12 school year and during summer programs.
- >> The Commission recommends that State Governors and State and local legislators share best practices for academies of leadership. The Commission is aware that several States, such as Kansas, Texas, and Florida, have developed and supported academies of leadership in their middle schools. These citizenship programs have enabled younger Americans to be exposed to and learn leadership skills and to develop leadership qualities at a young age.

Currently, there is at least one JROTC program in each of the 50 States.<sup>77</sup> Southeastern States and urban areas, however, have the greatest concentration of JROTC programs, while Midwestern States, Mountain States, and rural areas have the lowest.<sup>78</sup> By expanding the number of JROTC programs across the country, DoD would expose many more young Americans to its curriculum related to civics and citizenship. In addition, through JROTC, American youth could be exposed to a broader range of service opportunities.

*“JROTC should be more accessible to all interested high schools. I understand it is NOT a recruitment tool but it does INSPIRE service, both civilian and military. Cadets and other students are inspired by the presence of JROTC in high schools. I’ve witnessed it firsthand and the difference it makes in our youth . . . OUR FUTURE. I believe it could be a vital link to help bridge the gap between those who serve and those who do not serve. The process is currently delayed, expensive and not ‘friendly’ for interested high schools.”* —Public Comment

**10b. Encourage administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Career Exploration Program (ASVAB CEP).**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President and the States promote ASVAB CEP administration in schools.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to evaluate the potential applicability of the ASVAB CEP program to national service and Federal public service.

The ASVAB CEP can provide enlistment and career-relevant information to students, highlighting areas of occupational interest and assessing strength in specific skills. The ASVAB CEP is provided free of

charge to schools, making it accessible to a wider population of students than are likely to take commercial standardized tests. Although the test results are oriented toward increasing awareness of military jobs, many of the ASVAB CEP occupations—such as engineer, veterinarian, surgeon, and actor—also exist in the private sector, and thus the results may be applied to other careers and other kinds of service. In 2017, DoD’s Office of People Analytics (OPA) collaborated with O\*Net Online, CareerOneStop, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies (JAMRS) to redesign the ASVAB CEP. This redesign resulted in a career-planning resource that includes information on “college, certifications, apprenticeships, licensure programs, and the military—in one place.”<sup>79</sup> Therefore, the ASVAB CEP may prove to be an invaluable tool for students as they make critical decisions regarding their future, such as whether to serve in the Armed Forces.

Some States, such as Maryland, have proactively passed legislation to offer students the opportunity to take the ASVAB CEP while prohibiting public schools from sharing student test results with military recruiters without permission from a parent or guardian.<sup>80</sup> Even though military recruiters are not guaranteed access to student results, some assert that expanding ASVAB CEP administration would lessen the civil-military divide by increasing youth exposure to military opportunities.<sup>81</sup> Former Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Dr. David Chu recommended broadening the administration of the ASVAB CEP to expose additional students to military service.<sup>82</sup>

**Strengthen Military Recruiting and Marketing**

Each of the military services takes its own approach to recruiting, one that reflects its specific mission and culture. To accomplish their missions, the services establish recruiting stations around the country staffed by career recruiters as well as by service members who are not career recruiters. Because their resources are limited and their end strength fluctuates, the military services often recruit most intensively in areas where they have historically been successful. This approach does little to alleviate existing challenges in recruiting a diverse

population—with strong representation from men and women, from all regions of the United States, and across the socioeconomic spectrum—to military service as they draw on a limited number of groups and indeed families.

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*“We must . . . focus not just on improving the pool of available recruits, but on improving the organization such that that wider pool is interested in serving, the people are used to best advantage, and the organization itself is better at what it does. This means the military will have to become significantly more culturally inclusive to attract the right mix of people, more responsive to the demands of a more highly skilled workforce, and more capable of approaching challenges from multiple perspectives.”*

—Lindsay Cohn, U.S. Naval War College

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Military advertising also boosts propensity to serve and the likelihood of influencers to encourage service, as documented by a 2009 RAND Corporation study on the effectiveness of military advertising.<sup>83</sup> However, advertising efficiency is dependent on timely and predictable appropriations. Uncertain and late passage of annual appropriations for military recruitment advertising prevents the services from competing for desirable timeslots and results in inefficient use of taxpayer dollars.

**11: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President develop policies to better allocate military recruiting and marketing resources for the future.**

**11a. Invest military recruiting resources in underserved markets.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate additional funding for DoD to invest in and provide incentives for existing Hometown Recruiting Programs.

Renewed emphasis on reaching underserved portions of the population would make the Armed Forces more reflective of the Nation, as well as increase the sustainability of the All-Volunteer Force by expanding the markets in which the military recruits. The military has already established one low-cost approach aimed at improving geographic diversity, with each of the services authorizing its own hometown recruiting programs. Hometown recruiting programs allow service members to “return to their hometowns to assist the local recruiters by sharing their military training experiences with family, friends, high school classmates, Future Soldiers, veterans, and community leaders.”<sup>84</sup> Currently, the work of hometown recruiting is usually authorized as permissive temporary duty and occurs at no cost to the Government.

**11b. Update military advertising and marketing for today’s youth.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate multiyear funding for military marketing and advertising.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and subject-matter experts, to conduct a review of the efficacy of legacy advertising and marketing models. The review should identify ways to apply current and future information platforms used by young people and their influencers to convey to young people a more thorough and informed understanding of the opportunities and benefits associated with military service.

Budget instability over the past decade has limited military marketers’ effectiveness in purchasing advertising. Congress’ delays in passing annual appropriations have made it impossible for the military services to determine their annual funding for marketing at the start of the fiscal year, and military marketers often cannot commit resources to campaigns or make timely purchases of products in the commercial advertising cycle.<sup>85</sup> Sustained and long-term funding of marketing—combined with innovative new approaches for today’s media

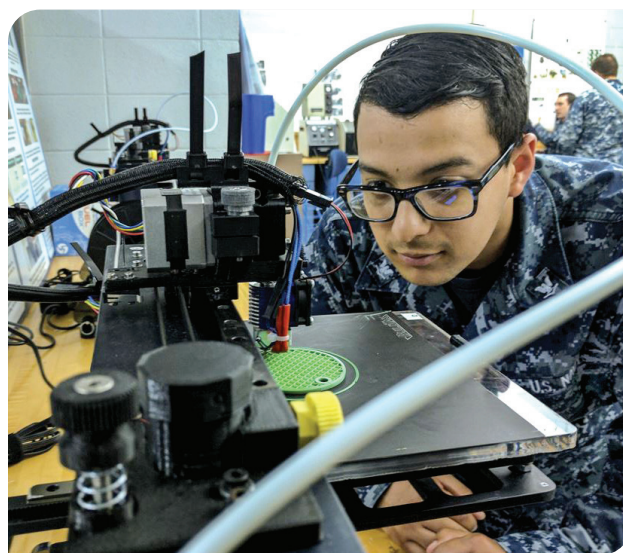


environment—may enable the military services to more efficiently apply advertising resources to increase awareness and propensity to join the military.

**Develop Educational Pathways for Military Service**

Currently, the services access individuals with technical skillsets either by recruiting qualified specialists or by funding education and training concurrent with military service. The military already provides a broad range of educational benefits to military service members; for example, service members are entitled to tuition assistance during their term of service and can pursue higher education using the GI Bill.<sup>86</sup> In a 2018 RAND study, these educational benefits—particularly the GI Bill—were listed as significant motivators for enlisted personnel to join the Army.<sup>87</sup> Yet high school students increasingly view military service as incompatible with postsecondary education and often choose to attend college or vocational school in lieu of joining the military, even when they are interested in serving.<sup>88</sup> Options for countering this trend and inspiring more youth to pursue military service after their postsecondary education include encouraging more active-duty officers to teach at civilian institutions and more civilians to teach at military institutions, and increasing the number of universities that participate in exchange programs with the academies.<sup>89</sup>

The military also faces strong competition from the private sector in attracting and retaining individuals with critical skills, particularly technical talent. Expanding avenues within the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) to specialize in information warfare offers a scalable means to increase cyber competency among officers entering the Armed Forces. The Cyber Leader Development Program (CLDP), developed at the U.S. Military Academy to prepare future cyber officers, offers an easily expandable, off-the-shelf framework.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, the FY 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorized the Secretary of Defense to establish Cyber Institutes at institutions of higher learning for the “development of foundational expertise in critical cyber operational skills for future military and civilian leaders of the Armed Forces and the Department of Defense.”<sup>91</sup> Under this initiative, the Secretary of Defense may establish Cyber Institutes at institutions



Source: U.S. Navy

A Navy sailor examines a 3D printer during a course at Old Dominion University in Virginia.

of higher learning with ROTC programs, with special consideration given to the senior military colleges.<sup>92</sup>

**12: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President expand and improve educational pathways for entering the military.**

**12a. Expand opportunities for educational attainment prior to and during military service.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for the military departments to provide limited tuition grants for pre-service professional degrees, certificates, and certifications in exchange for an enlisted service commitment.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretary of one of the military departments, to run a pilot program establishing a partnership with community colleges and vocational schools that would provide professional degrees, certificates, and certifications through technical education programs.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the military departments fund and apply tuition assistance (TA) in a consistent manner, given the importance of TA to young new service members. The Secretary should consider allowing the military departments to prioritize TA funds to service members who are seeking to complete a degree, certificate, or certification program that leads to a critical skill.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to follow the efforts of the Army, which has developed programs that leverage private-sector certifications for soldiers, reduce transition costs, increase retention, and create a more skilled force.

The uniformed services can develop and expand a series of pathways for providing technical education so that they can recruit and retain individuals with increasingly technical skillsets. In addition, new programs that focus on assisting current and future service members to obtain degrees, certificates, and certifications could provide much needed help in recruitment, retention, and skill development. Participants in the tuition grant program would be required to sign an enlistment contract in exchange for receipt of any tuition funding. If successful, these programs might be replicated for national and public service applicants. Military-sponsored technical credentialing programs would provide additional opportunities for civilian students, military recruits, and current military service members to gain technical education relevant to future national security needs.

## **12b. Strengthen existing platforms for growing digital talent.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of the Army, in coordination with the Army Cyber Institute and U.S. Army Cadet

Command, to continue to expand access to the Cyber Leadership Development Program (CLDP) to Army ROTC cadets across the country, and to work with service cadet commands to facilitate the participation of Navy, Marine, and Air Force ROTC cadets—in addition to Army ROTC cadets—in CLDP.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to continue funding for ROTC cadets to participate in summer programs, internships, and opportunities through CLDP, even if not co-located with the ROTC cadet's university.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding to the newly established Cyber Institutes authorized in the NDAA for FY 2019 and consider expansion to other universities if proof of concept is successful.

As noted, programs like CLDP offer platforms for increasing the level of digital talent in the services. Individual ROTC programs not co-located with the Army Cyber Institute have so far lacked the same level of coordination and opportunity to fully implement the program. In addition, though authorized in the FY 2019 NDAA, recently approved Cyber Institutes have not yet reached their full potential.<sup>93</sup> Expanding access to and funding for these programs will assist the military services as they compete for cyber talent.

## **More Effectively Manage Military Personnel**

Increasing participation in military service requires examining how current practices of managing talent affect both recruiting and retention. Whereas the current military personnel management system was constructed to develop standardized skills and a degree of interchangeability among service members during the Cold War, DoD will increasingly require processes for recruiting advanced specialists and for accommodating civilian career models in order to attract key talent.

Source: U.S. Navy



Sailors in the U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard wait to parade the colors in Washington, DC.

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*“While organizations like the Defense Digital Service and the Defense Innovation Unit have done a tremendous job attracting civilians for short tours of service, this human capability cannot be solely outsourced to contractors or even civilians. We need uniformed members, both officer and enlisted, to combine their tech-nativity with the credibility and authority inherent under Title 10.”*

—Raj Shah,  
former Director of Defense Innovation Unit

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The FY 2019 NDAA provided extensive new authorities for the promotion of military officers to allow more flexibility in personnel management and to “enable access to critical skills.”<sup>94</sup> Though some military leaders have been reluctant to take advantage of

many of these authorities, as they often depart from the standard “up or out” model of personnel management in the military, a few programs have innovated in applying new approaches to personnel management, including the Navy’s Sailor 2025 initiative.<sup>95</sup> In addition, several of the military services are exploring new initiatives to allow more movement between military and civilian careers.

Included in these early initiatives are alternative promotion timelines and the ability to opt out of promotion, as well as opportunities to separate from military service for academic, professional, or personal reasons and then reenter service at a rank reflecting qualifications and experience gained outside the military. Overcoming prevailing culture and longstanding military personnel practices will require support from the highest leadership and the collection of more robust data to appropriately make best use of new authorities.



**13: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to utilize existing personnel tools and resources to more effectively manage military personnel.**

**13a. Utilize existing authorities and opportunities to facilitate a “continuum of service.”**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies and departments of the Federal Government, including DoD and the military departments, through their leadership, to use existing personnel management authorities to facilitate a “continuum of service” that fosters efficient and effective permeability between all components of Government service, and between the Government and the private sector.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Secretaries of each of the military departments to develop a new personnel management structure for recruiting and retaining a specific military occupational specialty, such as cyber or engineering. In developing a new personnel management structure, the military departments should leverage existing authorities and consider how individuals with specific skillsets—such as medical workers, attorneys, and chaplains—are currently managed in order to improve talent management of personnel within the chosen career field.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to use existing authorities to establish warrant officers as an optimal pathway for individuals transitioning into and out of military service, to provide flexibility in compensation, and to retain existing service members who are not interested in pursuing military

command leadership.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to establish permanent billets at Defense Digital Service and similar entities, as opposed to the current short-term temporary duty assignments, to facilitate greater cyber development opportunity and enable promotion boards and service leadership to better recognize the institutional value in such assignments.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies and departments of the Federal Government, including DoD and the military departments, through their leadership, to consider options for allowing and incentivizing individuals in cyber career tracks who leave for the private sector to agree that they can be called back into service when needed, or on a part-time basis.

The military personnel system does not currently allow for a smooth transition between components of service and the private sector, a position that inhibits retention of trained and talented service members. The military services should foster greater permeability with the private sector and take advantage of best practices and untapped talent by adopting more flexible transition mechanisms.

**13b. Collect data on the usage of new authorities and other personnel management tools.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to collect data on the usage of new FY 2019 authorities with regard to recruiting and retaining cyber talent and report that information to Congress, along with identified challenges, additional authority requirements, and future plans for expanded





Source: DoD

New Marines stand in formation at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego.

implementation or justifications as to why such authorities are not appropriate.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to collect more robust individual performance data and administer a standardized exit survey to identify retention challenges, increase transparency, and support the use of new authorities in areas such as merit promotion, lateral entry, and constructive credit.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to provide an annual report to Congress on the use, by military department, of recruitment and retention bonuses paid to individuals in cyber career tracks in order to formulate a better appraisal of the incentive structures necessary for the military to remain competitive in attracting such individuals and ensure that service branches are fully utilizing the incentives at their disposal.

While the military services have begun efforts to manage digital talent, the collection of more robust performance data as well as data regarding the efficacy of the new authorities granted in the FY 2019 NDAA could help overcome institutional and cultural impediments and aid those efforts. The military bureaucracy has historically been reluctant to adopt initiatives that require significant cultural change; instead, action has had to be taken by congressional or executive branch leadership, as in the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act or the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policies. Explicit tracking can hold service leaders accountable and incentivize them to make use of new authorities that run counter to existing cultural practices. Absent such tracking, policymakers cannot determine whether new authorities were ineffective in overcoming recruiting and retention challenges or simply were not fully utilized by service leadership.

## NATIONAL SERVICE

### Background




Hundreds of thousands of Americans participate in national service—individual, community-led, or federally organized projects and partnerships to address the needs of the Nation. National service extends beyond volunteerism in that members commit to a term, typically greater than six months, of sustained and substantive service with an organization while earning a modest living allowance.

Each year, the Federal Government sponsors more than 300,000 national service positions through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the Peace Corps, and other Federal agencies. CNCS’s AmeriCorps programs engage men and women in service each year at various locations across the country, including nonprofits, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based organizations. AmeriCorps consists of three programs: State and National, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA), and National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC). Members of AmeriCorps State and National provide direct service with nonprofit and community groups. AmeriCorps VISTA members help build the capacity of organizations addressing poverty. AmeriCorps NCCC is a team-based, residential program for young adults 18 to 24, who provide short-term surge support to high-impact projects throughout the country. In addition, CNCS’s Senior Corps programs tap the skills, talents, and experience of Americans ages 55 and up in three programs. The Foster Grandparent Program coordinates volunteers who serve as one-on-one tutors and mentors for at-risk youth. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) organizes volunteers to serve in a variety of roles in their community. The Senior Companion Program helps older Americans live with independence and dignity in their own homes. For Americans who desire to serve overseas, the Peace Corps sends volunteers to assist other countries in developing community capabilities and a better understanding of U.S. culture and values.

National service programs are built on partnerships. AmeriCorps ensures that State and local leaders play a key role in deciding where national service resources go. The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 explicitly created partnerships between the Federal Government, States, and nonprofit organizations to connect

public and private resources to community projects. In fact, nearly 80 percent of funding for AmeriCorps State and National is overseen by Governors through appointed State service commissions. These partners generate more than \$1.26 billion annually in outside resources to support national service programs.<sup>6</sup> These resources come from investments from some of the Nation’s biggest companies, small businesses, community foundations, individual donors, and local agencies through matches or in-kind support. Such investments strengthen community impact and supplement taxpayer dollars, helping to make national service a cost-effective strategy to meet local and national needs.

**Figure 5: National Service Program Size**

	<b>AmeriCorps</b>	<b>75,300</b>
	AmeriCorps State & National	65,600
	AmeriCorps VISTA	8,000
	AmeriCorps NCCC	1,700
	<b>Senior Corps</b>	<b>207,100</b>
	RSVP	174,100
	Foster Grandparents	22,400
	Senior Companions	10,600
	<b>Peace Corps</b>	<b>7,300</b>

Sources: CNCS, correspondence to the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, July 2, 2019; and Peace Corps, *The Peace Corps’ Congressional Budget Justification: Fiscal Year 2020* (Washington, DC: Peace Corps, 2019), 17–19, [https://files.peacecorps.gov/documents/open-government/peacecorps\\_cbj\\_2020.pdf](https://files.peacecorps.gov/documents/open-government/peacecorps_cbj_2020.pdf).

Often overlooked, national service has routinely demonstrated its positive impacts and return on investment by improving the lives of those who are being served, by providing much-needed resources for local and nonprofit organizations, and by creating more united, civically engaged communities. Participants in national service can reap substantial benefits from their

service, including better employment prospects, higher wages, achievement of educational goals, and improved health.<sup>97</sup> Communities served benefit not only from improved civic health but also from lower crime rates, improved education outcomes, and attention to unmet needs.<sup>98</sup> National service also works to support veterans and military families with programs designed to help in navigating benefit claim processes, provide mentoring and support when parents are deployed, and offer support services to address health and wellness needs.<sup>99</sup> A 2004 review of national service programs demonstrated that almost universally, the social and economic benefits significantly outweighed costs, such as the expense to Government to run the programs.<sup>100</sup> More recently, a study of the benefits and costs of national service found that the benefits outweigh the costs by billions of dollars.<sup>101</sup> And though social benefits are difficult to quantify financially, it is clear that when individuals serve alongside those who may not look, worship, speak, or think like them, community ties are strengthened and civic health improves.<sup>102</sup>

Despite the proven benefits of national service, most Americans are unaware of what national service is, unfamiliar with the opportunities to serve, and unable to anticipate how a term of service could benefit their future plans. Nearly a third of millennials state that they are unaware of existing national service opportunities, in part because of their limited exposure to participants in national service, the decentralized nature of national service marketing, and differences in branding and recruiting across programs.<sup>103</sup> Even Americans who want to take action in their communities might not consider national service if they are unsure and unaware of what it is, how they can contribute, and where to find opportunities.

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*“Expanding national service opportunities for young Americans strengthens our communities, broadens the worldview of our next generation of American leaders, and instills in our young men and women a sense of pride in themselves and their country that can only be gained through giving back.”*

—Senator Jack Reed, Rhode Island

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### WHAT IS THE EDWARD M. KENNEDY SERVE AMERICA ACT?

Enacted in 2009 with strong bipartisan support, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act:

- > Reauthorized and expanded national service programs administered by CNCS.<sup>104</sup> It set a goal of increasing the number of annual AmeriCorps positions from 75,000 to 250,000 by 2017 and authorized new programs, including the Social Innovation Fund, Summer of Service, and Semester of Service.
- > Expanded age and income eligibility for the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs, and increased the amount of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to match the Pell Grant.
- > Focused national service programs on six national priorities and required grantees to demonstrate effectiveness by using standardized performance measures to improve community impact.
- > Encouraged innovation in the nonprofit sector and strengthened management and accountability processes.<sup>105</sup>

While post-service awards are intended, in part, to attract new national service participants, the living allowance and other benefits received during their service term are meant to help meet members’ cost-of-living expenses. The living allowance is intentionally modest, but often it is so low that members cannot sustain themselves without outside assistance during their service term, and many enroll in public assistance programs just to make ends meet. For example, in 2018—the most recent year for which data is available—the average budgeted living allowance for full-time AmeriCorps State and National members was \$15,370, only 23 percent above the national poverty line for an individual.<sup>106</sup> The Commission repeatedly heard from both program managers and participants that the low stipend amount discourages those who aspire to pursue national service opportunities and hinders those without outside assistance from participating. Limitations on the post-service Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (Segal



## HOW SERVICE CAN MEET THE NEEDS OF THE NATION

Congress charged the Commission with developing recommendations about service to meet critical needs of the Nation. The Commission therefore devoted significant efforts to understanding these needs, which span a wide range of issues, including education, economic opportunity, health care, and disaster preparedness and response. As the needs of the Nation continue to evolve, service has the ability to respond swiftly and to empower individuals across the country to support their fellow Americans. Below is just a glimpse of the transformational potential of service.

### Education

National service is a proven, cost-effective means to meet some of the Nation's most critical educational needs. Over 90,000 Senior Corps volunteers and AmeriCorps members already provide in-school and after-school support to students, serving in nearly 12,000 schools nationwide.<sup>107</sup> Whether as part of Teach For America, City Year, or Foster Grandparents, national service programs have been able to staff classrooms in dire need of teachers, expand the pipeline to the teaching profession, and send diverse volunteers to diverse communities. As the Nation faces an acute teacher shortage, service has the potential to provide a steady supply of dedicated volunteers to help fill these critical roles—particularly in low-income communities, which traditionally struggle to recruit new teachers.<sup>108</sup> In addition, national service programs can help address the teaching profession's lack of diversity by recruiting from communities across the country.<sup>109</sup> Indeed, national service programs such as City Year have made a concerted effort to engage more minority volunteers; as a result, 56.1 percent of corps members identify as people of color, providing many students with role models who share their cultural background.<sup>110</sup>

### Economic Opportunity

National service programs can effectively promote economic opportunity across the Nation by providing an array of antipoverty measures and contributing to workforce, community, and small business development. In FY 2017, AmeriCorps VISTA programs provided support services to over 300,000 disadvantaged youth; one program known as NeighborWorks raised more than \$2 million to connect over 2,000 economically disadvantaged individuals to financial literacy services and over 300 economically disadvantaged individuals to job training.<sup>111</sup> Given that more than 4.6 million youth are disconnected from employment opportunities, national service programs can significantly enhance workforce development opportunities and contribute to the overall health of the Nation's economy.<sup>112</sup> A 2010 report by America's Service Commissions and Innovations in Civic Participation highlighted 52 AmeriCorps programs with job training success stories.<sup>113</sup> The need to assist Americans in these areas continues to rise, and national service programs could be part of a holistic solution to improve the economic condition of Americans across the Nation. Moreover, studies suggest that participation in national service programs provides significant benefits to the participants themselves, notably increasing participants' chances of securing long-term employment through skill development and certifications that are fundamental to the future economy.<sup>114</sup>

### Health Care and Long-Term Care Needs

The Federal Government currently sponsors a number of national service programs that help to address health care and long-term care needs in rural areas and areas with underserved populations—and the burgeoning population of older Americans highlights the critical need to expand such programs. The share of Americans older than 65 will soon exceed one in five,<sup>115</sup> creating even more need for primary care physicians, medical specialists, nurses,



and caregivers. Research examining health care challenges in the United States suggests that service could help mitigate access-related issues and critical public health challenges.\* For instance, families that cannot afford nursing homes or prefer to provide family care cost employers an estimated \$29 billion per year in lost productivity.<sup>116</sup> Organizations such as Senior Companions and Partners in Care can offset this cost by providing in-home services that enable older Americans to continue aging in place, improving both their quality of life and their access to care. The potential ability of service to alleviate many of the health care challenges facing families throughout the Nation—both through existing programs and new programs that might enable skilled health care workers to contribute their time and talents—is immeasurable.

### Environmental Conservation

National service can provide low-cost methods to address a range of environmental conservation issues, from highly localized projects that reduce excess heat and air pollution in urban areas through tree planting and rooftop gardens to broader efforts that lessen the impact of rising sea levels and devastating storm surges through coastal mangrove rehabilitation. Between 1972 and 2017, the Forest Service benefited from three million volunteers who devoted 131.2 million hours of their time, providing \$1.7 billion in value. In FY 2018 alone, Forest Service volunteers did work equivalent to that of 2,885 full-time employees—a \$128 million value.<sup>117</sup> Despite this work, the Nation faces significant maintenance backlogs across

all Federal lands that will require a more sustained commitment to service. The National Park System, for example, faces a deferred maintenance backlog estimated at \$11 billion.<sup>118</sup> In addition, service can particularly help rural communities that suffer from crop and livestock losses caused by flood and drought conditions. Service programs such as Rural Action's Ohio Stream Restore Corps, which hosts 31 subprograms that provide natural resource restoration throughout Appalachian Ohio, offer an example of the impact national service can have throughout the Nation.<sup>119</sup>

### Disaster Preparedness and Recovery

Natural disaster preparedness, response, and recovery are tasks faced by communities across the United States, as natural disasters have increasingly far-reaching and damaging impacts. Service plays a key role in each of these areas, particularly as time and personnel are two essential yet finite resources during a disaster and in the months of recovery that follow. At present, basic tasks such as debris removal may take weeks or months longer than necessary because of personnel shortages. For instance, in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey—a disaster that in August 2017 affected 13 million people and damaged over 200,000 homes—Habitat for Humanity delivered 7,460 disaster relief and recovery services, completed 293 construction projects, and funded 243 loans to homeowners by July 2018.<sup>120</sup> National service could continue to play a significant role in bringing motivated service members to complete disaster preparedness and recovery tasks, freeing trained personnel to focus on other critical jobs. Programs such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Surge Capacity Force, whose volunteers are deployed to disaster sites for up to three months, and FEMA Corps, which leverages volunteers for ten-month terms, exemplify the value of national service in disaster recovery and response.

\* Many public health challenges would be tackled best by policy changes, which are more the province of agencies, legislatures, and advocacy groups than of those in service. For example, the creation of exchanges that facilitate coordination of care and sharing of clinical information between VA and non-VA health care providers could significantly improve access to care for rural veterans. See Karen B. Pearson et al., *Health Information Exchange: A Strategy for Improving Access for Rural Veterans in the Maine Flex Rural Veterans Health Access Program* (Portland, ME: Maine Rural Health Research Center, May 2016), <https://muskie.usm.maine.edu/Publications/rural/Maine-Rural-Veterans-Health-Access-HIT-Strategies.pdf>.

Award) also hamper its ability to act as a strong incentive to serve. While it provides AmeriCorps alumni the equivalent of a Pell Grant—\$6,195 for the 2019–2020 academic year, which can be used for college tuition or to pay down student loan debt—it covers only 60 percent of the average cost of tuition at an in-state school and is subject to Federal and State taxes.<sup>121</sup>

In addition to these challenges, many are unable to act on their wish to serve because there simply are not enough positions available. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act authorized an expansion of AmeriCorps positions to 250,000, but Congress has not appropriated funds to enable this growth. Indeed, funding for existing programs is not secure, and as a result, demand for national service positions outstrips a stagnant supply. In this situation, national service programs and advocates devote significant time and energy to defending the status quo rather than to expanding service opportunities to more Americans.

The Commission’s recommendations are designed to address national service’s structural challenges in both the short and long term. In the short term, the Commission aims to increase awareness of national service and build more effective pathways to service opportunities by improving and expanding the national service system. Enhancing public awareness will not only provide more information to people looking to make a difference but will also more widely disseminate examples of service in the community, inspiring more people to serve. The Commission’s recommendations are also intended to improve partnerships and collaboration through service between government agencies, private and nonprofit organizations, and their communities.

In the long term, the Commission’s recommendations seek to build a service infrastructure that can support a million Americans in national service annually by 2031 through the expansion of existing service models and the creation of new models. This goal is both feasible, because enough untapped aspiration exists to fill these positions, and desirable, because a culture of service will strengthen the bonds between Americans and address unmet needs in communities across the Nation. The Commission believes that the Nation is ready and—as it has learned from conversations with experts, business leaders, service executives, national service members and

alumni, and members of the public—eager for a dramatic expansion of national service opportunities across the country. The Commission envisions a future in which its recommendations have successfully cultivated a culture of service to country, and “How have you served?” has become a common refrain in America.

## Findings and Recommendations

The Commission identified several critical ways in which policy change can improve awareness of, and aspiration and access to, national service. Specifically, the following policy recommendations are designed to cultivate universal awareness and improve recruitment; restructure the value, flexibility, and use of service benefits; restructure Senior Corps; expand opportunities; explore new models; increase private-sector investment; and reimagine public-sector coordination. CNCS, as an institution fundamental to coordinating and supporting national service efforts across the country, will have a direct role in executing many of these recommendations to strengthen and grow national service. The Commission is aware of deficiencies cited in recent audits of CNCS and recognizes the steps CNCS is taking to address these shortcomings, such as its ongoing efforts through its Transformation and Sustainability Plan to overhaul its grant-making system, strengthen its financial management and information technology practices, create new intergovernmental agreements to bolster its human resources and accounting functions, and improve its background check processes.<sup>122</sup> The Commission believes a combination of its recommendations and the full implementation of CNCS’s Transformation and Sustainability Plan will help unlock the full potential of national service in America.

### *Cultivate Universal Awareness and Improve Recruitment*

The lack of public awareness about national service is one of the most intractable barriers to expanding and promoting greater investment in national service. It has several sources, including the absence of a formal definition of service, decentralized branding practices, and limited public exposure to national service members and opportunities to serve. The phrase “national service” has no universally accepted definition in the United States, and it can evoke disparate images, ranging



Source: Peace Corps



A Peace Corps Volunteer teaches English in Paraguay.

from volunteerism to specific service opportunities to mandatory military obligation. In addition, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps have decentralized marketing and branding strategies that rely on nongovernmental partners with varying capabilities, while CNCS has struggled to enforce compliance with branding requirements, making it difficult for the public to differentiate the programs under its umbrella.

*“One powerful way to strengthen our democracy is to ask new generations of Americans to work together through a year of national service to help solve the most persistent needs facing our communities and our country.”*

—AnnMaura Connolly,  
*Voices for National Service*

CNCS is charged with promoting national service in America, but it has yet to develop and implement a national strategy to do so—primarily because of its limited budget. One option is to establish and make full use of systemic policies that encourage or require leaders of military, national, and public service to work together on recruitment and marketing initiatives. Conversations with and testimony by military leaders revealed an appetite for crossover recruiting efforts, so long as those activities advance their mission and do

not interfere with existing recruitment. Military service recruiters could benefit from greater awareness of national service opportunities across the Nation as well as more frequent interaction with national service alumni, many of whom are interested in continuing their service.<sup>123</sup> According to the Peace Corps’ leadership, military service or AmeriCorps participation is frequently taken into consideration when Peace Corps applicants are evaluated. CNCS and the Peace Corps welcome the recruitment and inclusion of military veterans in service, but both have struggled to attract veterans to their programs.

**14: The Commission recommends that the President direct all agencies and departments to work toward increasing public familiarity with national service opportunities, promote cross-service marketing and recruitment efforts, and expand pathways for those who serve to continue their service.**

**14a. Launch a public awareness campaign for national service.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding for a public awareness campaign to educate key influencers of youth, including parents, grandparents, teachers, guidance counselors, clergy, and coaches, so that they can inform students about the opportunities for and impacts of national service.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to implement a national program to recognize institutions of higher education that champion service and service alumni on campus.

A public awareness campaign will educate young people and their influencers by highlighting the ways in which people can join national service, the variety of areas on which national service focuses, and the benefits that service can provide to participants. Such a campaign will better equip these influencers to guide young adults regarding how service could benefit their lives.

Institutions of higher education can be powerful partners in creating universal awareness of and aspiration for service by encouraging service before college. Highlighting institutions of higher education that champion service and service alumni on campus will promote the idea that service is valued and may lead to more extensive support for national service by high schools. Some colleges and universities actively promote national service alumni and opportunities on campus, but more may do so if they could earn a national recognition award for their commitment to service. There is at present no strategy to reward those institutions that go above and beyond in demonstrating how they value service members. By recognizing schools that incentivize service, national service organizations can create active partnerships with institutions of higher education to promote a culture of service.

In addition to these recommendations, the Commission recognizes and supports CNCS's ongoing effort to improve common and unified AmeriCorps and Senior Corps branding requirements in order to ensure consistency across all AmeriCorps and Senior Corps promotional materials, service uniforms, and service opportunity announcements.

### ***Restructure the Value, Flexibility, and Use of Service Benefits***

National service relies on Americans who dedicate their time, talents, and energy to the public good and to community causes. However, the benefits provided to service members do not reflect the value national service provides to the Nation, and do little to attract new participants or sustain members. The poverty-level compensation and the relatively inflexible benefits provided to service members leave an impression that the Nation places little value on service and provides shaky ground upon which to build propensity to serve.

The current value of the living allowance creates a particularly significant barrier and prevents some from serving despite their interest. As noted above, the current average living allowance for full-time AmeriCorps State and National members is just above the 2019 Federal

*The current average living allowance for full-time AmeriCorps State and National members is just above the 2019 Federal poverty line for a household of one (\$12,490).*

poverty line for a household of one (\$12,490).<sup>124</sup> Many participants therefore rely on outside financial help, often from family, while others apply to poverty assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to make ends meet.

Senior Corps' Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs offer low-income older Americans a small stipend to cover expenses related to their service. These stipends are paid at an hourly rate, and volunteers are eligible to receive other assistance such as automobile insurance and reimbursement for transportation and meals. The Senior Companion Program, like the Foster Grandparent Program, requires volunteers to be age 55 or older and to have an income below 200 percent of the poverty line. Volunteers in these programs receive similar benefits. In 1978 the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Program stipends were set to \$2.00 an hour, approximately 75.5 percent of the Federal minimum wage of \$2.65.<sup>125</sup> As of 2019, the Foster Grandparent Program and Senior Companion Program volunteers earn an hourly stipend of \$2.65 for their service,<sup>126</sup> which is only 36.5 percent of the current Federal minimum wage.

In addition to compensation, post-service awards play an important role in attracting new participants to national service. The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 established the Segal Award as the primary Federal education benefit for members who complete a term of service in any of the three AmeriCorps programs. All AmeriCorps alumni are eligible for a Segal Award, and the VISTA program offers their members the option of receiving a discounted cash payout instead. The value of the Segal Award is tied to the value of the Pell Grant (\$6,195 for the 2019–2020 academic year). The award can be used toward college tuition, student loans, or fees for vocational training at institutions of higher education and vocational schools that qualify under the U.S. Department of Education's Title IV student aid program. Seventy-eight percent of national service alumni use the Segal Award to pay for college or technical training or to repay student loans.<sup>127</sup>

However, unlike most Federal education awards—including Pell Grants, benefits offered through the



Post-9/11 GI Bill, and Fulbright scholarships—the Segal Award is treated as income by the Internal Revenue Service and subject to taxation when used by alumni for tuition, student loan repayment, or both. AmeriCorps alumni do not receive the award themselves; rather, it is sent directly to the institution of higher education or to the student loan provider. CNCS provides information to members and alumni to inform them of these taxation requirements, though the Commission learned from conversations with alumni that some remained unaware of the award’s taxability until after they attempted to use it and that others who did know of it were discouraged from using the award at all.

Commissioners also heard from national service alumni about difficulties they have faced in finding affordable housing or meeting other basic needs; unfortunately, CNCS cannot accurately assess members’ financial hardships, because it lacks both systematically collected data on income and self-reports on financial decisions made by members who are serving. CNCS currently collects data primarily through AmeriCorps applications, enrollments, and the exit surveys given at the end of a member’s service commitment. The application asks potential members to provide their demographic data but seeks no information related to socioeconomic status. In addition, member applications are provided by CNCS for AmeriCorps VISTA and NCCC positions, but many AmeriCorps member organizations have their own application processes and questions. The exit survey assesses areas that include the training and activities performed by the member, the member’s satisfaction with their experience, and political engagement and social cohesion.

**15: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take actions to improve benefits to national service participants.**

**15a. Increase national service living allowances.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President and Congress encourage the CEO of CNCS and heads of grantee organizations in the AmeriCorps State and

National program to exercise their full authorities to increase the living allowances for members and provide adequate cost-of-living and geographic adjustments to those living allowances, and that Congress accordingly appropriate funds.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress eliminate the Senior Corps’ maximum stipend restriction and appropriate funds to increase the stipend that volunteers receive to at least 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage.

The AmeriCorps State and National living allowance is meant to cover members’ basic cost-of-living expenses during their term of service, but a body of evidence reveals that the living allowance falls short—and that shortfall causes a substantial barrier to participation in national service. Although the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs are both intended to help alleviate poverty for older Americans, they provide volunteers only a small fraction of the Federal minimum wage. Increasing these allowances will make these programs accessible to a wider population and reduce members’ dependency on social safety net programs.

**15b. Improve the value and flexibility of the Segal Award.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude the Segal Award from gross income, thereby eliminating Federal taxation of the award.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress eliminate the provisions anchoring the Segal Award to the Pell Grant and appropriate funds to increase the overall value of the Segal Award.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress allow all AmeriCorps alumni to opt in to receive a discounted end-of-service cash stipend in lieu of the Segal Award.

### *Jim's Story*

While a student at Vanderbilt University, I participated in volunteer activities and service-learning experiences that sparked my desire to do something for the greater good. After graduating in 1993, I decided to get involved in volunteerism and service instead of pursuing a career in anthropology or computer science, which I had studied. However, I did not know what opportunities were available besides the Peace Corps, so I took a temporary job while looking for something more meaningful. The next summer a friend told me about a new national service program called AmeriCorps that was starting in Nashville. It did not take much convincing for me to decide that AmeriCorps was the service I had been waiting for. As a member of the first class of AmeriCorps, I dedicated a year to serving low-income senior citizens through the TenneSenior Service Corps. Traveling throughout thirteen counties in Middle Tennessee holding health fairs at senior citizen centers, we routinely found seniors with dangerously high blood pressure, blood glucose, or cholesterol, many of whom had not seen a doctor in years. We also provided minor in-home service projects for low-income senior citizens in the region such as repairing rotted floorboards on a porch or painting a house for the first time in years. These things would have gone undone if not for our AmeriCorps program. Despite the financial hardship caused by the small living allowance, my AmeriCorps service was so rewarding that it led me to dedicate my career to national service.



>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the CEO of CNCS to expand the usability of the Segal Award beyond Title IV schools to include the same types of training and assistance programs authorized in the Post-9/11 GI Bill for all AmeriCorps alumni, not just veteran AmeriCorps alumni.

Unlike other scholarships and Federal awards, the Segal Award is taxed as income when used, resulting in tax burdens for national service alumni. Compounding this issue, the Segal Award cannot cover the average tuition for a full academic year at a public university. Taken together, these two problems drastically reduce the effectiveness of the education award in helping national service alumni to attain more schooling. In addition, the taxation of the Segal Award leads to disgruntlement among those who are best positioned to be advocates for national service: alumni. The Commission believes that members who participate in a full term of national service deserve an award that covers the full cost of a year of in-state schooling at a public institution.

At the same time, the Commission recognizes that the Segal Award has limited value for those without student loans or any plans to pursue additional education after their term of service. Flexibility could be added to ensure that members are not excluded from one of the main benefits of AmeriCorps service. Allowing all members the option of taking a discounted cash payment in lieu of the Segal Award will make national service more attractive to a wider range of people.

Due to restrictions included in annual appropriations bills, most AmeriCorps members cannot use the Segal Award to pursue training and assistance programs outside a limited set of institutions; Congress should ease this restriction. These changes, coupled with an increased Segal Award, would open the door more widely to continued education for national service alumni.

#### **15c. Expand national service incentives through institutions of higher education.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to work with the American Association of

State Colleges and Universities and the National Governors Association to encourage members to offer in-state tuition rates to all national service alumni.

- >> The Commission encourages all State Governors and State legislatures to require public institutions of higher education to offer all national service alumni and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) application fee waivers and/or course credit incentives in recognition of service experience.

Even though postsecondary education benefits are frequently advertised as an incentive for participation in national service, too few institutions of higher education assist in making their offerings affordable for national service alumni. The provision of fee waivers, matching funds, course credits, and other incentives for national service alumni would lower the costs associated with earning postsecondary degrees. Reducing these costs, in tandem with other incentives offered as part of a service term, would boost Americans' ability to pursue higher education and, later, find employment.

**15d. Allow for greater transferability of the Segal Award.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the CEO of CNCS to allow all AmeriCorps alumni who entered service over the age of 55 to transfer their Segal Award to a family member or legally recognized dependent.

Current statutory guidelines allow AmeriCorps State and National members—but not VISTA members—to transfer the Segal Award to a member's children, stepchildren, foster children, grandchildren, or step-grandchildren. Loosening the restriction on transferability would make the award more attractive and useful to members over the age of 55 and would expand access to higher education for more Americans. Opening this benefit to more AmeriCorps alumni would also promote parity of benefits across programs.

**15e. Incorporate a more flexible benefits compensation model into AmeriCorps.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to study whether a restructuring of the current benefits package would contribute to breaking down barriers to service and create greater incentives to pursue service opportunities.
- >> The Commission encourages the President to direct the CEO of CNCS to ease the restrictions on the AmeriCorps child care allowance program that prohibit young parents from receiving any additional child care assistance, even from their parents, during service, as well as the AmeriCorps child care eligibility requirements that restrict the amount of income a member can earn and the amount of family assistance a member can receive.

Current rules for eligibility to receive AmeriCorps' child care allowance are very restrictive. Potential members, particularly low-income single parents, would have a greater incentive to serve if they could receive assistance for child care from informal networks to supplement the child care benefits offered by AmeriCorps. A more flexible benefit plan would also enable members to customize their benefits package to best suit their needs.

**15f. Collect member socioeconomic and demographic data.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President encourage the CEO of CNCS to direct the heads of AmeriCorps member organizations to collect socioeconomic and demographic data during the member application process, not as a basis for selecting members but rather as a way of better understanding the challenges facing national service members, and to report the results to the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.

CNCS does not collect data on members' pre-service characteristics, use of social safety net programs, and challenges experienced during a member's service term. Policymakers therefore rely on secondary and anecdotal sources of data to evaluate the success of policy changes. Because a significant number of AmeriCorps grantees do not use the standard application, and many members do not complete the exit survey, gaps in data exist. Because member exit surveys do not capture information about those who exit their service term early owing to hardship, conclusions reached from the examination of exit survey results may be biased. A revised and more widely used application that includes socioeconomic questions and a new or more frequently administered member survey might also be of use to CNCS in evaluating efforts to improve the national service experience.

**15g. Issue all national service members a completion of service certificate.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to provide individuals completing any federally sponsored national service a record of completion that would include information on training received and certifications/licenses earned, as well as allow service members to authorize CNCS to provide their contact information to other service organizations and Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments for the purpose of learning about additional service and employment opportunities.

A completion of service certificate would enable national service members to have an officially recognized record of their accomplishments during their service term. More expansive than the current letter provided by CNCS, this certificate would be similar to DoD's DD-214 form and would build on the description of service created by the Peace Corps for RPCVs. It would be useful for a variety of purposes, including applications for jobs and for admission to institutions of higher education.

**Restructure Senior Corps**

CNCS solicits RSVP grant proposals from eligible organizations through a competitive grant process, and CNCS awards a single grant per geographic area. Currently, organizations interested in offering Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion Programs can apply for grant funding only after an incumbent grantee relinquishes its grant. Program incumbents enjoy three-year grant awards, with an option to enter into another three-year grant for a total of six years of funding before they must fully reapply for the grant. In the FY 2018 Foster Grandparent Program grant competition, only six States participating in the program had open geographic service areas; for the Senior Companion Program, only three States had open geographic service areas. CNCS does not fund more than one RSVP program in the same region, though the grant allows for open competition.

**16: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps necessary to improve the Senior Corps grant process and increase the geographic diversity of Senior Corps programs in order to expand the number of service opportunities available to seniors.**

**16a. Restructure the Foster Grandparent Program and Senior Companion Program as competitive grants.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress restructure the Senior Corps Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs as competitive grant models.

Restructuring the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs as competitive grants would reduce stagnancy in Senior Corps programming and allow the best programs to rise to the top. The requirements for the competitive grant should be established by the CEO of CNCS, with some conditions set by Congress to ensure oversight and accountability.



**16b. Increase geographic diversity of Senior Corps programs.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress provide the CEO of CNCS with all appropriate authorities, and the President provide the CEO of CNCS with all appropriate direction, to preserve geographic coverage of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) while also creating flexibility for growth.

CNCS’s ability to expand Senior Corps’ RSVP program is in question because current law limits the number of grants that can be issued in a given geographic region at one time. Congressional and executive action would ensure that Senior Corps has the ability to fund more than one program in underserved communities.

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*“. . . 10,000 ‘Baby Boomers’ retire every day and will do so for the next 11 years. This cohort of more than 40 million people represents a source of experience, knowledge, and expertise that we desperately need to tap to improve our communities, our schools, and our health care, among other problems.”*

—Betty Ruth,  
National Association of RSVP Directors

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**Expand Opportunities**

Since its inception, national service has had diversity as an aspirational goal, but for a myriad of reasons reaching geographically, demographically, and socio-economically diverse communities has been difficult. The Commission heard frequently from representatives of underserved populations—including opportunity youth, Tribal members, rural residents, and Americans with disabilities—about the challenges and opportunities for them to more freely engage in service.

For example, there are 4.5 million opportunity youth, defined as young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither enrolled in school nor employed.<sup>128</sup> These disconnected youth are often experiencing challenges such as homelessness, foster care,



Source: CNCS

Senior Corps volunteers and military veterans engage in Mystic, Connecticut.

poverty, and involvement in criminal justice systems and could benefit greatly from national service opportunities.<sup>129</sup> Programs wishing to reach opportunity youth and Tribal communities often provide wraparound services such as onsite food pantries and transportation vouchers, but these forms of assistance are not required or supported by CNCS. At the same time, the greater scarcity of social resources and high cost of transportation increase the relative cost of operating service programs in rural areas.<sup>130</sup> Given the requirement to match funding, national service opportunities are often difficult for small, rural organizations to support.

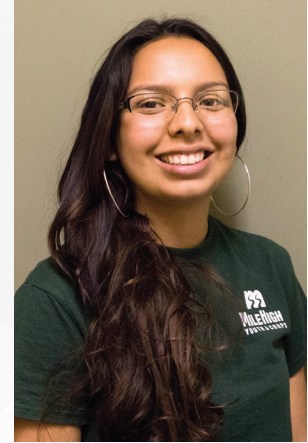
**17:** **The Commission recommends that the President direct CNCS to expand social, educational, and economic opportunities, especially for underserved populations, through participation in national service programs.**

**17a. Expand existing national service programs targeting diverse populations.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding to double by 2031 the number of opportunities in

### *Pearl's Story*

I came to the Mile High Youth Corps (MHYC) YouthBuild AmeriCorps program in Denver, Colorado, in hopes of turning my life around. I dropped out of high school at 14 and ran away from home. After hearing YouthBuild AmeriCorps members speak about the differences they were making in their communities, I applied to MHYC and began my service in February 2018. I dedicated my time in the program to earning my high school equivalency, Nurse's Aide certificate, and Segal Award. By working hard and earning independent service hours at food banks, community gardens, hospitals, and nonprofits on the weekend, I reached those goals nearly three months early. I did this while upholding my responsibilities within the program to provide health and wellness services to low-income Denver residents. I then enrolled in college with a focus on nursing. I plan on being the first person in my family to obtain a bachelor's degree. My experience was life changing. Since completing my service term, I continue to be involved with my YouthBuild program by serving on the MHYC Alumni Council and was recognized as an emerging leader by YouthBuild USA. AmeriCorps gave me the confidence I needed to begin acting on the issues I want to change. I was able to turn everything I had been through into something worth living for.



existing national service programs that engage opportunity youth and Tribal communities, including YouthBuild, run by the Department of Labor (DOL); the Youth Conservation Corps, run by the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior; and the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to provide service opportunities for individuals with diverse abilities, such as Americans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, so that they may participate in and benefit from national service.

National service organizations continue to find it challenging to provide services and access to service opportunities to diverse and underrepresented populations. Every effort should be made to incorporate diverse populations into goals to expand national service, thereby ensuring that service is open to all people. Overlooking certain populations undercuts the goals of national service and reduces the benefits that it affords.

#### **17b. Reduce hardship in the provision of wraparound services.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate additional funding for CNCS to provide dedicated financial support to AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA programs that demonstrate philanthropic challenges or high costs per member due to the provision of wraparound services.

Organizations, especially those serving in lower-income communities, frequently find it difficult to provide wraparound services to best meet member needs. The provision of even small benefits, such as public transportation vouchers, can stress already-strained budgets so much that some organizations cannot host certain national service members. As a result, populations with a greater need for these wraparound services can be denied national service opportunities, to the detriment of all.

**17c. Employ national service to support the reintegration of ex-offenders.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to study best practices for service as a means to facilitate reintegration of ex-offenders and to explore the “reintegration of ex-offenders” as a grant priority.
- >> The Commission encourages the Bureau of Prisons, State legislatures, State courts, and local magistrates to offer incentives for ex-offenders who complete a term of service.

National service can provide a practical means by which ex-offenders could demonstrate their commitment to reintegration into the community. Currently, the paucity of avenues available to those who wish to put their past mistakes behind them leads to a cycle of recidivism and incarceration that harms both the ex-offenders and their communities. National service provides a model that successfully assists populations in transition and in need of job training and positive socialization.<sup>131</sup>

**Explore New Models**

While continued growth from existing models will play an important role in reaching the Commission’s goal of 1 million Americans annually in national service, new service models will enhance and accelerate that effort. The Commission explored several possible avenues for growing national service, including fellowship programs proposed previously. The Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act authorized CNCS to establish a service fellowship program that would create 1,500 fellowships over a five-year span.<sup>132</sup> The ServeAmerica Fellowship program calls for individuals to apply to State service commissions to receive a fellowship equal to a minimum of 70 percent of the average VISTA living allowance.<sup>133</sup> This program was authorized but left unfunded by Congress, and thus the expansion of national service was thwarted.

The Commission believes that pilot programs are one way that CNCS and the Peace Corps can explore

**THE FLINT NATIONAL SERVICE ACCELERATOR**

The Flint National Service Accelerator Initiative (the Accelerator) is a collaborative partnership between the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, CNCS, and leaders from Flint, Michigan’s nonprofit community, including United Way of Genesee County. The Accelerator provides vital support to the Flint community through national service funding, place-based solutions to community issues, and member and alumni support.<sup>134</sup> The Accelerator started in 2011 with only 25 AmeriCorps members and one Flint-based AmeriCorps program. It has since grown to about 200 AmeriCorps members and six Flint-based AmeriCorps programs working to address challenges in education, opioid abuse, public safety, and more. In addition, the Accelerator is helping to cultivate an upcoming generation of community-minded nonprofit, for-profit, and civic leaders who work together to address the most critical needs of the Flint community.<sup>135</sup>

new processes or provide grants to address specific issues with little risk and great flexibility. Pilot programs are small-scale and short-term but can be expanded if shown to be successful. Under the National and Community Service Act of 1990, CNCS may establish demonstration programs for the creation and evaluation of innovative volunteer and community service programs. Similarly, the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (DVSA) grants CNCS demonstration program authority, including the ability to undertake programs that encourage wider volunteer participation and to identify segments of low-income communities that could benefit from volunteer and other antipov-erty efforts.<sup>136</sup> The DVSA also provides an authority for grant funds for demonstration projects linking youth groups and organizations of older Americans in volunteer activities, involving older volunteers in programs and activities, and testing whether volunteer programs for older Americans can advance new objectives or certain national priorities.<sup>137</sup>



**18: The Commission recommends that Congress take bold action to expand national service through the implementation of new fellowship and pilot programs.**

**18a. Launch a fellowship program to encourage national service growth.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress replace the ServeAmerica Fellowship program and make an appropriation for the CEO of CNCS to launch a new national service fellowship program that awards individuals “service grants” that provide them funding to complete terms of service in certified nonprofit or community organizations.

Overall, the demand for national service positions overwhelms the supply. Potential AmeriCorps participants are limited by the number of AmeriCorps opportunities and pre-identified focus areas available, and because of these restrictions they are not always able to serve in organizations of greatest interest to them. A fellowship program will empower individuals to seek out service opportunities in their communities without requiring a host organization to undergo the traditional AmeriCorps grant procedures. This new fellowship program would expand by 25,000 positions per year until reaching its goal of 250,000 fellows.

Potential fellows, ages 18 to 25, would be selected by lottery, with 80 percent of fellowships awarded according to a formula that ensures that every congressional district receives fellows. A percentage of these fellowships would be reserved for opportunity youth and those in Tribal regions. Fellows would receive a stipend equal to the average AmeriCorps State and National member living allowance for the geographic region in which the service would take place and would be eligible for a Segal Award or discounted cash payout at the end of their service term.

This fellowship program addresses many of the challenges faced in making national service truly “national.” For example, more Americans would be able to pursue service opportunities in their communities, because individuals would be empowered to seek out programs that fit their desires, and because smaller organizations that otherwise might not have access to AmeriCorps talent would now be able to host national service members. The creation of fellowships would be a huge boon to the national service ecosystem, especially in areas such as rural and Tribal regions that have few existing philanthropic resources.

**18b. Appropriate funds for CNCS to launch pilot programs.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funds for the CEO of CNCS to run novel demonstration projects.

Although CNCS has existing authority to undertake pilot programs, CNCS has rarely explored the potential of pilot programs to open new pathways to service and address local needs. Funding for novel demonstration projects would enable CNCS to experiment with new national service models to benefit American communities. Priority should be given to demonstration projects that address place-based models—those whose participants combine resources to address unique local issues—and that focus on the reintegration of ex-offenders into the community, such as those that offer a positive, supportive environment in which ex-offenders can gain job experience.



Source: AmeriCorps NCCC

AmeriCorps NCCC members work to restore a forest in Kentucky.

### ***Increase Private-Sector Investment***

National service programs were designed to be public-private partnerships linking the Federal Government, the nonprofit sector, and community supporters. According to the CEO of CNCS, national service programs annually draw on more than \$1.26 billion from businesses, foundations, public agencies, and other outside sources—an amount that exceeds the Federal appropriation of \$1 billion for CNCS.<sup>138</sup> Not only do some corporations serve as funding partners to national service programs, but several are creating their own service corps so that their employees can lend their time and talents to their customers and to the communities in which they operate. The Federal Government and the private sector could further utilize these partnerships to make service more relevant and accessible.

#### **HOW PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS ENHANCE NATIONAL SERVICE**

Many national service programs administered by CNCS are structured as public-private partnerships between public, nonprofit, and private-sector organizations. Many small businesses and large corporations invest in national service programs by donating matching funds to AmeriCorps grantees or enabling their employees to use their time and talents to help with community projects.<sup>139</sup> National service programs that leverage public-private partnerships are able to multiply the dollars invested into communities. For example, Habitat for Humanity's "Legacy Partners" are corporations, such as AbbVie and Thrivent, that provide long-term ongoing donations at the highest level—more than \$10 million annually—to build safe, affordable housing in the United States.<sup>140</sup> In addition, several large corporations, including Starbucks, IBM, and Citi, have created their own corps-based volunteering programs, as part of their corporate social responsibility efforts, that enable employees to lend their time and talent to community projects.

**19:** The Commission recognizes that many organizations in the private sector have made a commitment to support service and develop strategies to provide service opportunities for their employees and the communities within which they operate. The Commission encourages others in the private sector to embrace this trend by, for example, offering technical support for service organizations; pledging to hire military, national, and public service alumni; forming mission-driven partnerships with service entities; and enhancing and expanding service opportunities for their employees.

### ***Reimagine Public-Sector Coordination***

Since its inception, CNCS has joined with other Federal agencies, such as the Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Education, to create Federal service corps. Federal service corps are partnerships between CNCS, another Federal agency, and typically a nonprofit or other nongovernmental organization that create national service opportunities for AmeriCorps members or Senior Corps volunteers while helping to accomplish agency or Administration objectives. National service members can help Federal agencies advance initiatives and Administration objectives by using a low-cost Federal resource. Federal agencies without a service corps should assess the feasibility of partnering with CNCS to create one.

The Peace Corps seeks to expand access to international service for more Americans but faces challenges in creating additional opportunities, especially for older Americans and Americans with disabilities. While the Peace Corps is capable of supporting members with some types of disabilities—one member with hearing loss notes that “since Peace Corps’ inception in 1961, more than 60 deaf Americans have successfully served as Volunteers”<sup>141</sup>—leadership has shown interest in exploring more flexible models to engage more Americans.<sup>142</sup> Limits on resources and authorities have obstructed this interest in expansion, however.

Apprenticeships and national service opportunities share certain characteristics—such as providing certifications, on-the-job training, and avenues to



employment—but the goals of the programs and of those doing the work differ. Many AmeriCorps programs already provide members opportunities to earn industry certifications that can lead to employment. To be registered as an apprenticeship, a position offered through national service would need to meet current criteria—including potentially longer service terms, increased living allowances/salaries, involvement of local employers, and standard curricula.

The Federal Government plays an important role in creating and promoting new opportunities for national service. In addition to actions identified in the recommendations below, Presidents can issue calls to service to increase public awareness and encourage both public and private commitment to national service. But State Governors and legislatures can also work to promote service within their administrations—for example, by appointing chief service officers and establishing dedicated offices to coordinate national, public, and military service, as well as volunteer resources and initiatives. While mayors, city councils, and county commissioners may have few resources for developing national infrastructure, they are well-positioned to put to best use additional support in city hall. With an estimated 19,492 municipal governments, 16,519 township governments, and 3,033 county governments across the country, there are plenty of opportunities for local leaders to take advantage of service to meet community goals.<sup>143</sup>

**20:** The Commission recommends that Congress and the President direct Federal agencies to implement flexible and, where appropriate, coordinated efforts to expand or enhance national service programming.

**20a. Expand flexibility of Peace Corps volunteer opportunities.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the Director of the Peace Corps to conduct demonstration projects to expand the flexibility of Peace Corps Response Volunteers located in the United States to support efforts abroad.

Peace Corps Response Volunteers are experienced professionals sent to undertake short-term assignments in communities around the globe. Those who have difficulty traveling abroad but nonetheless wish to contribute to the Peace Corps Response mission have limited opportunities to volunteer. Expanding flexibility to allow some Volunteers to serve while remaining within the United States will open new pathways to service for populations who cannot travel abroad.



A Peace Corps Volunteer serves in Cambodia.

Source: Peace Corps



**20b. Increase coordination in the creation of apprenticeships.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS and the Secretary of Labor to coordinate and develop more national service models that qualify as DOL apprenticeships.

Despite their similar goals of increasing human capital, national service and apprenticeship programs lack sufficient coordination in their creation and execution. Linking the two could provide people with more direct paths toward a new career, improving their economic prospects.

**20c. Improve disaster relief national service programs.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to review the current program limitations on participation, particularly in the area of disaster relief, and determine whether the extension of program participation would be beneficial to the long-term stability of the program and to the execution of requirements, particularly in disaster relief (e.g., the ability to recall recent graduates who have the requisite skillset and experience to respond to disasters).

Currently, those working in such programs as FEMA Corps or AmeriCorps NCCC are unable to extend their service term during a disaster response so that they may stay onsite and continue providing services to those affected by a disaster. It is disheartening to leave a job unfinished, and the option to stay and complete a mission—knowing that they can finish their important work—would provide members and potential members with a greater sense of satisfaction. The seamless transition of disaster response personnel can be achieved by allowing service extensions. Given the increasing severity and frequency of natural disasters in the 21st century, disaster relief and recovery service are becoming more important than ever.

## PUBLIC SERVICE

### Background

Public servants perform a critical role in the functioning of American democracy. With integrity, honesty, and impartiality, civil servants implement the decisions of elected officials and administer a host of services that fundamentally affect the daily lives of Americans. Civil servants are employees of Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments and represent a diverse spectrum of occupations: they include teachers, law enforcement officers, scientists, health care providers, financial analysts, and customer service representatives. The Pendleton Act of 1883 and subsequent legislation established the Federal civil service as a merit-based system in which individuals were to be judged by their qualifications rather than their political or personal affiliations. The principle of merit-based hiring still undergirds the system today.

Despite the strong belief by leaders such as President George H. W. Bush that “public service is a noble calling,”<sup>144</sup> significant barriers to entering public service exist due to a lack of awareness, aspiration, and access—especially among younger workers, who are underrepresented in Federal civilian employment. Americans under the age of 35 constitute about 18 percent of the Federal civilian workforce, compared with 36 percent of the broader economy.<sup>145</sup> Access presents the most significant barrier—dysfunctional hiring and personnel vetting processes constitute the greatest impediment to serving. An expert panel of the National Academy of Public Administration evaluated Federal public service policies and practices and concluded that “the Federal Government’s human capital system is fundamentally broken.”<sup>146</sup> To make matters worse, negative depictions of civil servants by some elected officials hurt the morale of the current workforce, misrepresent to the public their role and importance, and undercut efforts to recruit and retain public servants.

Americans are typically less familiar with Federal and State Government career opportunities than with options in the private sector, public safety, or teaching.<sup>147</sup> This lack of familiarity is likely the result of limited exposure to Federal and State employees. Those in public service make up a relatively small portion of the employed population—roughly 1.4 percent of employed Americans work for the Federal Government

and about 3.4 percent for State Governments.\* Government jobs tend to be concentrated in certain geographic areas, further limiting Americans' interactions with Federal and State civil servants.

In addition, most Federal Government agencies do not operate centralized, organization-wide recruitment campaigns such as those commonly used by the private sector and the military, though many agencies conduct at least some targeted outreach based on their recruiting needs.

\* As of December 2017, State Governments employed 5,164,000 workers and the Federal Government employed 2,081,160 workers, including full-time permanent, part-time, and temporary employees (and not including postal and other government enterprise workers, whose salaries are typically paid by customer revenue rather than tax dollars) compared to 154,065,000 American workers in the labor force writ large. See Office of Personnel Management, "FedScope: Federal Human Resources Data"; "All Employees: Government: State Government," Federal Reserve Economic Data, updated September 6, 2019, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CES9092000001>; and "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey: Employment Level," Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS12000000>.

Because awareness is a precondition for aspiration, low awareness of civilian employment opportunities in Federal and State Government significantly limits the number of individuals who aspire to public service. In a 2013 survey of college students, 5.7 percent of respondents identified the Federal Government as their ideal career, while 4.8 percent indicated State or local government—compared to 21.8 percent who chose nonprofit or teaching fields and 36.8 percent who preferred the for-profit sector.<sup>152</sup> This disparity may also be due, at least in part, to the Federal Government's compensation and benefits packages, which are uncompetitive in many occupational fields and unattractive to employees who value career mobility.<sup>153</sup>

Aspiration toward a public service career may also be complicated by the blurred lines between public- and private-sector service. Contractors and grantees, which include both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, perform many roles that are similar to those that are performed or were previously performed by civil servants.

## LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

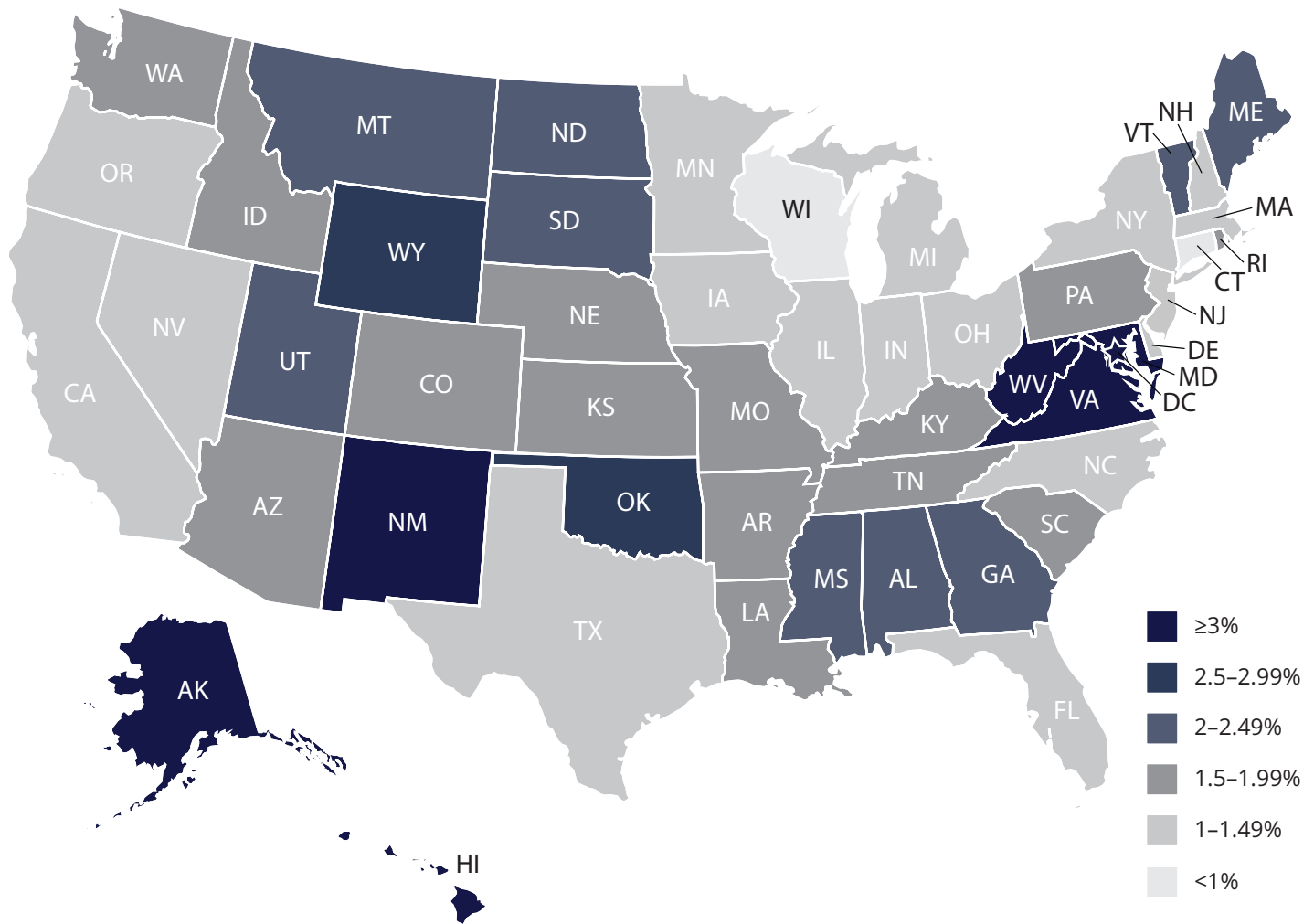
The following major legislative actions created, and subsequently shaped the development of, the Federal civil service. Most major provisions have not been substantially updated for many decades, evidence of a system that is increasingly out of date for managing a rapidly changing, modern workforce.

- > **Pendleton Act of 1883:** Established the U.S. Civil Service Commission to oversee a new hiring process known as competitive examining, which was designed to assess and select individuals applying for employment with the Federal Government on the basis of their qualifications rather than political connections.<sup>148</sup>
- > **Classification Acts of 1923 & 1949:** The 1923 Act established standard job categories and the pay scale known as the General Schedule (GS), a list of annual rates of basic pay that creates a standard metric across Government in an attempt to provide equal pay for equal work.<sup>149</sup> The 1949 reform heavily revised the GS classification and pay systems and marked the last time Congress robustly refined the system.

- > **Civil Service Reform Act of 1978:** Replaced the Civil Service Commission with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Merit Systems Protection Board, and Federal Labor Relations Authority and devolved some authority over personnel matters from OPM to agencies.<sup>150</sup> This reform started the transition from centrally administered, standardized civil service examinations to agency-designed candidate qualification and assessment systems with oversight by OPM.
- > **Homeland Security Act of 2002:** Established the chief human capital officer (CHCO) position and created the CHCO Council; granted direct-hire authority, which enables agencies to hire qualified candidates without completing a competitive process; and authorized agencies to use alternative ranking and selection procedures.<sup>151</sup> These reforms attempted to rectify problems with competitive examining, shining light on the process' inability to elevate qualified candidates to meet hiring needs.

**Figure 6: Federal Employees as a Percentage of the Workforce, by State**

Federal employees live and work throughout the Nation. In fact, several States far from Washington, DC, have a higher share of Federal employees among their workforces as compared with the Nation as a whole.



Source: Current Employment Statistics: Employment, Hours, and Earnings – State and Metro Area [Federal Government Employment, Seasonally Adjusted], U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2019, <https://www.bls.gov/sae/data/home.htm>; and “Civilian Labor Force and Unemployment by State and Selected Area,” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2019, [https://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.t01.htm#lau\\_srd\\_tbl.f.p](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.t01.htm#lau_srd_tbl.f.p).

Government contractors recruit heavily from college campuses and attract many students from public affairs and public policy programs—and those interested in public service often enjoy greater success in obtaining job offers from government contractors than from the Federal Government.

Finally, negative rhetoric about public employees as well as the belief that the Federal Government is a bad

employer may also discourage individuals from pursuing or remaining in public service jobs. For instance, repeated Government shutdowns, in which the livelihoods of public servants are threatened as political bargaining chips, undermine the stability traditionally offered by civil service employment. These attitudes may especially dissuade young people who are beginning their careers from aspiring to public service.



Americans who do aspire to public service find many obstacles to gaining employment in a State or Federal position, as access challenges form the most formidable barrier to increasing Americans' participation in public service. Competitive examining, the standard, merit-based hiring process for Federal agencies, is too slow—with an average time-to-hire nearly triple that of private industry—and often fails to advance and hire highly qualified candidates.<sup>154</sup> For many applicants, the experience of applying for a job at a Federal agency differs substantially from that at private-sector employers, and too frequently those who may be most qualified are deterred by bureaucratic requirements and processes. For hiring managers, ineffective qualification and assessment mechanisms often fail to deliver candidates that meet agency needs. These problems are compounded by the current application of veterans' preference, which in some cases allows an individual who was initially rated as "minimally qualified" to move to the top of the "best qualified" pool of candidates. According to governmentwide OPM hiring data, more than half of all competitive examining certificates are returned without a hire being made—demonstrating the process' inefficiency and its systematic failure to elevate qualified candidates.<sup>155</sup>

*"A significant barrier to public service (especially Federal public service) is the unwieldy application process. I have used USAJOBS many times, and have found the process extremely complicated, easy to mess up, and to take so long that even if I was offered my dream Federal job, I would have already had to take another position."*  
—Public Comment

The inability of the competitive process to reach qualified candidates has directly contributed to the proliferation of special hiring authorities for agencies seeking exemptions from Congress and OPM. Despite the Pendleton Act's original intent to make competitive examining the Federal Government's primary hiring mechanism, in FY 2014 it accounted for less than one-quarter of new hires.<sup>156</sup> Instead, policy-makers have dispersed more than 105 separate hiring authorities unevenly across the Government to fill

gaps in the personnel system and to help agencies meet critical hiring needs.<sup>157</sup> While these policies produced short-term fixes, they also added to the complexity of administering Federal hiring. Yet for agencies without such hiring authorities and for individuals who lack the specialized qualifications that the exemptions target, the competitive process remains the only way for agencies to meet hiring needs and would-be employees to join the Government. Though the Federal Government has longstanding separate hiring systems for students and recent graduates, recent changes to these programs have made them almost indistinguishable from the standard competitive process—with all of its attendant problems—further undermining the ability of agencies to attract new generations to public service employment.

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*"Agencies are using exceptions to the standard hiring process to fill 55 percent of their mission-critical positions, and they are using just one-fifth—11 of 51—of the legal authorities available to them to do so."*

—National Academy of Public Administration,  
No Time to Wait, Part 2: Building a  
Public Service for the 21st Century (2018)

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Though current policies create serious barriers for agencies seeking to meet their workforce needs, changing these policies alone would not be sufficient to achieve a high-performing personnel system. Organizational culture should also change—from the top down—to promote strategic workforce development. Too often, agency culture encourages a compliance-driven, siloed, "someone else's responsibility" attitude rather than a talent-driven, whole-of-agency, forward-looking workforce strategy. Despite being granted additional authorities by Congress and OPM, some agencies—due to habit, fear of being out of compliance with the law, insufficient capability within human resources (HR) departments, and lack of interest and support from agency leadership—restrict the use of such authorities by HR staff and hiring managers.

The outmoded and inefficient nature of Federal personnel systems is most clearly demonstrated by the

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



An Environmental Protection Agency boat crew departs for a debris sweep after Hurricane Sandy.

Government's inability to compete for critical skills. Specifically, the General Schedule's rigid classification and compensation system constrains the Federal Government's capacity to recruit and hire individuals in emerging specialties, as well as its ability to fully utilize individuals with cross-disciplinary talent—such as technical acumen and aptitude for project management.<sup>158</sup> Congress and the Administration have started to address these challenges by expanding direct-hire authority and by creating new personnel systems for DoD and DHS cybersecurity professionals. But unless more intensive interventions are undertaken, underlying problems with classification, hiring, promotion, compensation, and benefits will continue to prevent agencies from attracting and retaining the workforce they need to accomplish their essential missions.

Preserving the status quo by failing to make broad civil service modernization a legislative priority will continue to impede the Government from accessing the most capable talent, hamper its ability to carry out its responsibilities to the public, and make future generations even less likely to view civil service as a valuable and worthy endeavor. With just 6 percent of the Federal workforce under the age of 30 and more than a third eligible to retire in the next five years, the Federal Government has reached a critical juncture, and broad changes to personnel policy and practice are necessary to address systemic failures and meet national needs.<sup>159</sup>

With dedication and commitment from the Nation's leaders, comprehensive civil service personnel modernization is possible. Positive examples can be found in State Governments, including Colorado, Indiana, and Tennessee. Success on the Federal level will depend on several factors: bipartisan cooperation between Congress and the Administration; engagement of key stakeholders, especially Federal employees; and an approach that builds on areas with the greatest potential for broad agreement.

The public service recommendations in this report address both near-term, urgent problems and long-term, structural issues. The first priority for policymakers should be to improve existing personnel processes so that agencies can function better now. At the same time, the Government needs a realistic approach to replacing those core aspects of the Federal personnel system that are fundamentally flawed so that it can become a competitive employer for any talent that agencies need. Ultimately, it is the goal of the Commission, and should be the goal of Congress and the President, to realize a modern talent-management system that attracts and retains a highly qualified public service workforce so that the Government can fulfill its critical mission for the American people.\*

## Findings and Recommendations

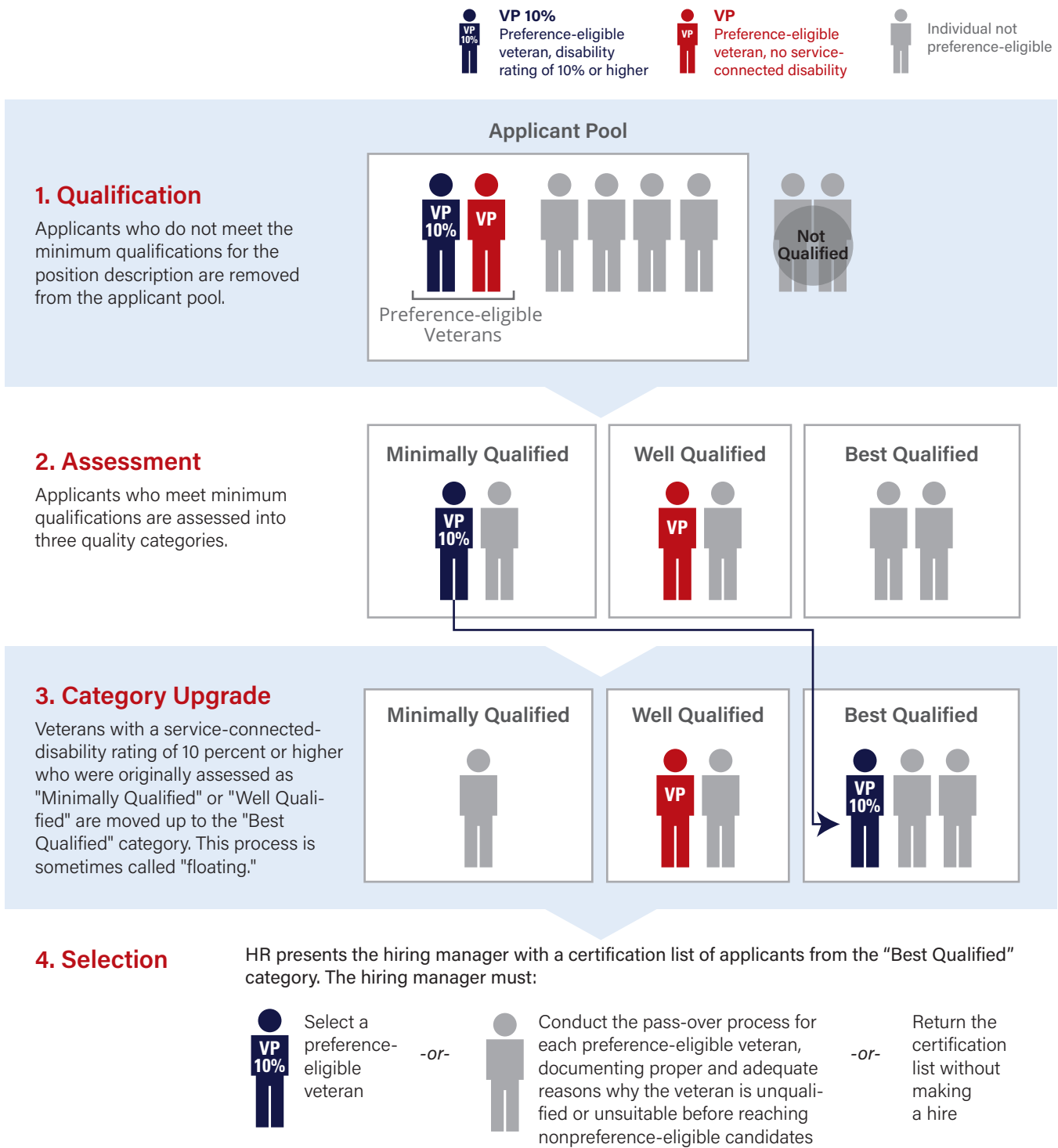
To increase Americans' propensity to serve in public service roles, policymakers should remove systemic barriers to access. Specifically, the Commission encourages Congress and relevant executive branch agencies to reform Federal hiring, revamp hiring systems for students and recent graduates, promote a high-performing personnel culture, address critical-skills shortages, increase competitiveness of benefits, and, ultimately, develop a new personnel system.

### Reform Federal Hiring

The challenges facing Government hiring are so severe that GAO has identified strategic human capital management as an area of "high risk."<sup>160</sup> In particular, lack of adequate talent management has led to

\* While different levels of government share many similarities in their structure and the challenges they face, the Commission, as a Federal body, focused primarily on the Federal level in the belief that its findings and recommendations could also inform improvements to State, local, and Tribal personnel systems.

**Figure 7: Category Rating and Veterans' Preference in the Competitive Examining Process**



Sources: Benjamin Collins, *Federal Government Employment: Veterans' Preference in Competitive Examination* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, July 2018), 5–9, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44652>; and Office of Personnel Management, *Delegated Examining Operations Handbook: A Guide for Federal Agency Examining Offices* (Washington, DC: OPM, June 2019), Chapter 5, 1–25, [https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/competitive-hiring/deo\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/competitive-hiring/deo_handbook.pdf).



“mission-critical skills gaps” that significantly contribute to 16 of the 34 other “high-risk” areas identified in GAO’s latest report.<sup>161</sup> For the Government to remain a competitive employer, Congress, OPM, and individual agencies should change the recruitment, application, qualification, and assessment processes to more closely mirror broader workforce practices and to enable agencies to more accurately appraise candidates’ credentials.

No discussion of hiring reform would be complete without addressing veterans’ preference and noncompetitive hiring authorities. Federal civil service law specifies that veterans who meet certain criteria, such as serving in a particular military campaign or experiencing a service-connected disability, receive preference over other candidates within the competitive hiring process.<sup>162</sup> Dating back to the Civil War, this preference was instituted to offset economic loss experienced by service members in comparison to their civilian counterparts, to ease transition from military service back to gainful employment in civilian life, and to honor the Nation’s obligation and debt to veterans.

The Commission received a great deal of feedback regarding the impact of veterans’ preference on the hiring process. As currently employed in competitive examining, veterans’ preference does not produce optimal outcomes for veterans transitioning to civilian life. Just as importantly, it undermines the merit system and severely limits nonveterans’ ability to serve in Government. Veterans’ preference is not just a tiebreaker—many preference-eligible veterans are automatically categorized as highest qualified or best qualified, even if they were originally assessed as minimally qualified. Agency officials and public service experts alike agree that this policy damages the hiring process and frequently results in highly qualified nonveterans having little chance of Federal employment, while also contributing to a lack of diversity at some agencies. Further, many of the special hiring authorities that have emerged are intended to get around veterans’ preference, thereby increasing the complexity—and decreasing the fairness and transparency—of the personnel system. The recommendations below would make veterans’ preference work better for younger, recently separated veterans, helping them to transition successfully to civilian life by ensuring that they are entering Federal positions for which they are a good fit.

At the same time, the recommendations would expand noncompetitive hiring authorities (that is, alternative hiring processes outside of competitive examining) to make it easier for agencies to hire veterans without limiting their ability to access highly qualified nonveteran talent. Proposed changes to noncompetitive eligibility (NCE) attempt to make this hiring option easier for individuals and agencies to understand and use. These changes would enable the Government to more uniformly capitalize on high-performing individuals participating in developmental programs and to facilitate the return of high-performing employees who left to pursue growth opportunities outside of the Government. Collectively, the recommendations aim to make hiring processes more seamless, help agencies better meet their workforce needs, and promote a competitive process that elevates the most capable candidates to achieve the Government’s mission.

#### WHAT IS NONCOMPETITIVE ELIGIBILITY?

Noncompetitive eligibility (NCE) is a hiring option that enables Federal agencies to appoint qualified external candidates to civil service positions without their having completed the competitive examining process. NCE is granted for a limited time frame, typically 12 months, to individuals who meet certain requirements. Examples of people who receive NCE include:

- > Alumni of some national service programs,
- > Participants in select Federal fellowship and scholarship programs,
- > Certain veterans, who may be hired using the Veterans Recruitment Appointment, a form of NCE, and
- > Military spouses.

These individuals may be appointed—as long as they are qualified—to any position in the Federal Government before that position is open to applicants from the general public.<sup>163</sup>

The Federal hiring process cannot operate seamlessly and deliver the talent that agencies need unless policymakers also maintain their focus on ensuring the success

of ongoing efforts to modernize personnel-vetting systems. In April 2018, the Government’s background investigation inventory reached 725,000, including more than 500,000 delayed clearances. On average, candidates waited 534 days to receive a Top Secret clearance, with some candidates waiting significantly longer.<sup>164</sup> Though applicants are excited by the prospect of contributing to a meaningful mission, such a long wait period results in many top candidates accepting other job offers and frustrates agencies attempting to attract the workforce they need to achieve their missions. Revisions to the security clearance, suitability, and credentialing protocols have the potential to reduce both the friction between personnel hiring and onboarding processes and the time candidates must wait when accepting a new position with the Government, receiving a promotion, or transferring between agencies.

familiar with Federal personnel systems, and typically they are not promoted on the third-party job sites used by many highly qualified candidates. In addition, highly qualified candidates who apply using a standard, one-page resume are disadvantaged by review systems that emphasize the presence of specific keywords rather than a holistic assessment of an applicant’s qualifications.

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*“We did an analysis of what an application looked like for a software engineer in the private sector at a major company versus USAJOBS. The former was a paragraph long, stated the mission, and had an easy apply button. The USAJOBS [posting] was seven pages long, and the description of what the job was, was three-quarters of the way down the page.”*

—Eddie Hartwig, U.S. Digital Service

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**21: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps to improve and simplify the competitive hiring process so that it is possible to more efficiently and effectively hire talented individuals by, among other things, reviewing and substantially revising USAJOBS, its interoperability with outside vendors, and the way it functions to facilitate hiring so as to make it easier to attract and employ talent.**

**21a. Improve the job posting and application processes.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM and agencies to revise job descriptions, add interoperability between USAJOBS and third-party job boards, and accept short, standard resumes for civil service positions.

USAJOBS, the Federal Government’s website for applying for civil service positions, needs an overhaul. Applicants expect the process of learning about and applying for Federal job openings to be straightforward. Yet the job announcements produced by many Federal agencies are unintelligible to job seekers who are not

**21b. Transform how agencies assess candidates for employment.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies to avoid keyword-based resume reviews and self-assessments and direct the Director of OPM to issue guidance to require agencies to involve hiring managers and subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and assessment. The Commission further recommends that Congress appropriate funds to help agencies adopt advanced assessment tools.

In many Federal agencies the candidate qualification and assessment processes are fundamentally flawed, allowing poorly qualified candidates to advance through the hiring process. These failures occur despite the availability of better alternatives, such as involving hiring managers and subject-matter experts—who are best prepared to determine whether a candidate is qualified—in resume reviews, as well as using validated online assessment tools, such as those offered by OPM’s USA Hire system.

When applicants apply for Federal jobs, HR generalists typically review resumes and rate candidates by

## Figure 8: Example of a Federal Job Application Self-Assessment

This is a screenshot of a recently posted self-assessment questionnaire. Poorly qualified applicants can easily game the system by answering “E” to this question and others like it, while many well-qualified candidates are overlooked because they rate themselves honestly.

2. Assist in providing day to day oversight of multiple processes to define, establish, and manage process controls.

- A. I have not had education, training, or experience in performing this task.
- B. I have had education or training in how to perform this task, but have not yet performed it on the job.
- C. I have performed this task on the job. My work on this task was monitored closely by a supervisor or senior employee to ensure compliance with proper procedures.
- D. I have performed this task as a regular part of a job. I have performed it independently and normally without review by a supervisor or senior employee.
- E. I am considered an expert in performing this task. I have supervised performance of this task or am normally the person who is consulted by other workers to assist or train them in doing this task because of my expertise.



Source: USAJOBS.

searching the resumes for keywords in the job description. In some cases, software is used to automatically match keywords and score resumes. These approaches miss applicants with relevant skills and experience that do not lend themselves to an exact keyword match; they also advantage applicants familiar with the process who craft resumes that closely mirror job descriptions.

Many agencies also rely on a candidate self-assessment, which is not a valid method of evaluating applicants. Many applicants mark “expert” on every item, regardless of their actual qualifications, in order to advance in the assessment process; and many highly qualified applicants who attempt to rate themselves honestly are rejected.

**21c. Allow agencies to use the method of selecting candidates that best meets agency workforce needs.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to implement the recently authorized, more flexible, ranked-list assessment option, allowing managers to select from top-ranked candidates.

Current policy requires agencies to use category rating, even if another method authorized in statute would better meet their workforce needs. Before this requirement was imposed, agencies used a process known as “the rule of three:” candidates were assigned a numeric rating during the assessment process, and hiring managers could select from the candidates with the highest three ratings. While the “rule of three” process was restrictive, some agencies preferred it to category rating, which can result in large, unwieldy, and less-qualified pools of finalists. Congress recently authorized a new selection option, known as the “rule of many,” which would allow agencies to use a numerical rating system for candidates and then empower hiring managers to select from a group of finalists using flexible criteria. For example, finalists could comprise the top 10 candidates, or all candidates with a score higher than 85. This system could be more selective than category rating but also more flexible than the “rule of three” method. Full implementation of this new authority, along with clear direction to agencies to use the selection method that works best for them, could help agencies more effectively meet their workforce needs.



**21d. Promptly notify applicants of key milestones during the application process.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President encourage the Director of OPM to direct agencies to notify applicants of key milestones during the hiring process.

Agencies do not consistently notify job candidates about their status in the hiring process.<sup>165</sup> Lack of transparency frustrates applicants and discourages them from continuing to engage with Federal job applications.

**21e. Streamline interagency transfers.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to assess barriers to interagency transfers among competitive and excepted service employees and take steps to streamline such transfers.

Appointing current Federal employees to new jobs in different agencies is unnecessarily difficult, especially when the change is between different job classifications or between excepted service and competitive service positions. A streamlined process by which agencies offer transfer opportunities to their employees could help those agencies put the existing Federal workforce to better use in meeting critical mission needs.

**21f. Increase the use of term and temporary appointments.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to enhance the ability of agencies to use temporary and term appointments to address short-term needs.

Temporary and term appointments can facilitate more flexible career paths and address short-term agency needs—but they are often underutilized by agencies.

**22: The Commission encourages Congress and the President to promote and facilitate the use of existing noncompetitive hiring authorities that are currently underutilized and that would enhance the Government’s ability to attract and retain talent.**

**22a. Increase agency use of noncompetitive hiring systems.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to develop and agencies to use (1) standardized documentation for NCE and (2) noncompetitive hiring rosters by agency to allow candidates with NCE or Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) to identify agencies and career fields of interest.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to update USAJOBS to notify the hiring manager immediately when a candidate with NCE or VRA applies for a job posting.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President issue an Executive order directing agencies to eliminate policies that restrict the use of noncompetitive hiring beyond those required by statute or OPM regulation, and to establish policies that proactively encourage HR staff and hiring managers to use available non-competitive hiring authorities to efficiently and effectively meet workforce needs.

Hiring managers lack effective, well-publicized systems to recruit and hire individuals with NCE or VRA. While some agencies organize electronic job boards and in-person job fairs for individuals with NCE, others do not, and many individuals with NCE or VRA are not aware of these recruiting opportunities.<sup>166</sup> Developing standardized documentation to serve as proof of eligibility for individuals with NCE or VRA would improve awareness of this hiring option and streamline the hiring process. Well-publicized, easy-to-use systems to enable such individuals to express interest in a certain

agency or career field and make their resumes searchable by hiring managers across the Government would help connect promising candidates with agencies that need their capabilities.

Currently, when individuals with NCE or VRA apply to a competitive service job through USAJOBS, hiring managers are not notified about their candidacy until all other candidates have been assessed. This practice may unnecessarily delay the hiring process, since agencies already have authority to hire qualified NCE and VRA candidates without completing the competitive process. Forwarding the resume to the hiring manager immediately after an NCE or VRA candidate applies could speed the hiring process and encourage agencies to seek out these applicants.

Finally, many agencies limit their hiring managers' use of noncompetitive hiring—not because of any OPM or statutory requirements but because of internal agency policies or preferences. A lack of information and an overly cautious culture have caused some agencies to underutilize these hiring options, resulting in unnecessary delays for applicants. Clear direction to agencies to eliminate policies that restrict the use of noncompetitive hiring could encourage agencies to make best use of NCE and VRA candidates to more efficiently meet workforce needs.

**22b. Inform individuals with noncompetitive eligibility about how to utilize this status.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS, Director of OPM, and Secretary of Defense to implement training for individuals with NCE, including national service alumni, alumni of fellowship and scholarship programs, and individuals with VRA.

Many individuals eligible for noncompetitive hiring preferences are unaware of their eligibility and of how to use it to obtain Federal employment. Providing training for individuals through existing programs—such as by updating the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) for service members separating from the military with information about how to use VRA to obtain a Federal job—could encourage individuals to pursue

public service and increase use of these hiring authorities to meet agency workforce needs.

**22c. Expand the usability of direct-hire authority.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to change the criteria for granting direct-hire authority to agencies so that agencies may obtain direct-hire authority in case of a shortage of “highly qualified” candidates.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to modify regulations to allow agencies to use direct-hire authority without conducting a minimum-qualifications review for every applicant.

Under current law, agencies may request direct-hire authority if they can demonstrate a shortage of candidates who meet minimal job qualifications. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) already benefits from a statutory exception that allows OPM to grant direct-hire authority to VA if there is a shortage of highly qualified applicants. Extending this provision to all Federal agencies would help them meet critical workforce needs with the most capable talent.

Separately, once an agency has been granted direct-hire authority and has selected a qualified candidate, it must still conduct a review of all other candidates to determine whether they meet minimum qualifications for the position. This is a wasteful and unnecessary process that negates the purpose of direct-hire authority—to meet critical workforce needs in an expedited time frame. Removing this requirement would help agencies reduce time-to-hire and better compete for top talent.

**23: The Commission recommends that Congress update hiring preferences and noncompetitive eligibility.**

**23a. Modernize veterans' preference.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to change veterans' preference within competitive

examining to a tiebreaker between equally qualified candidates.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to limit eligibility for veterans' preference to individuals who are not employed by a Federal agency and Federal employees within two years of their first use of the preference.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to establish a 10-year time limit, beginning upon separation from the military, for preference-eligible veterans to use veterans' preference.

The current application of veterans' preference within competitive examining produces suboptimal outcomes for both hiring managers and young veterans. The floating of minimally qualified preference-eligible veterans to the top of the best qualified list results in hiring managers being forced to choose between hiring an individual who is a poor fit for the job, conducting a lengthy pass-over process for each poorly qualified preference-eligible veteran in order to reach a qualified candidate, or simply returning the certification list without making a hire. Thus, the current application of veterans' preference routinely prevents agencies from hiring highly qualified candidates to meet their workforce needs.

## YOUNG ADULTS' VIEWS ON VETERANS' PREFERENCE

A 2019 survey polling U.S. residents, ages 18 to 29, found that **12 percent** of respondents felt that veterans should receive preference over better qualified nonveterans, as is currently done in Federal hiring; **44 percent** of respondents believed that veterans' preference should be applied only as a tiebreaker between equally qualified candidates; and **18 percent** of respondents believed that veterans should not receive any preference in Federal hiring.<sup>167</sup>

Agencies typically implement competitive hiring in ways that strongly favor years of experience over other evidence of qualifications. Therefore, younger,

recently separated veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have difficulty competing against older preference-eligible veterans with more work experience. In addition, preference-eligible individuals who have already transitioned from military to Federal civil service may continue to use their preference during agency transfers and promotion (for positions open to the public) for the rest of their careers. This policy limits consideration of transitioning veterans who are using their preference for the first time and prevents agencies from accessing and promoting highly qualified nonveteran talent. For agencies that attract many veteran applicants, the inability to access nonveteran talent poses challenges for attracting a workforce encompassing diversity of background, thought, and experience, particularly as the veteran population is disproportionately male in comparison to society at large.

The Government's hiring model should preserve the original intent of the civil service system—to bring the most capable talent to public service. Hiring an individual who is a poor fit for the job does not benefit the agency, the public, or the individual—especially a veteran transitioning to civilian life. A modernized preference system would empower agencies to hire highly qualified, preference-eligible veterans for their formidable skills and substantial experience—gained in part through taxpayer investment—thereby contributing to achieving the agency's mission for the American people.

## 23b. Standardize and extend noncompetitive eligibility.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize 12 months of NCE for successful completion of federally sponsored internships, scholarships, and fellowships; grant 36 months of NCE to all full-time AmeriCorps alumni and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers; and extend VRA to 10 years after separation.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize NCE for select high-performing and qualified civilian employees who leave the Government, allowing them to return at a higher grade.



Fewer than half of federally sponsored (that is, funded by Federal agencies) internships, fellowships, and scholarships currently grant NCE or noncompetitive conversion (NCC), and many interested, highly qualified, and vetted individuals leave public service because agencies are unable to hire them. National service members similarly cultivate skills and experience that prepare them for careers in public service, but very few national service programs grant NCE to participants. Because current hiring authorities do not encourage employees to blend Federal agency and private-sector experience, many talented employees have no pathway to return with more experience and instead choose to leave the Government permanently. Finally, VRA provides a broad noncompetitive authority under which recently separated veterans may be hired. However, it often remains underused because many veterans do not know about their eligibility or fail to apply for a Federal job within three years of separation—a time span when many young veterans are instead using their GI Bill benefits to attend university.

**WHAT IS NONCOMPETITIVE CONVERSION?**

Noncompetitive conversion (NCC) allows an agency to convert a full-time temporary or term position—a yearlong fellowship, for example—into a longer term or permanent position without opening that position to applications from the public. This tool is largely used to allow Pathways Interns and Recent Graduates, as well as Presidential Management Fellows, to take full-time, competitive positions after they have met all the program requirements.<sup>168</sup>

**23c. Streamline preference-eligibility determinations within the hiring process.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to require that eligibility for preferences be determined centrally by OPM rather than in a decentralized manner by each agency during every hiring process.

Agency HR staff expend substantial time manually redetermining eligibility for hiring preferences every time an individual applies for a Federal job, rather than relying on electronic verification systems or a single manual determination when a USAJOBS profile is created or updated with new documentation. Better systems that automate this determination, when possible, and enable a determination to be used for multiple applications would speed up the hiring process while providing better opportunities for applicants to confirm their eligibility for veterans’ preference or NCE.

**Revamp Hiring Systems for Students and Recent Graduates**

The Federal Government offers an array of fellowships, scholarships, and specialized pipelines for students, recent graduates, and rising professionals to enter the Federal workforce because they are unlikely to succeed in the competitive examining process, which favors more experienced candidates. These programs often take advantage of their reputations as prestigious leadership-development opportunities to attract highly qualified individuals with critical skills. Nevertheless, too few qualified recent graduates consider and have access to public service employment at a time when high percentages of employees at many local, State, and Federal agencies are eligible to retire.<sup>169</sup>

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*“[T]he [Federal] information technology workforce has five times as many employees over age 60 than under 30. Meanwhile, it is not uncommon in Silicon Valley firms for the numbers of employees in their 20s to exceed 50 percent. Clearly the Federal Government is failing abysmally in attracting the next generation.”*

—Max Stier, *Partnership for Public Service*

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Altogether, the Commission identified an estimated 20,000 federally sponsored internships, fellowships, and scholarships—many are unpublicized, and less than half currently grant NCE or NCC. Without NCE or NCC, and without clear guidance to agencies and

participants on how to effectively utilize them, agencies are typically unable to hire these participants.

*“New hires of student interns fell from about 35,000 in 2010 to 4,000 in 2018.”*

—*President’s FY 2020 Budget (2019)*

The Pathways Programs face similar challenges. The Internship Program is separated into long- and short-term opportunities, and only long-term interns are typically eligible for conversion to permanent employment after meeting stringent requirements; the Recent Graduates Program is generally available to those who have graduated within the past two years or will soon graduate; and the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program—often considered the Government’s most prestigious fellowship for young professionals—frequently fails to retain its participants in the Federal workforce.<sup>170</sup> Eight years after the implementation of the Pathways Programs, student interns hired by Federal agencies shrank to just 11.4 percent of their 2010 level, while appointments of veterans through Pathways more than quadrupled from FY 2010 to FY 2014.<sup>171</sup>

The inability of talented candidates to succeed in the competitive process has caused many agencies to withdraw from active recruitment on college campuses. After years of struggling to hire students through the Internship Program, agencies without special hiring authorities have scaled back such programs.<sup>172</sup> Recognizing the systemic challenges that the Federal Government faces in hiring students and recent graduates, Congress included a governmentwide direct-hire authority for recent college graduates in the FY 2019 NDAA.<sup>173</sup> The new authority could be an effective tool for the Federal Government to obtain early career talent, but the restrictive cap on the authority undermines its efficacy. Agency officials assert that the new authority is essentially unusable because the restriction effectuates a limit of zero hires for many agencies.

Finally, given the high cost of postsecondary education and increased levels of student debt, many recent graduates are pressured to pursue careers in which they can earn a higher income. Because of complications surrounding the application process for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program, the U.S. Department of

Education has approved less than 1 percent of requests for loan forgiveness.<sup>174</sup> This and other loan repayment plans offered by individual agencies are important ways to incentivize public service and ensure that all Americans interested in pursuing civil service careers are financially able to do so.

Taken individually and together, these failures prevent highly qualified and skilled individuals from joining or remaining in public service. The recommendations below seek to improve and add pipelines for students and recent graduates in order to diversify the workforce and meet critical needs.

**24: The Commission encourages the President and Congress to take steps to improve access to public service employment, and in particular to improve the process for recruiting and hiring students and recent graduates both by better positioning agency officials to engage in effective recruiting and hiring when students are looking for jobs and by promoting additional pathways to service through internships.**

**24a. Improve the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates hiring programs.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress improve governmentwide hiring authorities for students and recent graduates.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to streamline internship and recent-graduate hiring programs.

Programs for Title 5 agencies to hire student interns and recent graduates have historically operated through Executive orders.\* Explicit statutory direction from Con-

\* The Pathways Programs were created in 2010 by Executive Order 13562, replacing earlier internship and recent-graduate hiring programs. Under the Pathways Internship Program, students work as short-term, paid employees of Federal agencies with the potential to be converted to permanent employees upon completion of a postsecondary degree and other requirements. The Pathways Recent Graduates Program allows recent college graduates to be hired for a trial period before being converted to permanent employment.

gress would be useful and potentially necessary to prompt OPM and other agencies to prioritize the creation of an effective system for hiring students and recent graduates.

The Pathways Internship Program unnecessarily restricts the vast majority of Federal interns from qualifying for NCE and stipulates onerous requirements for converting interns to permanent employment, which together inhibit the program's utility and effectiveness for recruiting students and recent graduates into the Federal workforce. Further, lack of strategic workforce planning also undermines agencies' ability to recruit the most capable young talent.

#### **24b. Pilot new hiring programs for critical skills.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the Director of OPM to allow agencies to conduct a demonstration program that would allow the use of new reform authorities to hire students and recent graduates in areas of critical skills, as identified by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, into the new internship program or directly into positions identified by the agencies as critical.

Demonstration authority would greatly expand the ability of agencies to craft hiring programs that can quickly fill critical-skills shortages while also improving the demographic diversity of their workforces.

#### **24c. Pay all Federal Government interns.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress pass legislation to require that all Federal Government internships be paid.

Because many Federal internships, such as within some congressional offices and at agencies that have authority to accept voluntary services, remain unpaid, these opportunities are limited to those Americans who have alternative means of financial support. Requiring Federal interns to be paid—while maintaining an exception that allows unpaid work for students who receive college credit for their internship—would expand the

socioeconomic diversity of interested applicants and interns and improve competitiveness with private-sector internships.

#### **24d. Make a technical correction to existing direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress increase the statutory cap on the direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates.

An error in the statutory language calculating the cap for agencies undermines the new governmentwide direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates by effecting a cap of zero for many Federal agencies. Establishing a realistic, functional cap so that agencies can use this authority as Congress intended would offer hiring officials an additional tool to appoint students and recent graduates on an expedited basis, complementing the above proposals to revamp the Pathways Programs.

#### **24e. Streamline and expand fellowship and scholarship programs.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress establish a Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center, within OPM and supervised by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, to administer, streamline, and expand fellowship and scholarship programs across the Government and to promote fellowship and scholarship programs, particularly in areas of critical need to the Nation.

The inability of many agencies to hire their high-performing fellowship and scholarship participants to permanent positions defeats the purpose of these programs. In addition, agencies cannot easily create or modify fellowships and scholarships to support their evolving workforce needs. The Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center would have authority to approve, promote, and facilitate agency-funded fellowship and scholarship programs across the Federal Government; would operate a website portal for potential applicants with information on all Federal agency fellowship and scholarship



programs; and would grant NCE to fellowship and scholarship participants. This new approach would help agencies align fellowship and scholarship programs with changing workforce needs to attract to public service a new generation of Americans with critical skills.

## 24f. Revitalize the Presidential Management Fellows Program.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President revitalize the Presidential Management Fellows Program by devolving responsibility to agencies and establishing a separate track for fellows with a technical focus.

The PMF Program is failing to achieve its stated aims of developing and placing young leaders in civilian employment and is instead often criticized for placing only about half of PMF finalists every year, despite its intensive application process. Moreover, despite being advertised as a prestigious leadership program, with unique positions in which fellows can develop cross-functional knowledge and solve problems, it is typically used to fill positions that might otherwise be handled through the normal competitive hiring process. Its revitalization would devolve responsibility for the PMF Program from OPM to agencies and would include two separate tracks, one for leadership

development and one targeted at technical skills. OPM would act as an advisory and facilitating agent while empowering hiring agencies to craft positions of worth for themselves and for the fellows.

## 24g. Establish new postsecondary education pipelines to public service.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to OPM and other agencies to support a Public Service Corps, similar but not identical to the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and in partnership with universities and other levels of government, that awards scholarships and provides special coursework to participants in exchange for a public service commitment.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to the military service academies to bring in a cohort of public service cadets or midshipmen who would be subject to the same five-year service commitment, but in public service rather than in military service, at a Federal agency in a civilian capacity. The number of public service cadets should represent at least 5 percent of the total incoming class at each academy, with no corresponding decline in enrollment of military cadets or midshipmen.

Current avenues for young talent to enter the Federal workforce are insufficient and ineffective, and agencies now face a demographic imbalance in their workforce. Military service academies and ROTC programs deliver a steady stream of talent into the military's ranks each year and have proved successful in developing leadership among the military's junior officer corps. Creating similar pipelines for the Government could help reduce current workforce imbalances and encourage agencies to engage in more long-term, strategic workforce development. Establishing a Public Service Corps alongside



A National Park Service ranger leads an education program at Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Ohio.

Source: National Park Service

ROTC programs and integrating a cohort of public service cadets at military service academies would mitigate the growing civil-military divide among American youth and promote service more broadly. Such programs would also enable Federal-agency sponsors to get an early start to the clearance process so that students are eligible to serve upon graduating.

## ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY'S PUBLIC SERVICE ACADEMY

Founded in 2015, the Public Service Academy at Arizona State University (ASU) educates undergraduates for careers in public service. Incoming freshman enter the Academy and choose the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), the Next Generation Service Corps (NGSC), or the Veterans Scholars Program. Each track is intended to lead purpose-driven students to service-oriented careers. Participants can select any major and earn a certificate in cross-sector leadership; serve in internships at government, for-profit, and nonprofit employers; and complete service requirements within the university. The NGSC and ROTC programs work closely together in order to showcase that "civilian service and military service are really just two sides of the same coin."<sup>175</sup> ASU envisions a future in which a network of public service academies at universities across the Nation prepare their students for and offer a clear pathway to a career in service.

### 24h. Establish a Public Service Academy grant program.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress establish and appropriate funds for a competitive grant program for 50 institutions of higher education to establish public service academies. Grants would provide funding over four years, covering 75 percent of the full operating costs in year one, 50 percent of the operating costs in year two, 50 percent of the operating costs in year three, and 50 percent of the operating costs in year four.

For universities without a Public Service Corps, the Public Service Academy grants could facilitate programs that provide similar educational and experiential opportunities and support the development of public service leadership training more generally, without agencies selecting students or providing scholarships for service commitments.

### *Promote a High-Performing Personnel Culture*

Many of the public service challenges and proposed solutions discussed above concern issues of policy—insufficient authorities or barriers in statute or regulation that prevent agencies from meeting their workforce needs. But just as important is the culture within agencies—for example, whether agencies make full use of existing authorities, whether HR staff work closely with subject-matter experts and hiring managers at all stages of hiring, and whether building a workforce pipeline and investing in the training and career development of the existing workforce are priorities for staff across agency functions. Developing strong competency standards, initial training, and continued professional education for HR staff—and just as importantly, robust training on the Federal personnel system for hiring managers, interviewers, and other non-HR staff who participate in recruiting, hiring, and performance management—could facilitate a culture in which strategic human capital management becomes a whole-of-agency effort. Addressing these matters in large part requires leadership from the agency head and senior management.

Some agencies, or parts of agencies, have developed a productive culture and use existing authorities to meet workforce needs. Others struggle in this area. While the culture at an agency cannot be changed directly by a statute or regulation, policymakers could set the expectation that all agencies achieve a high-performing personnel culture by offering resources, conducting oversight, and removing barriers. The following approaches would provide agencies with tools, goals, resources, and motivation to elevate personnel culture from a siloed HR issue to an agency-wide imperative that includes all hands.

**25: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President emphasize the importance of strategic workforce planning, which should be prioritized and more effectively facilitated by, in particular, agencies and departments emphasizing more strongly the importance of personnel management skills for supervisors; promoting the development of human resources staff and the involvement of subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and assessment; and making the best use of all available hiring authorities and other legal and regulatory options to meet their workforce needs.**

**25a. Elevate the human resources function.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Chief Human Capital Officers Council to establish competency standards for HR specialists, including technical knowledge, analytics, and collaborative skills.

Human resources is a critical function that requires highly capable employees; yet governmentwide standards for hiring and evaluating HR employees do not exist, and agencies and OPM do not provide sufficient training for HR staff. Setting clear competency standards would help establish a foundation for elevating the HR profession within the Government and would affect hiring, allocation of funds for employee training, and the strategic role performed by HR within agencies.

**25b. Encourage agency heads to prioritize talent management.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President require each Federal agency head to identify and/or appoint one or more individuals within the Federal agency to develop a workforce plan.

Many agencies have developed a culture in which HR is discouraged from using all available hiring authorities and from involving subject-matter experts and hiring managers throughout the hiring process, thereby limiting the agency’s ability to meet workforce needs. What is required—and in many cases lacking—is leadership and accountability from the top of the agency to prioritize necessary transformations in culture and operations in order to meet agency workforce needs. Crafting and updating a workforce plan that identifies hiring, retention, and reskilling goals and documents progress with periodic updates would provide agency-wide direction for talent management, as well as offer a mechanism for accountability and oversight by OPM, OMB, and Congress.

**25c. Increase agencies’ public communication about their mission.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct Federal agencies to communicate with the public in order to increase public awareness of their mission and inspire the next generation to serve. To accomplish these ends, the Commission further recommends that the President direct Federal agencies to designate a reasonable percentage of appropriated funds for the purpose of promoting service with the agency, informing the public about agency activities, and recruiting aspiring public servants, and that Congress enact legislation to provide Federal agencies with the authority to engage in robust public communication about their mission.

Agencies’ efforts to increase public awareness of their mission and to inspire the next generation to serve may be hampered by longstanding appropriations riders that prohibit the use of Federal funds for “publicity or propaganda.”<sup>176</sup> Clarifying that agencies are not prohibited from educating and informing the public about their activities, mission, and opportunities for public service could help inspire a new generation of Americans to seek civil service employment.



## *SaNoah's Story*

As a young Native American woman from the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota, the idea of serving never really occurred to me. That is, it was my assumption that one had to enlist in the military in order to serve. I have realized that service can take many forms. What's more, I came to realize how immediate the need is for young adults to serve. Service in my life has taken the form of obtaining an education and garnering professional experiences that will allow me to dedicate my career to serving my Tribal community. My goal is to become a medical doctor who will work for Indian Health Service—the Federal health program for American Indian and Alaska Native communities. The very notion of serving in this capacity is what motivates me to keep moving forward with my education. My career aspirations serve not only myself and my community but lend to the legacy of service that makes America the country that it is.



### **Address Critical-Skill Challenges**

Federal agencies especially struggle to hire workers with critical skills through existing personnel systems. Basic aspects of the General Schedule are out of date—for example, the classification system has no place for data scientists—even as technology and industry standards rapidly progress.<sup>177</sup> At the same time, the Federal Government's compensation and benefits packages are uncompetitive for many occupations, especially for employees who value career mobility.<sup>178</sup> Finally, the most-sought-after individuals are often actively pursued by private companies and rarely spend time searching USAJOBS. It is highly revealing and worrying that in FY 2018 more than 85 percent of National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) vacancies for scientists and mathematicians received fewer than three qualified—not best qualified—applicants.<sup>179</sup> For these reasons, the Federal Government is unable to attract and retain individuals with the skills needed for it to succeed now and in the future. The Government should critically evaluate how its benefit structure and hiring practices have underperformed and should consider new ways to promote entry into areas of critical need.

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*“NASA’s ‘best and brightest minds’ do not perform predictable, repetitive work; in spite of this, almost 100 percent of NASA’s workforce is bound by Title 5’s definition of jobs/occupations and pay rules, which are rigid, antiquated, and seniority-based and no longer fit today’s business model and the actual world of work, let alone the future of work.”*

—Elizabeth Kolmstetter, NASA

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To attract and retain high-skill individuals, the Government requires modernized hiring platforms, competitive pay and benefits packages, and a work environment that aligns with industry expectations. Policymakers have attempted to address these challenges with direct-hire authority, critical pay authority, and specialized personnel systems, but these approaches do not apply uniformly to all agencies or across all needed skillsets. These existing efforts form a base that could be modernized and extended to agencies with similar occupational needs. The recommendations below aim to make the Government more agile, competitive, and forward-looking.

**26:** The Commission encourages the President and Congress to take steps to address the current shortage in Federal-agency health care professionals by streamlining the hiring process and the process for obtaining certain health-related skills and licenses and by promoting appropriate portability of such licenses.

**27:** The Commission recommends that Congress and the President support agencies and departments in improving the hiring process and the compensation options for cybersecurity, information technology (IT), and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professionals with high-demand talent; in developing and maintaining high-demand skills in the existing Federal workforce; and in improving the work environment within the Federal Government so that it more effectively accommodates the needs of such employees.

**27a. Extend special authorities to attract and retain cybersecurity workers.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize every Federal agency to adopt the Cyber Talent Management System, the special personnel system for civilian cybersecurity professionals managed by DHS.

All agencies need cybersecurity workers, but special hiring authorities for cybersecurity are not consistently available to all agencies.\* Extending an existing model to all agencies would harmonize this aspect of the personnel system across the Government and allow all agencies to compete effectively for high-demand cybersecurity talent.

**27b. Reskill the Federal workforce.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress and the President invest in upgrading the skills of the existing Federal workforce.

The Federal Government has not invested enough in maintaining and increasing the cybersecurity and IT skills of current employees. In 2019, the Administration initiated a promising pilot program to reskill current Federal employees not working in the IT field to become cybersecurity analysts.<sup>180</sup> The outcomes of these programs could inform future investments in similar approaches within agencies and across the Government.



Source: NASA

Students greet a NASA astronaut after a presentation about her International Space Station experience.

\* Congress has routinely acknowledged the limitations of the 70-year-old General Schedule by creating specific carve-outs that extend increased flexibility over hiring, training, assignment, performance management, and compensation so affected agencies can more successfully attract talent and manage their workforces. At least 200 separate authorities can be used to hire Federal employees. Some hiring authorities apply only to specific agencies, such as the Transportation Security Administration or the Federal Aviation Administration, or specific occupational fields such as health care, defense acquisitions, or attorneys. Others relate to a specific group of individuals, such as veterans, students and recent graduates, or people with disabilities, or exist to overcome critical hiring shortages.

**27c. Use all available means to maintain a sufficient cybersecurity and IT workforce.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct that an appropriate portion of the evaluations for chief information officers (CIOs), chief human capital officers (CHCOs), and agency heads be based on their ability to utilize all available authorities to recruit and retain IT professionals for their agency.

Federal agencies do not sufficiently involve cybersecurity and IT subject-matter experts and hiring managers in the recruitment, qualification, and assessment processes when hiring technical talent. The U.S. Digital Service has partnered with the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of the Interior to demonstrate best practices for making full use of existing flexibility within competitive examining to hire technical talent, yet cultural barriers prevent many agencies from taking full advantage of these best practices. Holding agency leadership accountable through a new performance metric could help change the culture and thus spread the use of more effective personnel practices and work environments.

**27d. Pilot a Federal Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to create a Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve pilot program.

Agencies with a cybersecurity mission cannot quickly expand the civil service workforce with the technical skills, unique platform knowledge, and appropriate clearance needed in an emergency. Yet recent state-sponsored cyberattacks against OPM's security clearance database, U.S. weather system satellites, and U.S. election systems demonstrate the daily threats posed to Government entities in cyberspace and their far-reaching consequences. A reserve program that permits agencies to call up cybersecurity experts could ensure additional cyber capacity at times of greatest need. By building the reserve program around

cybersecurity experts who have left Government service for other opportunities, the program would also help the Government to maximize the value of taxpayer investment in developing their expertise.

**Increase Competitiveness of Benefits**

The benefits package for newly hired Federal employees includes Federal-agency contributions to retirement, health insurance, and life insurance. The retirement plan has two components: (1) the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) defined-benefit pension and (2) the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) defined-contribution retirement plan, which resembles a 401(k) plan. Federal employees may enroll in supplemental benefits, such as dental insurance or a flexible spending account for health care, at their own expense.

In general, the Federal benefits plan emphasizes deferred compensation and is most valuable for workers who spend most or all of their careers as Federal employees. It is less competitive for workers who seek career mobility, since a substantial portion of retirement benefits are not portable and may have limited value for workers with short terms of Federal employment.

*“We need to preserve Federal benefits and retirement security, while bringing our package more in line with the current job market. . . . The Federal retirement pension is a great benefit, but it is probably not as valued compared to a TSP/401(k) contribution scheme because it is not as mobile when switching employers, and millennials seem to move jobs more than anyone.”* —Public Comment

Federal retirement benefits, in particular, are also relatively expensive. The Congressional Budget Office projects that Federal civilian employees hired in 2018 will contribute an average of 12 percent of their salaries to Federal retirement benefits (including FERS and TSP), and agencies will contribute another 15.5 percent of workers' salaries during their careers to finance these benefits.<sup>181</sup> Because the employee contributions reduce current take-home pay, heavy reliance on them also reduces the competitiveness of cash compensation. An updated benefits design that incorporates options that are increasingly common among private-sector



employers and allows individuals to prioritize short-term value may attract more individuals—especially those with high-demand skills—to Federal service.

**28:** **The Commission recommends that the President and Congress create additional flexibility in the benefits packages for Government employees to better compensate and recruit individuals who do not foresee career-long employment with the Federal Government and furthermore take steps to improve employees’ understanding of the benefits available to them.**

**28a. Improve and update benefits for Federal civilian employees.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Council on Military, National, and Public Service to create an advisory committee, with representatives from various stakeholders, that would review and develop recommendations on how to improve and update benefits for Federal civilian employees to meet the needs of the future workforce.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize OPM to offer a new benefit option for newly hired, non-public safety, Federal civil service employees with fully portable retirement benefits, flexible time off, paid parental leave, and comprehensive disability-income insurance.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress establish a cafeteria plan for certain Federal employee benefits.

The FERS pension is a poor value for employees who serve fewer than 20 years.<sup>182</sup> Moreover, the Federal Government has not kept up with competing employers in offering other benefits, such as disability-income insurance.<sup>183</sup> Developing a new benefit option that addresses these changes in the workforce and competitive landscape—and that incorporates the needs of various agencies and stakeholders—would enable

agencies to compete more effectively for talented individuals who value career mobility.

In addition, under current policy, Federal agencies contribute to some benefits—including life insurance—but not to others, such as dental insurance. Some employees might prefer to use the agency contribution for benefits other than life insurance. Incorporating a cafeteria plan within the benefits package would enable Federal employees to redirect agency contributions toward the supplemental benefits—such as dental insurance, vision coverage, and flexible spending accounts—that they value most.

**28b. Treat alumni of Federal service corps equally with regard to pension credit.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize Federal employees who are alumni of service corps operated by Federal agencies the option to purchase FERS pension service credit.

FERS policies apply inconsistently to alumni of Federal-agency-operated national service programs. AmeriCorps VISTA and Peace Corps alumni who become Federal employees may obtain FERS pension service credit by making a payment to the Treasury to cover the employee contribution, but alumni of other AmeriCorps programs, such as NCCC and FEMA Corps, cannot.<sup>184</sup>

**28c. Improve communication and data collection regarding benefits.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to include an estimated benefits statement with all Federal-agency job offers and to send it to all Federal employees on an annual basis.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to improve data collection on agency-specific benefits and on Federal employee views regarding current and potential new benefits.

Benefits represent a substantial portion of compensation for Federal employees, yet prospective hires may not realize their importance. Such ignorance about benefits may make Federal employment seem less competitive than it truly is. In addition, policymakers lack sufficient data on the use of existing optional benefits within agencies, as well as on the opinions of Federal employees about current and potential new benefits.

**28d. Maintain competitive benefits for emergency response and public safety officers.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress and the President preserve competitive benefits structures for emergency response and public safety officers, commensurate with their job requirements and their responsibilities to the public.

Sometimes—perhaps unintentionally—policymakers have changed employee benefits in ways that make them less competitive. For example, changes by the city of Memphis made the retirement benefits for law enforcement officers and firefighters much less valuable than those offered to public safety employees by competing jurisdictions, causing retention problems. Careful consideration of how benefits packages accommodate the specific employment circumstances of emergency response and public safety officers can help agencies to attract and retain these valuable public servants.

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*“[I]t is important to broaden authorities across the Government rather than granting ‘carve-outs’ to certain agencies. Patchwork solutions are not optimal because even as they solve a specific hiring problem for one agency, they add unnecessary complexity and create endemic problems to the system.”*

*—Meroe Park,  
former Senior Official, Central Intelligence Agency*

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**Develop a New Personnel System**

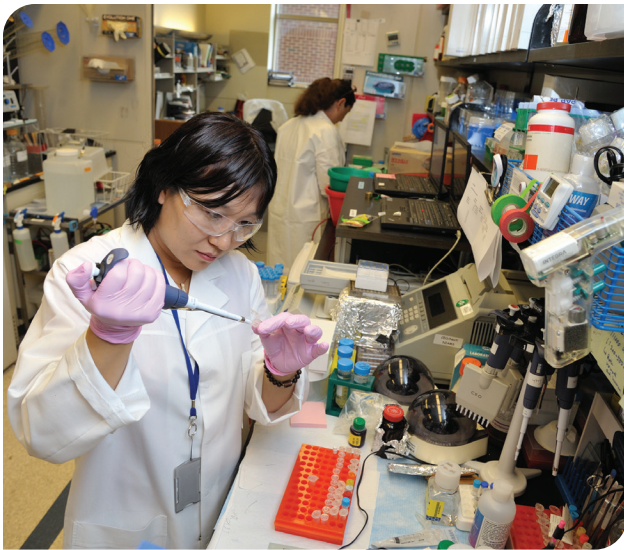
Federal classification, compensation, and competitive examining processes have not fundamentally changed since the General Schedule was established 70 years ago. The Federal personnel system is not competitive with that of other employers and cannot meet Federal agency workforce needs. To address these problems, Congress has created work-arounds and alternative personnel systems for some agencies, sometimes in response to high-profile, urgent needs. As a result, Federal personnel policy is not a unified system but a “highly diverse collection of agency-based processes with only loose central oversight.”<sup>185</sup> The Federal Government’s fragmented, outdated, and rigid personnel system hinders its ability to adequately meet workforce needs. An updated version of the demonstration authority in statute—used productively by OPM and other agencies—could create the practical knowledge base and a viable set of tools to build a new personnel system that remains competitive into the future.

**29: The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and the President direct implementation of a modern talent-management system across the Federal Government.**

**29a. Revamp personnel demonstration-project authority.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress expand OPM’s demonstration authority to test changes to personnel systems, loosening the time and personnel restrictions as well as enabling OPM to expand demonstrated successes without statutory changes.

A revitalized demonstration-project authority could be key to taking a different approach to Federal hiring—one built on experimentation and gradual, sustained improvement. Currently, demonstration projects are restricted in time and scale, and when they succeed agencies cannot act on those results without legislative action. These obstacles limit the utility and effectiveness of demonstration projects for improving the Federal Government’s hiring processes.



Source: NIH

A National Institutes of Health scientist conducts research in a lab.

**29b. Pilot a new personnel system at select agencies.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize OPM to pilot a new personnel system, covering hiring, classification, compensation, transfer, and promotion, at agencies with a significant number of STEM employees.

Because the classification, hiring, and compensation systems interact in ways that obstruct Federal-agency efforts to hire STEM professionals, agencies that hire significant numbers of STEM professionals are ideal candidates to test a new talent-management system. The results of a pilot project would establish an evidence base that could inform future efforts to comprehensively modernize personnel systems governmentwide.

**29c. Monitor the progress of the Commission’s recommended reforms.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress and the President require a comprehensive evaluation of changes to Federal personnel policy made in response to the Commission’s report.

Modernization of Federal personnel systems will be most effective with iterative, evidence-based approaches, including a thorough review of changes made in response to the Commission’s recommendations and their results. Data demonstrating the impact of such changes is necessary to guide the regular adjustment of programs to ensure future success, as well as to achieve buy-in for more wholesale implementation.

**29d. Generate proposals for a new personnel system.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and the President direct the development of comprehensive proposals for a modern talent-management system to meet modern workforce needs.

By engaging public service experts to develop proposals on comprehensive personnel reform—based on rigorous analyses of demonstration projects across various agencies and disciplines—policymakers can build the groundwork for the strongest package to modernize and transform the Federal Government into a competitive employer.

## INTEGRATE MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

### Findings and Recommendations

The Nation thrives when Americans step up and serve the common interests of the American people, whether by providing for the common defense, addressing community needs, or contributing to governmental functions. Service cannot—and should not—be categorized as military, national, *or* public; in fact, the needs of the Nation are best met when military veterans play an active role in the public sector, AmeriCorps alumni take their skills to the Armed Forces, and public servants support the goals of national service. Therefore, the Commission urges policymakers to consider these streams of service holistically when taking action, with a goal of bolstering a shared ethos of service among Americans.



**30: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President develop and improve mechanisms that connect service opportunities and promote the vision “every American inspired and eager to serve.”**

**30a. Optimize cross-service marketing and recruitment opportunities.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for a pilot program overseen by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service and run in appropriate agencies and departments to invest recruiting resources for military, national, and public service in underserved markets as defined by each service—focusing on gender, geography, socioeconomic status, and critical skills—to better reflect the demography of the Nation and ensure that recruiting needs are met into the future.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress direct and appropriate the necessary funds for the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps to collaborate on joint advertising campaigns and to share marketing research resources.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the CEO of CNCS and the Director of the Peace Corps, to develop and provide to the Armed Services Committees a plan for providing ineligible or non-selected applicants with information about the other forms of service.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps to sign an interagency agreement (IAA) formally committing their agencies to develop and implement cross-service incentives for recruitment and retention purposes.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress require the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, together with the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps, to jointly produce a quadrennial report that is focused on evaluating cross-service participation and that contains recommendations for increasing joint awareness and recruitment initiatives.

DoD, CNCS, and the Peace Corps all recruit from similar demographics to fill their ranks, generally focusing on Americans ages 18 to 25. The lack of systematic cooperation between military and national service leaders has led to many missed opportunities. Coordination between CNCS, the Peace Corps, and the military to develop recruiting strategies to expand their respective reaches will make possible increased innovation in marketing through the sharing of best practices. Incentivizing transitions between service streams will support those who wish to continue serving the Nation after their current term of service ends.

**30b. Promote continued service for those completing a term of service.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to work with the CEO of CNCS to provide information on national and public service to transitioning military service members through DoD’s Transition Assistance Program, and to provide military and public service information to individuals completing national service.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS and the Director of the Peace Corps to work with the Secretary of Defense and Director of OPM to provide military service and public service information to transitioning national service members.

Testimony to the Commission suggests that national service could be a mutually supporting partner with DoD’s TAP. Military veterans often possess skills and

experiences that make them ideal candidates to serve as leaders in national service programs. If national service is highlighted as a potential option for transitioning veterans to explore, both veterans and their communities will benefit from their increased participation in national service programs. Similarly, because national service alumni possess a proven ability to work as part of a team toward a larger goal, they are excellent candidates to continue in military or public service. Creating intersecting paths to service careers will provide military, national, and public service organizations with a pool of quality candidates that is both wide and deep.

### **A Path Forward**

The Commission's recommendations to increase participation in military, national, and public service have the potential to dramatically expand awareness of service opportunities, aspiration to serve the community and the Nation, and access to service options. This expansion would advance America's culture of service and help the Nation address critical needs and improve the lives of countless Americans.

*Please see Appendix B for additional details and implementation guidance concerning the military, national, and public service recommendations.*

# STRENGTHEN EMERGENCY NATIONAL MOBILIZATION

**T**hroughout the history of the Nation, the American people have proven their willingness to defend the country through military service. The Commission embraces the American tradition of first seeking volunteers for military service to meet national needs. However, it also recognizes the established constitutional authority and enduring requirement of the Federal Government to provide for the Nation's common defense.

Congress charged the Commission with reviewing whether, as part of this requirement, the Nation still needs a draft contingency mechanism to organize and mobilize Americans in the event of a national emergency. Congress also required the Commission to review whether all individuals should be required to

register and whether certain changes, such as inducting individuals with skills for which the Nation has a critical need, might enhance the existing system's ability to meet evolving national security needs.

After careful consideration of the alternatives, the Commission recommends maintaining the Selective Service System as a draft contingency mechanism. In addition, the Commission offers recommendations to modernize, enhance, and improve the fairness of the system for mobilizing the Nation for military service as well as recommendations designed to take advantage of volunteers who may step forward in a national emergency before the Nation turns to the draft. Ensuring successful and timely national mobilization in the event of a national emergency requires advance planning, maintenance of a draft contingency mechanism, and improved transparency and confidence in the process by which the Nation would mobilize.\*

## Background

The United States has employed conscription throughout its history to fill recruiting shortfalls and meet increased personnel needs. During the Civil War and World War I and, with one brief exception, from just prior to its entry into World War II until the draft's deactivation after the Vietnam War, the Federal Government used conscription to meet its military personnel needs. Through the second half of the twentieth century, draft induction policy and implementation varied.

\* The Commission uses the phrase "national mobilization" to refer to any mobilization of personnel beyond the resources of the All-Volunteer Force. Although such mobilization may also involve personnel needs for national security institutions and the defense industrial base, the Commission's focus is on DoD personnel requirements.



Source: U.S. Army

Army recruits take the oath of enlistment in Trenton, New Jersey.



But as the escalation of the Vietnam War reached its height during the 1960s under President Lyndon B. Johnson, the expansion and often inconsistent application of deferments—allowing individuals selected for military service to delay or in effect be exempted from their obligation—coupled with larger numbers of draftees being inducted for an unpopular war, fueled public discontent with the draft. Prior to Vietnam, polling indicated that “the general public seemed satisfied with the draft system.”<sup>186</sup> But perceptions of the use of the draft during the Vietnam conflict, above all others, define how Americans view conscription and the Selective Service System. These impressions contribute to misperceptions that have obscured the draft’s historical purpose and utility in national emergencies.

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*“It may be laid down, as a primary position, and the basis of our system, that every Citizen who enjoys the protection of a free Government, owes not only a proportion of his property, but even his personal services to the defence of it[.]”*

—George Washington

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### **The Civil War and World War I**

At the time of the Nation’s founding, Americans were suspicious of a large peacetime military; as a result, the Government initially maintained a relatively small standing military and rapidly increased the size of the Armed Forces during conflicts. When a larger force was necessary, the United States called for volunteers from local militias or used conscription. Conscription at the Federal level began in the Civil War and ended with that conflict; the Government did not reinstate the draft until after America’s entry into World War I, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the Selective Service Act of 1917. By creating the Selective Service System, that act for the first time established a means to selectively induct individual registrants through a decentralized system of local draft boards.<sup>187</sup> Over the course of the war, 2.8 million men between the ages of 18 and 45 were inducted from a pool of 24.2 million registrants.<sup>188</sup>

### **THE SELECTIVE SERVICE ACT OF 1917**

Congress passed the Selective Service Act of 1917 shortly after the United States entered World War I because volunteers were not joining the military quickly enough to expand the military to wartime strength.<sup>189</sup> This act authorized the Federal Government to require all men, initially those between 21 and 31 years of age and then all men ages 18 through 45, to register for conscription.<sup>190</sup> The law established a *selective* system of conscription that used local boards to select and classify draftees, in contrast with a *universal* system that would have applied to every American.<sup>191</sup>

### **World War II**

Following World War I, the number of personnel in the U.S. military fell rapidly as the Nation returned to its peacetime posture. But by 1940, as war spread across Europe and the threat of conflict in the Pacific grew, senior retired U.S. military officers worried about the small size of the U.S. force and the time required to bring the force to wartime strength should the United States enter the war. On September 16, 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Selective Training and Service Act, which required males between the ages of 21 and 35 to register with the Selective Service.<sup>192</sup> The law stated that inductees would be subject to 12 months of training followed by not more than 10 years of reserve duty. It also included several provisions that narrowed the draft’s scope, including capping the total number of draftees at 900,000 and prohibiting draftees from being deployed outside the Western Hemisphere unless the President declared a state of emergency. Although the draft had popular support, these provisions and the time required—several months—for the bill to pass Congress reflected the public’s reluctance to become involved in a foreign war.<sup>193</sup>

While the draft was intended to prepare the United States for its eventual participation in World War II, this was the first time in the country’s history that conscription was used in peacetime. The 1940 law, modeled after the Selective Service Act of 1917,

initially put in place a lottery conducted by local draft boards, because local control was believed to provide the fairest way to classify and assess individuals for induction. The lottery system, replaced in 1942 by a system that allocated quotas to local boards, would not reappear until the late 1960s.<sup>194</sup>

Following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the formal declaration of war, inductions rapidly increased as the expansion of the U.S. military accelerated.<sup>195</sup> Because nearly 65 percent of the 17 million men who registered in 1940 and 1941 were granted dependency deferments, Congress was forced to reassess policy to ensure that the Nation had the manpower it needed to prosecute the war. In November 1942, Congress amended the Selective Training and Service Act to also call into service men ages 18 to 20.<sup>196</sup> In addition, it altered how draft quotas were filled nationwide so that eligible childless men were called before those with dependents.<sup>197</sup> As the war progressed, the registration requirements would broaden to include all men ages 18 to 65, and eligibility standards for those 18 to 25 were greatly relaxed.<sup>198</sup>

By the end of World War II, approximately 16 million men, 10 million of whom were conscripted, had served in the military—roughly 12 percent of the total U.S. population at the time.<sup>199</sup> About four out of five men born in the 1920s performed military service, creating a common and lasting bond between Americans from all walks of life.<sup>200</sup> Though opposition to the draft existed and some individuals pursued ways to avoid service, a Gallup poll conducted in 1941, before the United States entered the war, found that 93 percent believed the draft was implemented fairly in their community and that an expectation to serve was widely shared.<sup>201</sup>

### **Korean War**

After the Allied victory in World War II, Congress continued conscription by extending the Selective Training and Service Act in 1945 and 1946. In 1947, however, President Harry Truman placed the Selective Service in “deep standby”—eliminating the draft, halting registration, and transferring the remaining duties to preserve knowledge and store records to the Office of Selective Service Records.<sup>202</sup>

By 1948, just three years after the end of World War II, the military had decreased to roughly one-twelfth



Source: U.S. Army Signal Corps

U.S. troops approach Omaha Beach on D-Day.

its 1945 size. But low rates of voluntary enlistment, coupled with a coup in Czechoslovakia that heightened fears of a looming conflict with the Soviet Union, raised concerns that the minimized Selective Service System would not be able to meet the military's need for personnel in the event of an emergency. Congress therefore reauthorized the draft in the Selective Service Act of 1948.<sup>203</sup>

The Selective Service Act was scheduled to expire in June 1950, in recognition of budget constraints and renewed hopes that the threat of war was subsiding. However, on June 25, 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea and war erupted on the peninsula. Congress swiftly moved to extend the law under the Universal Military Training and Service Act of 1951.<sup>204</sup> Approximately 1.5 million conscripts served during the Korean War, making up about one-quarter of uniformed service members at the time.

Because fewer conscripts were called and the U.S. population had grown by tens of millions since 1945, the overall percentage of men who were drafted was substantially lower in the Korean War than in World War II.<sup>205</sup> Even though a smaller percentage of Americans expected to be conscripted, a 1953 Gallup poll found that 60 percent of Americans believed the draft was handled fairly in their communities; 29 percent had no opinion on the question.<sup>206</sup>

### PROVIDING A FAIR AND EQUITABLE SYSTEM

The U.S. military selective service process is based on a common obligation for all persons eligible to submit to a lottery system operated in a manner that is fair and just. The Selective Service System, working with DoD, is responsible for consistently evaluating each individual selected by the lottery and appropriately classifying them for military service, alternative service, or a deferment or exemption. The rules governing registration eligibility requirements, classification, deferments, and exemptions set societal expectations for who should serve. Given the need to maintain the health of the civilian economy and the societal value in exempting some individuals from a military draft, including those providing essential support to their family or community, the Government has utilized deferments and exemptions since modern conscription began in World War I. Historically, draft exemption policies seldom changed, whereas deferment categories and classification criteria were often and routinely expanded or restricted, depending on personnel needs. Past policies that created more deferment categories, some of which were open primarily to those of privileged socioeconomic status, contributed to a perception that the system was unfair and led public opinion about the draft to turn increasingly negative during the 1960s.<sup>207</sup>

### *Vietnam War*

From just prior to the Korean conflict through the end of the Vietnam War in 1973, the draft was used to fill shortfalls in the military's annual recruiting targets, whether in peacetime or during conflict. Thus, the emergency draft of the World War II era was replaced with a form of standing conscription. This version of conscription was expected to fulfill annual military personnel requirements while being responsive to recruiting trends and changes to numbers of authorized military personnel. In the decade that followed the Korean conflict, Congress repeatedly reauthorized the use of conscription. When American military involvement in Vietnam expanded in 1965 and 1966, the number of

inductees more than tripled and criteria for deferments were tightened to meet the increased needs of the military, changes that contributed to political tensions and a growing dissatisfaction with the system.<sup>208</sup>

Although conscripts, on average, made up only about 20 percent of the total force during the Vietnam War, with most never serving in Vietnam,<sup>209</sup> the draft was viewed both within the military and within society more broadly as unfair and inequitable. The widespread use of deferments—particularly those for college students, who were more economically advantaged—and a growing feeling that black Americans were disproportionately drafted and sent into combat, fostered a sense of inequity that today still strongly influences public perception of the Selective Service System and the draft.

### *Shift to a Standby Draft*

By the end of the 1960s, public sentiment that the Vietnam War was unnecessary and immoral was growing among the American public, the military faced increasing discipline problems with draftees, and the draft was seen as unfair to the ever-smaller proportion of Americans who were compelled to serve. As a candidate during the 1968 presidential election, Richard Nixon promised to end conscription if elected. After taking office, President Nixon appointed a commission led by former Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates to examine the best means for ending conscription. In 1970, the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, known as the "Gates Commission," recommended the end of standing conscription and the creation of a military composed entirely of volunteers. However, the Gates Commission also recommended that Congress enact legislation to maintain a standby mechanism; it would require the registration of all males who "might be conscripted when essential for national security," in "the event of a national emergency" to be "invoked only by resolution of Congress at the request of the President" if the Nation required manpower resources beyond the capability of the active and reserve components.<sup>210</sup>

In 1973, President Nixon fulfilled his campaign promise, ending conscription and establishing the modern All-Volunteer Force. By 1975, draft registration was suspended, and the Selective Service System again entered a "deep standby" posture—in which the agency maintained only a pared-down staff, its national



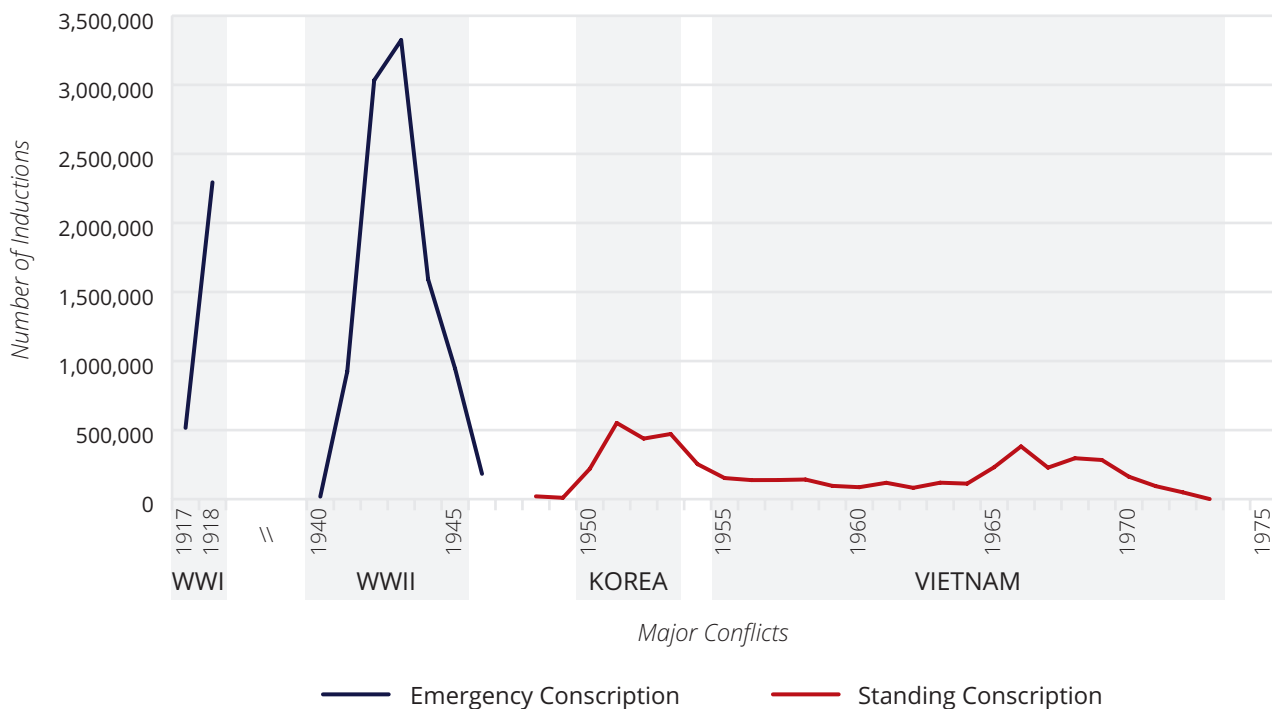
headquarters, and nine regional offices.<sup>211</sup> A series of events occurring in the late 1970s shifted the priorities of policymakers, however. In 1978, the Department of Defense (DoD) conducted a congressionally mandated exercise involving command posts across the United States and Europe, dubbed “Nifty Nugget;” it tested the ability of the military to rapidly deploy personnel and equipment across the globe to respond to the Soviet threat in Europe. Before the exercise, DoD had specifically highlighted personnel shortages as a potential problem in mobilization and deployment.<sup>212</sup> The exercise not only confirmed this but also revealed systemic weaknesses in the military’s capacity to generate and deploy forces for a full-scale conflict in Europe in

the absence of a ready Selective Service System.<sup>213</sup> After additional concerns were raised by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, President Jimmy Carter reinstated active registration for the Selective Service System.

In taking this action in 1980, President Carter limited registration to men through Executive order but also proposed that Congress amend the Military Selective Service Act to include women.<sup>214</sup> Congress rejected this proposal. A Senate report that year asserted that in the event of a draft, the primary need would be for combat replacements.<sup>215</sup> Noting that both law and policy in 1980 excluded women from combat, the Senate report concluded that women should not be included in the Selective Service registration system. Following a legal

**Figure 9: Number of Selective Service System Inductions by Year**

This figure indicates the number of inductions between 1917 and 1973, and thus shows the relative use of conscripts throughout the 20th century. While almost every conflict in the 20th century relied on conscription to fulfill personnel needs, more than three times as many conscripts were inducted between 1940 and 1945 for World War II than were conscripted over the 18 years of the Vietnam conflict.



Source: “Induction Statistics,” Selective Service System, accessed December 13, 2019, <https://www.sss.gov/About/History-And-Records/Induction-Statistics>.



## Findings and Recommendations

### *The Purpose and Value of the Selective Service System*

The United States is navigating a world of increasing uncertainty and potentially significant threats to the Nation. Given the lessons of history, and in an environment of possible great power conflict, it is not unrealistic to believe that America may be faced with a conflict for which available military forces prove insufficient. DoD has further highlighted that a draft contingency mechanism is needed to ensure that it has sufficient personnel, which may include both combat and noncombat troops, to address a range of possible threats to the Nation and its common defense.<sup>219</sup> For these reasons, every Presidential Administration since 1980 has made the conscious decision to maintain registration for the Selective Service System.<sup>220</sup>

#### UNDERPINNING THE COMMISSION'S ANALYSIS

While evaluating the Selective Service System and national mobilization processes, the Commission relied on the following judgments to bound the scope of its review:

- > The United States faces threats to vital national security interests, and the potential for existential threats—natural or man-made—will persist.
- > Military personnel costs will remain fiscally sustainable and national leaders will sufficiently resource the All-Volunteer Force to address most threats to vital U.S. interests.
- > Any military draft should be reserved for national security emergencies.
- > Current conditions do not appear to warrant a return to standing conscription.
- > The national context in which voluntary or compulsory national mobilization occurs will drive public acceptance, support, and response.
- > Although the U.S. military has historically lowered accession standards during large-scale conflicts, it is uncertain whether or how DoD would adjust accession standards for volunteers before recommending that Congress and the President activate the draft.

The Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) states that the current purpose of the Selective Service System is to achieve and maintain “an adequate armed strength” and to share the obligations and privileges of serving in the Armed Forces “in accordance with a system of selection which is fair and just.”<sup>221</sup> The Government Accountability Office (GAO) stated in a January 2018 report that “the Selective Service System mission is to be prepared to provide trained and untrained manpower to DoD in the event of a national emergency when directed by the President and the Congress.”<sup>222</sup> As DoD noted in a report to Congress on the Selective Service System, “this is not a theoretical capability,” adding that the Selective Service “*is the only* proven, time-tested mechanism by which to expand the [All-Volunteer Force] in the event of a national emergency.”<sup>223</sup> Indeed, as Dr. Nora Bensahel noted in her statement to the Commission, “History shows that the United States has relied on conscription for its large wars, no matter how strong the support of the American people.”<sup>224</sup> She further asserted that although the All-Volunteer Force has produced a very strong military, its performance in recent, relatively small wars did not obviate the need for a draft contingency mechanism.

Some disagree with this assessment. The Commission heard from Americans who are opposed to the Selective Service System entirely. These individuals cite a range of concerns. Some oppose war, whether because of political disagreement with what they perceive as militaristic U.S. foreign policy or because of deeply held personal beliefs against violence. Some oppose even minimal programmatic costs for a system that may not be used again imminently. Some resist the infringement of individual liberty, even for national defense.

Some Americans who express skepticism regarding the Selective Service System also raise concerns regarding compliance. They believe that evaluating the performance of the system through registration compliance rates does not account for what they infer will be poor turnout by those selected for evaluation in a potential draft. They also question the efficacy of criminal enforcement regarding those who are selected by lottery for evaluation and induction in the event of a draft.<sup>225</sup>

On the other hand, the Commission heard from Americans who support a return to a peacetime draft. Such advocates point to the need to meet DoD personnel



requirements, and they promote the individual benefits of military service and broader personal development that service of all forms confers on participants. Their sentiments are voiced by retired Major General Dennis Laich, who asserted in his statement to the Commission that the All-Volunteer Force structure is “unfair, inefficient, and unsustainable,” when contrasted with that of a force populated through recruitment of willing volunteers alongside annual percentages of peacetime conscripts.<sup>226</sup>

Others affirm that the Selective Service System is a capability that may be necessary someday, but disagree on whether it is needed now. In his testimony to the Commission, Dr. Bernard Rostker, former Director of the Selective Service System, judged that a military draft contingency mechanism could be reconstituted in time for a conflict, as the United States did before World War I and World War II. Dr. Kori Schake disagreed, stating, “We may not need it now, but it would be extraordinarily difficult to create in a national emergency that required calling up for service a large force.”<sup>227</sup> Indeed, the Selective Service System contends that crucial elements of the system’s infrastructure, particularly a “system of record” capable of processing the massive amounts of information necessary to conduct a draft, could take over a year to reconstitute.<sup>228</sup>

After extensive review, the Commission reaffirms the need to maintain a contingency for mandatory military service in order to draw on the talents, skills, and abilities of Americans in the event of a national emergency, and to clarify the purpose of that system in law. The Selective Service is an essential component of the Nation’s military preparedness.

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*“[N]ational interests are served by the Selective Service System. Registration provides a hedge against a catastrophe we do not yet anticipate. The Selective Service System is a means to sustain this legacy by reminding our youth that public service is a valid part of American Citizenship.”*

—Chuck Hagel,  
former Secretary of Defense

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**31:** The Commission reaffirms the continued need for a draft contingency mechanism to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during a national emergency.

**32:** The Commission recommends that Congress clarify the purpose of the Selective Service by revising the MSSA purpose statement to read: “The Congress hereby declares that an adequate military strength must be achieved and maintained to insure the security of this Nation by insuring adequate personnel with the requisite capabilities to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during a national emergency and not solely to provide combat replacements.”

In addition to reviewing the need for and purpose of a military draft contingency, the Commission also carefully considered the enduring value of this system for mobilization. Each Presidential Administration since at least 1994 has claimed that the Selective Service System provides three concrete benefits: (1) a hedge against unforeseen threats and a relatively low-cost insurance policy against potential threats, (2) a deterrent to U.S. adversaries, and (3) a link between the military and American society.<sup>229</sup>

Often referred to as a “low-cost insurance policy,” the Selective Service System offers value as part of a broader system to mobilize the Nation against threats. The 2017 DoD report to Congress on the purpose and utility of a registration system for military selective service emphasizes that the Selective Service System is required as a way to expand the force, particularly if the Nation is confronted by a “crisis of existential proportions.”<sup>230</sup> The 2018 National Defense Strategy Commission similarly pointed to “unanticipated force demands” as a risk factor threatening the ability of the United States to fulfill the goals of national defense, such as defeating one major-power rival while maintaining deterrence in other regions.<sup>231</sup> The Commission agrees that a key value of the Selective Service System is to meet an abrupt rise in force requirements during a national emergency.

However, DoD did not provide compelling evidence for the two other often-cited benefits of the Selective Service System. After engaging with DoD and intelligence community officials, the Commission found no direct evidence or support for the argument that maintaining a conscription system deters potential adversaries. This is understandable, given the decades that have passed since the Selective Service System was last utilized and considering the many components of national strength that deter our adversaries. Indirectly, however, a reduction in the readiness of the Selective Service System might be interpreted as a weakening of U.S. resolve to maintain foreign policy commitments. Academic experts told the Commission that the international community pays attention to changes in U.S. military personnel systems, which would be evaluated as a demonstration of U.S. resolve, adding that any proposed changes to the broader national mobilization system should be accompanied by a communication and education plan.<sup>232</sup>

Similarly, the Commission did not find evidence that the Selective Service System helps connect the American public with the obligations of military service. Some scholars argue that registration for the Selective Service System is worth maintaining, if only to uphold one of the last remaining connections between the broader American society and the military; others argue further that standing conscription should be reinstated to more equitably distribute the sacrifices of military service. Although the Selective Service System Director testified that young men are aware of their obligation to register and understand what it means, recent research shows that less than half of males between the ages of 16 and 24 understand that 18- to 25-year-old men are required to register and update their contact information with the Selective Service System.<sup>233</sup> Clearly, the current Selective Service System falls short in conveying that obligation or creating any meaningful connection between individual registrants and the Nation's current All-Volunteer Force.

Although there may be ancillary benefits from Selective Service System registration, such as providing DoD with information useful to military recruiting, in the view of the Commission the value of the Selective Service System does not rest on such benefits.

**33: The Commission affirms the key values of a draft contingency mechanism, namely (1) as a hedge against the risk of military personnel shortages in DoD during a national security emergency, and (2) as a symbol of U.S. national resolve to mobilize the Nation to meet commitments to its Armed Forces, allies, and partners.**

### *Reaffirming the American Approach for Defending the Nation*

#### **Recognizing the National Mobilization Continuum**

While the Commission affirms the need for the United States to maintain the ability to mobilize its people in the case of a national emergency, it views the draft as being appropriate as a last resort. In the event of a national emergency, the Federal Government should plan to first mobilize volunteers to defend the Nation and exhaust all available options before activating conscription.

The Commission believes that before resorting to the draft, the President should encourage Americans to voluntarily join the military, through an official call for volunteers. Such a call would solicit additional personnel who could stem shortages and possibly avoid the necessity of immediate escalation to the draft. A call for volunteers would also demonstrate resolve beyond U.S. borders that the Nation was preparing for potential hostilities; however, establishing formal procedures for a call for volunteers would in no way constrain the President's ability to call for a draft, if necessary.

**34: The Commission recommends that the President issue an Executive order setting out policy for issuing a call for volunteers before exercising a draft contingency.**

Over the Nation's history, the military has typically relied on both volunteers and conscripts during times of crisis—but a review of the historical record revealed that

U.S. Presidents have seldom made a formal call for volunteers to mobilize the American public to join the military during a national emergency. Although President William McKinley issued a call for volunteers to increase the size of the force during the Spanish-American War and President Wilson formally asked for military volunteers in the lead-up to America's entry into World War I,<sup>234</sup> no such Presidential call was used in the succeeding 60 years.\*

Despite the absence of formal calls, volunteers joined the military—often in large numbers—alongside conscripts during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. It is not clear exactly how many volunteers enlisted in the months following the attack on Pearl Harbor, but contemporaneous reporting indicates that “thousands of men attempted to enlist” in the days immediately after the attack.<sup>235</sup> More recently, in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the Nation experienced an initial bump in volunteering for military service, but the brief increase in propensity to serve did not last and was not accompanied by a call for volunteers.<sup>236</sup>

Recent polling conducted by the Harvard Institute of Politics shows that 30.9 percent of sampled adults would likely join the military following a call for volunteers in an existential crisis, and 27.3 percent would do so in an emergency to protect foreign policy interests.<sup>237</sup> Even though the proportion of adults who would commit voluntarily when faced with an existential crisis may seem surprisingly low, this data represents a notable increase in current trends in propensity to serve in the military. According to DoD's Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies (JAMRS) research, about 14 percent of youth from ages 16 to 21 report that it is likely that they will

*Recent polling conducted by the Harvard Institute of Politics shows that 30.9 percent of sampled adults would likely join the military following a call for volunteers in an existential crisis.*

serve in the military in coming years.<sup>238</sup> The difference in polling numbers suggests that a formal call for volunteers would be useful in producing an additional flow of personnel during a national emergency.

### Preserving a Pre-Mobilization Registration System

If the Nation is faced with such a significant crisis that it must initiate a draft to adequately confront threats, the Government will benefit from a ready, active system for quickly mobilizing and inducting personnel. The Commission determined that maintaining pre-mobilization registration mitigates the level of potential risk accepted by the Nation, ensuring that an adequate insurance policy remains in place in the event of a national mobilization while providing critical functions and procedures to safeguard a fair, equitable, and transparent draft process. In particular, a pre-mobilization registration system better provides for other critical functions and for the infrastructure required by the national mobilization process. Retaining a pre-mobilization system also sends a critical message to members of the All-Volunteer Force that the Nation recognizes the importance of their service and that national leaders are willing to commit to supporting a continuum of options between the All-Volunteer Force and full national mobilization.

**35: The Commission reaffirms the Selective Service System's pre-mobilization registration posture and recommends that Congress and the President maintain the Selective Service pre-mobilization registration requirement.**

Upon careful consideration, the Commission determined that eliminating or reducing the Selective Service System infrastructure would represent a significant and unacceptable risk to the Nation. The Selective Service System estimates that if the agency were in a standby mode or disestablished, and Congress and the President were compelled to activate a draft, it would require approximately 830 days or 920 days, respectively, to deliver the first inductees.<sup>239</sup> This estimate is

\* For example, during President Roosevelt's speech following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, he made no direct ask for volunteers. Similarly, President Carter made a clear call for young people to volunteer for the military during a question-and-answer session with high school students in 1980, but this call was unrelated to any specific national security crisis. See Jimmy Carter, “Wyoming, Michigan Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session with High School Students,” October 24, 1980, in the American Presidency Project, Peters and Woolley, accessed August 22, 2019, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/251631>.



derived primarily from the agency's experience with the 1980 decision to restart active registration.<sup>240</sup> The Selective Service System also estimates that if registration is suspended, it would take one year after congressional authorization to deliver the first inductees. This time span far exceeds the current DoD requirement that the Selective Service System provide inductees 193 days after draft authorization, posing an unacceptable risk to the Nation.

### Alternatives Considered to the Current System

As part of its comprehensive review, the Commission examined proposals for both voluntary and mandatory registration alternatives to the current registration system.

Previous proposals for voluntary alternatives to draft registration identified by the Commission essentially would have created an untrained, unorganized reserve force. Such proposals vary regarding whether to extend compensation to volunteers and whether those who volunteered to be available should have a legal obligation to serve in a crisis.\* However, voluntary alternatives present several challenges. Uncompensated and untrained volunteer reserves who are not bound to serve would provide only marginal benefit to DoD unless it had additional knowledge of their eligibility or specific skillsets. In addition, because individuals' interest in military service would have to be revalidated at the time of accession, such reserves could not provide value as a guaranteed source of personnel and would offer little advantage over a call for volunteers. On the other

hand, an uncompensated but legally bound untrained reserve would likely attract few volunteers, while a compensated, legally bound untrained reserve could be costly and therefore difficult to scale as a program. All volunteer-based proposals would remain of indeterminate utility, since registrants' ability to meet basic military eligibility requirements is not known.

Alternative approaches that would preserve registration involve two key decisions: whether individuals must actively participate in the registration process and how to sequence populating the registration database in relation to the decision by Congress and the President to authorize a draft. The Commission examined alternatives to the current system that did not require active registration but concluded that the options identified were not clearly capable of meeting the Nation's needs to the same extent that the Selective Service System does today. Developing robust tests of any alternative systems before suspending pre-mobilization registration or allowing passive registration would be critical to maintaining a hedge against a shortfall of military personnel.

One alternative to mandatory registration that the Commission reviewed was the suspension of registration until Congress authorizes a draft. The President has the authority to terminate registration, as President Gerald Ford did in 1975, or initiate registration, as President Carter did in 1980, by proclamation.<sup>241</sup> This policy alternative is also endorsed by Dr. Rostker, who served as the Director of the Selective Service System during the 1980 resumption of registration. In his testimony to the Commission, Dr. Rostker called for a registration system that is not activated until Congress authorizes the draft, noting that such a system could achieve necessary compliance rates in a timely fashion consistent with DoD's timeline for inductions, as was the case in the summer of 1980.<sup>242</sup> However, estimates of the additional time needed depend on a series of assumptions about personnel staffing and the amount of lead time provided before registration is authorized; GAO estimated in a 1997 review of the Selective Service System that suspending

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\* For instance, the political analyst Doug Bandow cites two additional proposals: a 1980 legislative proposal from Rep. Jim Weaver (D-Oregon), directing the President to establish a voluntary registration system, and a 1981 proposal by a White House aide for a "National Patriot's Register." Neither included a legal obligation for program participants to serve if called. See Doug Bandow, "Draft Registration: It's Time to Repeal Carter's Final Legacy," CATO Institute, Policy Analysis No. 86, May 7, 1987, <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/draft-registration-its-time-repeal-carters-final-legacy>; and James Jay Carafano, "The Draft Should be Left Out in the Cold," The Heritage Foundation, May 18, 2017, <https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/the-draft-should-be-left-out-the-cold>.

registration would increase the activation timeline by 24 days, and would add at least another \$17 million to startup costs.\*

The Commission also considered a passive registration process that could use existing Federal databases that are kept up to date, such as those maintained by the Internal Revenue Service or Social Security Administration. The Federal Government could use data from these agencies to populate registrant information after congressional authorization for the draft. The MSSA currently requires that individuals participate in registration, mandating that “it shall be the duty of every male citizen . . . to present himself for and submit to registration.”<sup>243</sup> This statutory requirement currently restricts the President from directing a means of registration for the Selective Service System that pulls from State or Federal databases, but the Selective Service System reports that such retrieval “could be done with reasonable success,” provided that it is furnished with technological systems capable of processing registration information.<sup>244</sup> However, the Selective Service System also maintains that terminating registration until the draft was activated and then relying on external databases would likely extend the timeline for mobilization beyond DoD’s requirement of 193 days by at least 30 days, heightening risk.<sup>245</sup>

Both approaches—suspending registration or transitioning to a reliance on existing data—would reduce the transparency of the Selective Service System. The Commission recognizes that such steps have the potential to undermine the moral mobilization required to sustain a prolonged conflict.

*Developing robust tests of any alternative systems before suspending pre-mobilization registration or allowing passive registration would be critical to maintaining a hedge against a shortfall of military personnel.*

### Maintaining Public Trust in the Mobilization Process

Preserving trust during the national mobilization process is vital to maintaining popular support in a future conflict that would require a draft. The Selective Service System is an independent Federal agency, not under the control of DoD. Continuing to host the draft registration process and database within the Selective Service System alleviates concerns from some stakeholders, particularly those within the conscientious objector community.

The Selective Service System’s autonomy helps ensure a fair and equitable draft process by preserving a structure to adjudicate claims and evaluate conscript fitness.<sup>246</sup> In the event of a draft, the Selective Service System has 11,000 uncompensated men and women who have volunteered to remain trained and ready to serve as local board members. These board members would decide the classification status of individuals “seeking exemptions or deferments based on conscientious objection, hardship to dependents, their status as ministers or ministerial students, or any other reason.”<sup>247</sup>

DoD supports this division of responsibility, viewing the Selective Service System as providing a line of demarcation for draft induction and signaling an appropriate transfer of responsibility when inductees enter a Military Entrance Processing Station.<sup>248</sup> Furthermore, in the event of a draft, the Selective Service System would manage the Alternative Service Program for conscientious objectors. The requirement to provide alternative service if a draft were enacted is arguably supported by a “body of case law from the Vietnam era that would put the whole [draft] system in legal jeopardy if both the local board structure and the alternative service programs were not in place and viable.”<sup>249</sup>

### Promoting Solemnity

While maintaining an active, pre-mobilization registration is critical to ensuring a transparent process, the current approaches to Selective Service registration have a nearly exclusive emphasis on compliance with the law. Existing registration mechanisms, particularly

\* Estimates come from a 1997 GAO-reported cost projection, which assumes active post-mobilization registration, registering two-year age cohort groups at a time versus all individuals aged 18 to 35; subsequently there have been considerable shifts in U.S. Postal Service infrastructure and U.S. population growth. GAO, *Selective Service: Cost and Implications of Two Alternatives to the Present System* (Washington, DC: GAO, September 1997), 7, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/230/224598.pdf>.

secondary registration methods, do not do enough to convey the obligation associated with registration. The casualness of the process diminishes the value of the system and reduces preparedness for a possible national mobilization. The Commission has determined that every registrant should understand the purpose and potential implication of their registration with the Selective Service System.

The Selective Service System sees its primary role as preparing the Nation for a fair and equitable draft by maintaining high compliance with the registration requirement, and the existing Selective Service System structure, procedures, and relationships are designed to maximize the number of individuals who register.<sup>250</sup> The Selective Service System website, for example, emphasizes the obligation of individuals to comply with Federal law and says little about the broader purposes of registration. The status confirmation mailer that is sent after successful registration does not discuss the reason for registration, only the legal obligation to do so.

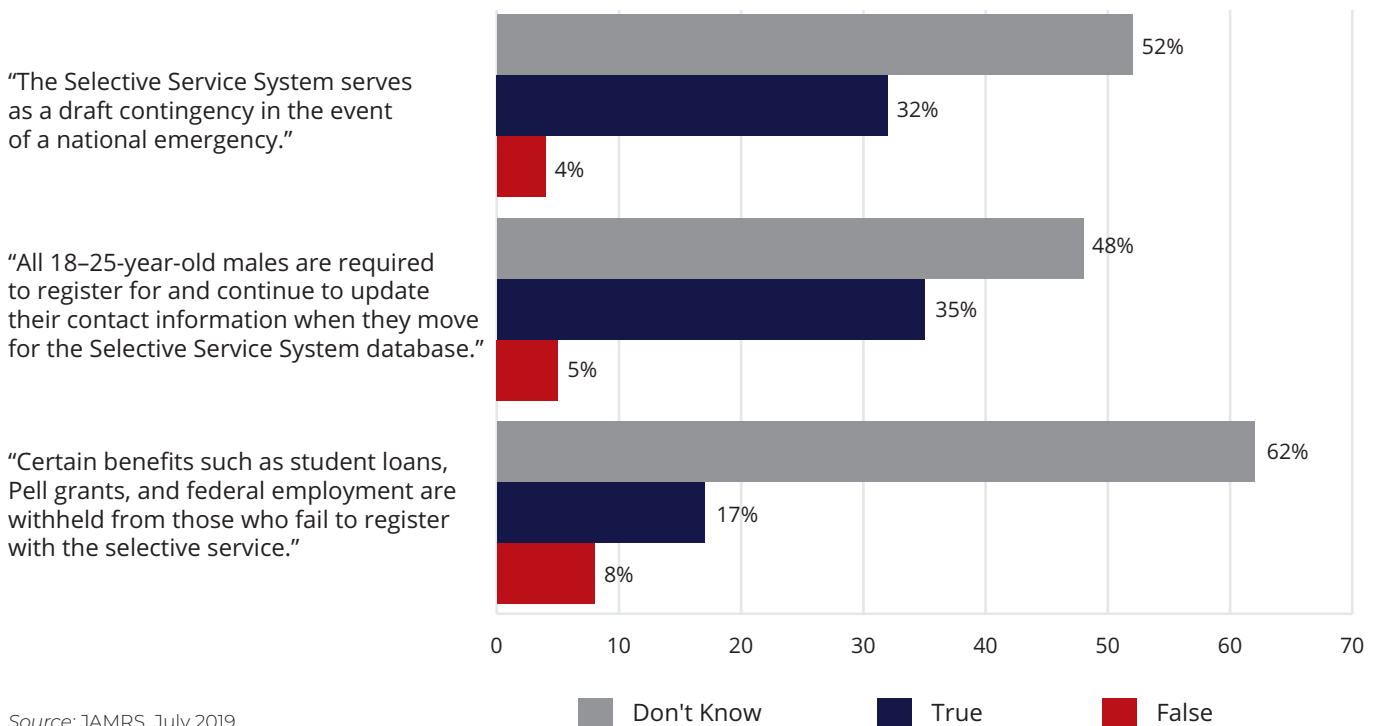
States could draw on an array of methods to accomplish the goal of increasing solemnity. For instance, registration could be paired with educational materials such as brochures or videos. More solemn registration efforts could require that registrants attend a ceremony, much

**36: The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to require the Selective Service System to develop and implement methods to convey to registrants the solemn obligation for military service in the event of a draft and to appropriate funds to accomplish this.**

**Figure 10: Respondents' Ability to Correctly Identify True Statements about the Selective Service System**

The following graphic depicts the results of a JAMRS survey of 16- to 24-year-olds concerning their knowledge of the Selective Service System. When queried about features of the Selective Service System, most respondents answered "Don't know."

Note: Percentages do not sum to 100 due to refusals and rounding.



Source: JAMRS, July 2019.



like Virginia's driver's license ceremony for those under 18. The naturalization ceremony for U.S. citizenship is one example of a solemn ritual that the Federal Government oversees; others are enlistment ceremonies for the U.S. military and ceremonies marking entrance to AmeriCorps. Many other approaches could be effective in making the process more solemn. Regardless of which is taken, the Commission believes that Selective Service registration deserves a moment of earnest reflection.

### ***Providing a Fair, Equitable, and Transparent System***

Should the draft become necessary, the Government must be able to maintain the fairness, equity, and transparency of the draft process. This begins with draft registration. Congress and the President should take steps to address and alleviate concerns regarding the fairness of the draft and draft registration as it relates to deferments and exemptions and the penalties for not registering.

### **Reviewing Deferments and Exemptions**

**37: The Commission recommends that the President review the existing exemptions and deferments for the draft and propose revisions intended to update existing legislation to promote equitable obligations in the event a draft is enacted.**

The military selective service process is predicated on a common obligation that all persons eligible for military service share generally through a lottery system in a manner that is fair and just. However, throughout U.S. history a portion of Americans have been exempted or deferred from military service if they perform vital functions in the national economy or have personal circumstances, such as familial obligations, that preclude such service. The MSSA authorizes exemptions and deferments from military service for various categories of individuals. Should individuals who meet the criteria for a deferment or exemption be both selected by a draft lottery and determined to be eligible for service after an evaluation by the military, they can file a claim or appeal to higher boards for temporary deferment or permanent exemption.<sup>251</sup>

### **WHAT ARE EXEMPTIONS AND DEFERMENTS?**

- > Individuals who register for the Selective Service but are granted an exemption are not required to serve in a military draft. Exemptions have existed since modern conscription began in 1917 but rarely changed over the decades. Changes to exemptions that did occur typically involved conscientious objectors. In World War I, the exemption for conscientious objectors was restricted to historic peace churches—Quakers, Brethren, and Mennonites.<sup>252</sup> In World War II, the exemption expanded to include mainline religious faiths.<sup>253</sup> The Supreme Court, in a series of cases involving Vietnam era draftees, further broadened the definition of conscientious objectors to include “all those whose consciences, spurred by deeply held moral, ethical, or religious beliefs, would give them no rest or peace if they allowed themselves to become a part of an instrument of war.”<sup>254</sup> Other exemptions exist for ordained ministers of religion, elected officials, judges, and certain veterans and military service members.
- > Deferments are granted as a temporary reprieve from conscription for eligible individuals due to financial hardship, occupational status, marriage, parenthood, and other reasons.<sup>255</sup> Whereas exemption policies seldom changed, deferment categories and personnel classifications, which prioritized registrants based on demographic characteristics such as marital status, were often and routinely adjusted depending on DoD personnel needs.

While the categories for exemption have changed little over time, the reasons for deferments have varied considerably. The President is authorized to allow deferments for those employed in industry, agriculture, or other select occupations along with deferments for those pursuing study, research, or the medical needs of the

Nation. There are also deferments for those physically, mentally, and morally unfit for military service. However, statutory deferments and exemptions have been updated only once since the end of the Vietnam War: in 1984, Congress passed legislation that exempted the children of mothers killed in the line of duty from conscription.<sup>256</sup>

In general, deferments and exemptions shape broader social expectations about who must serve and perceptions of whether those who are draft eligible are treated fairly. Historically, deferments and exemptions have been used to encourage higher education, support fatherhood, and allow participation in national service programs. For instance, the 1951 deferment for college students, designed to increase U.S. scientific capacity, may have been responsible for an increase in men's college enrollment rate from 54 percent in 1963 to 62 percent in 1968.<sup>257</sup> But the use of this deferment may also have changed Americans' expectations concerning which segments of society would be eligible for the draft and which would generally be able to avoid service.<sup>258</sup> If the Nation were to require a draft, American attitudes toward statutory deferments and exemptions will likely reflect changes in American society since the draft was last active. The Federal Government should update these statutory deferments and exemptions to ensure that the criteria for who should serve are current and clear; these policies should be consistent from the outset of a potential draft to maintain a fair, equitable, and transparent process.

### Improving Fairness in the Registration Adjudication Processes

Over the past two and a half years, the Commission heard from and met with individuals who had both positive and negative experiences in registering with the Selective Service System. The Commission recognizes that when an individual knowingly or mistakenly fails to register, he is penalized with loss of Federal or State benefits. After careful consideration, the Commission finds that a mechanism for corrective registration is necessary to mitigate cases of unduly harsh lifelong penalties for those already over the age of 25, while simultaneously encouraging greater compliance.

**38: The Commission recommends that Congress amend the M SSA to provide any individual who has been denied a Federal benefit due to nonregistration with the Selective Service System an opportunity to register within 30 days, no matter the individual's age at the time of denial, and to become eligible for the benefit denied.**

Offering a 30-day grace period for registration following the denial of a Federal benefit would remedy current inconsistencies and failures of the adjudication process. For instance, adjudication for individuals seeking benefits denied to them for failure to register ("civil penalties") is not centrally tracked or supported

with common guidelines used by the officials making these determinations. Under current law, any time a person required to register for Selective Service seeks certain State or Federal benefits, such as Federal employment or education benefits, the individual must have proof of their Selective Service System registration.\* Unlike the five-year statute of limitations on criminal penalties for failure to register, there is no statute of limitations on the denial of State or Federal benefits to individuals who fail to register. If not in compliance, the individual must be given an opportunity to explain why registration did not occur. That person cannot be denied a Federal benefit if he shows "by a preponderance of the evidence" that the failure to register was not knowing and willful.<sup>259</sup> Yet agencies that have the authority to deny benefits (for example, Federal employment, student loans, and citizenship) do not have clear or uniform procedures to adjudicate whether a failure to register was "knowing and willful." The U.S. Department of Education, for example, leaves

*Agencies that have the authority to deny benefits do not have clear or uniform procedures to adjudicate whether a failure to register was "knowing and willful."*

with common guidelines used by the officials making these determinations. Under current law, any time a person required to register for Selective Service seeks certain State or Federal benefits, such as Federal employment or education benefits, the individual must have proof of their Selective Service System registration.\* Unlike the five-year statute of limitations on criminal penalties for failure to register, there is no statute of limitations on the denial of State or Federal benefits to individuals who fail to register. If not in compliance, the individual must be given an opportunity to explain why registration did not occur. That person cannot be denied a Federal benefit if he shows "by a preponderance of the evidence" that the failure to register was not knowing and willful.<sup>259</sup> Yet agencies that have the authority to deny benefits (for example, Federal employment, student loans, and citizenship) do not have clear or uniform procedures to adjudicate whether a failure to register was "knowing and willful." The U.S. Department of Education, for example, leaves

\* An applicant for naturalization over age 31 is eligible even if he knowingly and willfully failed to register. See 50 U.S.C. § 3811(f) and (g); 20 U.S.C. § 1091(n); 50 U.S.C. § 3328; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, volume 12, Part D, Chapter 7.B, "Selective Service Registration," in *USCIS Policy Manual*, last updated October 8, 2019, <https://www.uscis.gov/policymanual/Print/PolicyManual-Volume12-PartD-Chapter7.html>.

this decision to institutions of higher education and does not maintain statistics on how many individuals request such hearings each year or their outcomes.<sup>260</sup> The Office of Personnel Management currently handles all adjudications after a Federal agency denies Federal employment to an individual who failed to register with the Selective Service System. Although OPM is authorized to offer a waiver to individuals who can establish that the failure to register was not knowing and willful, it does not maintain statistics on the number of waivers granted or denied and does not have clear procedures for adjudicating denial of Federal employment for nonregistration.

### **Taking into Consideration Conscientious Objectors**

The Federal Government has historically provided alternatives for those who have deeply held religious or philosophical objections to military service. The Commission heard from many members of the conscientious objector community, most of whom desire a means to indicate at the time of registration their intent to apply for conscientious objector status.

#### **ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SERVING HONORABLY**

In the event of a draft, individuals who receive an induction notice but are opposed to any form of military service as a matter of conscience may make a claim for classification as a conscientious objector. If the Selective Service grants the classification, through boards of trained volunteers backed up by an appeals process, the conscientious objector may be assigned to the Selective Service Alternative Service Program (ASP) for a two-year obligation. The ASP allows conscientious objectors to apply their skills and aptitudes in service to the Nation through assignments in conservation projects, child care, elder care, and educational programs.<sup>261</sup>

Although they acknowledge that such a status review would not take place until a draft is activated, some organizations counsel young men on unofficial mechanisms to establish a personal history of conscientious objection, such as maintaining certified letters

with their religious community and noting their beliefs on Selective Service System registration forms. The Commission therefore considered such a policy change that would indicate an individual's intent to apply for conscientious objector status. While the addition of a "conscientious objector box" would probably require minimal expense, the Selective Service System expressed concern about possible confusion, during a draft, for those who indicated their intent to file for conscientious objector status by "checking the box." Those individuals may believe that indicating their intent at registration would exempt them from reporting to a Military Entrance Processing Station or would guarantee that their local board would designate them a conscientious objector.

Ultimately, the Commission determined that harmful unintended consequences would make such a policy change ill-advised. In particular, the Commission believes that allowing an intent-to-file box might raise concerns about the fairness and equity of a draft. The ability to indicate one's status during registration might also limit the credibility of individuals who later find themselves to be conscientious objectors, potentially giving the impression of a weaker claim because they had failed to indicate their status at the time of initial registration. In addition, some individuals would opportunistically elect to identify as conscientious objectors regardless of their actual beliefs, thereby diminishing the value and negating the purpose of such an intent-to-file box. However, the Commission recognizes the importance of the American tradition of conscientious objection: should a draft be authorized, individuals remain able to file a claim or appeal regarding conscientious objector status and may be given a temporary deferment, a postponement, or a permanent exemption under existing law.

### **Addressing the Need for Critical Skills**

As discussed above, the purpose of a draft contingency is to ensure "adequate personnel with the requisite capabilities" to meet the needs of the Nation. Given the changing nature of warfare—including rapid technological advancements and acquisition cycles, increasing usage of unmanned systems, and globe-spanning cyberwarfare—it is easy to envision a potential conflict in which the Nation needs





Source: DoD

A Navy sailor welds on the USS Harpers Ferry.

individuals with critical skills.\*

The Commission's mandate included a review of mechanisms for bringing critical skills into the military. Fundamental to developing plans for inducting personnel with those skills is an understanding of current and projected needs. At present, no comprehensive military list of current or projected in-demand skills exists. Bonuses for each military position—or occupational specialty—offer a rough approximation of the demand for discrete skillsets and capabilities, but this measure is imprecise and does not apply solely to skills that DoD has in short supply. Continually identifying and cataloguing critical skills would help develop a common understanding of the severity of the need for certain critical skillsets within the military.

National security experts testified to the Commission that while the nature of a future scenario requiring national mobilization is unknown, there will certainly be a need for high-level skills in science and technology and other related fields.<sup>262</sup> Using existing information, military leaders have

*At present, no comprehensive military list of current or projected in-demand skills exists.*

identified personnel with health services, cyber, space, and pilot training as in high demand; however, additional analysis would be required to identify the full list of critical skillsets.<sup>263</sup>

**39: The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to generate and maintain a list of the type and number of currently needed critically skilled personnel.**

Assuming that DoD generates its list of critical skilled personnel, the Commission considered several alternative approaches to meet the critical skills needs of the Nation, including a targeted skills draft based on an existing model designed to provide health care providers to the military if needed and extension of the age range of registrants to the Selective Service System to induct personnel with more refined skills in time of crisis.<sup>264</sup> Ultimately, the Commission did not support drafting individuals with critical skills but endorsed a system that would both harness the American spirit to volunteer in times of need and deliver an expedited and flexible method for the military to identify and access those with requisite skills during an emergency.

#### Considered Alternatives to Acquiring Critical Skills

In order to ensure that the military has reliable access to qualified health care providers, in 1987 the Selective Service System developed the Health Care Personnel Delivery System—a standby plan for registration of persons qualified in a health care occupation, regardless of gender, between the ages of 20 and 45, in more than 60 discrete fields of medicine.<sup>265</sup> The plan, required by Congress, uses predefined relationships between the Selective Service System and medical boards, associations, and other certifying agencies to verify licensing and qualifications and to generate a ready database for a draft of skilled health care providers. While the concept of a targeted skills draft raises broader concerns over fairness and equity, the Commission ultimately found that other high-demand critical skills, such as cyber skillsets, lack similarly specific classifications and do

\* For instance, U.S. military services may consider individuals with high-demand skills that are not highly specialized, such as mechanical aptitude or language proficiency, to be critical skills.

not rely on central licensing or certifications. Thus, the Health Care Personnel Delivery System model cannot be transferred to nonmedical fields.

Another potential method to increase the military's access to individuals with critical skills would be to extend the upper age of the Selective Service registration requirement to 35 years old and amend the MSSA to require a multiyear lottery and selection process. Current regulations issued by the Selective Service System call for induction to begin with 20-year-old registrants and progress through each year group between 21 and 25, before returning to 19- and 18-year-olds. Because many high-demand skills are developed only after long courses of education or training, as well as professional experience, expanding the age cohort of registrants increases the likelihood of selecting an individual with a desired skillset through the same draft lottery that would apply to the entire cohort, thus maintaining fairness and equity.\*

However, expanding the pool of registrants—in order to include older individuals who are generally less eligible for military service—may add to the timelines associated with a draft lottery without necessarily yielding the required skillset in a rapid manner. Further, the President and Congress have the ability to determine the age of inductees eligible for selection at the time of draft authorization. As a result, the Commission found this approach inadequate to reach individuals with critical skills in a timely manner and of marginal utility to justify amending the registration age now.

### Creating a Critical Skills Individual Ready Reserve (IRR)

**40: The Commission recommends that Congress authorize an Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) of personnel with critical skills for the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement.**

\* To ensure the effectiveness of a process that selects skilled personnel randomly along with the general population, regulations regarding the induction of personnel would need to be updated to account for the skills of selected individuals.

The Commission believes the best way to preserve fairness and equity and sustain the most lethal and capable military in times of conflict requires enhancing voluntary mechanisms, such as through the creation of a critical skills IRR and a national roster of volunteers. Such mechanisms capitalize on the American spirit to rise to the occasion in times of crisis and are consistent with the Commission's conception of the draft as an option of last resort.

To satisfy the simultaneous personnel requirements of Iraq and Afghanistan over the past two decades, DoD chose to implement several measures that stressed the All-Volunteer Force. These measures—including stop-loss, extended deployments, and the operationalization of National Guard and reserve components—have strained the ability of the Guard and reserve components to fulfill their role as a strategic backstop in times of emergency. A critical skills IRR would rebuild the military's strategic capacity, enabling non-prior service members and those leaving active or reserve service to receive certain incentives to be available in times of emergency, while being subject to a less-regimented training schedule than that of the Selected Reserve.

### Creating a National Roster of Skilled Personnel

The Commission explored the potential creation of a national roster—or database—of individuals who indicate their willingness to serve in a time of emergency and provide information regarding occupations, qualifications, and certifications, as well as baseline information regarding eligibility. Members of such a national roster would be prompted annually to update their personal information and indicate their willingness to remain available for a call-up. Unlike members of an IRR, individuals who chose to join the national roster would not be required to muster, providing a more flexible option for those willing to serve when needed. In times of emergency, the Nation could rapidly identify high-demand skillsets and call upon those individuals, who in turn would then decide voluntarily whether to meet that call and serve. The concept of a national roster dates to World War II, when the National Roster of Scientific and Specialized Personnel was developed and maintained to provide a list of essential professionals for the Government.





Source: DoD

An Air National Guard staff sergeant works at a command and control center in Cayey, Puerto Rico.

A national roster would offer several advantages, such as being more tailored to DoD needs than a Presidential call for volunteers, offering lower per-member costs than an IRR, and having the ability to scale across a wide variety of skillsets and qualifications. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates aptly reflected, the United States has “a perfect record over the last 40 years in predicting where we will use military force next. We’ve never once gotten it right.”<sup>266</sup> In times of emergency, the military may have a pressing need for a skill that was not previously deemed critical. A national roster would hedge against unforeseen needs and provide a more efficient mechanism to identify and recruit interested individuals with needed skillsets. A national roster could be hosted through the proposed service platform. In particular, the Council on Military, National, and Public Service may create a system in which participants can volunteer information about themselves—including their skillsets and certifications—if they are willing to serve during a national emergency.

### ***Improving the Readiness of the National Mobilization System***

Despite the potential necessity of a draft in the event of an existential threat to the Nation, DoD operational plans do not currently account for a draft activation. This omission in part reflects a limitation of operational planning, which typically focuses on available forces. Thus, DoD’s declaration that it has no plans envisioning mobilization does not imply that there is no utility in maintaining a draft contingency.

In a national mobilization scenario that would require a draft, DoD has stated that “Congress and the President would be required to enact a law authorizing a draft, were they to deem it necessary to supplement the existing force with additional military manpower,” and appropriate funds to do so.<sup>267</sup> Following this authorization, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness would consult with the military services to inform the Director of the Selective Service System of the number of conscripts needed. DoD must also coordinate with other Federal departments and officials, including the Secretary of Homeland Security—who



serves as the principal advisor for the overall supervision and coordination of emergency planning and national resources—during a national emergency necessitating military mobilization.<sup>268</sup>

To ensure that the Selective Service System is able to operate as an effective “insurance policy” requires improving the readiness of the mobilization system and holistically reviewing institutional and organization functions and roles that have not been exercised since 1973. For example, the agencies responsible for implementing a national mobilization are not adequately prepared to carry out significant increases in the number of military personnel or the throughput of the military induction-training pipeline. DoD’s focus on capabilities-based planning and immediate demands on the force have come at the expense of long-term strategic planning for a national mobilization, and while the Selective Service System recently resumed exercising some of its functions, those efforts are not institutionalized. The use of robust exercises, in addition to updated requirements and assessment of future needs, is critical to developing a common understanding of potential gaps in procedures that could threaten the success of a national mobilization.

### Building National Mobilization Exercises

While the Selective Service System has maintained active registration since 1980, no significant tests of the system have been undertaken to assess whether it can fulfill its mission during an emergency. In his testimony to the Commission, the Director of the Selective Service System noted that the agency recently conducted mobilization exercises for the first time in several years.<sup>269</sup> Though a positive start, these readiness exercises are not yet comprehensive or institutionalized, making them dependent on the priorities of the incumbent Selective Service Director. Furthermore, Commission discussions with former DoD leadership revealed that DoD war games and strategy reviews usually end with mobilization of the Selected Reserve, ignoring force expansion through conscription. Insufficient exercises or review of mobilization processes degrades the utility of the Nation’s draft contingency, a problem compounded by the low degree of public engagement and awareness regarding national mobilization—particularly because more than four decades have passed since

the last draft occurred.<sup>270</sup> In her testimony to the Commission, Dr. Loren DeJonge Schulman, at the Center for a New American Security, underscored the importance of “informal exercises that test assumptions and plans of the Selective Service System and its integration with DoD.”<sup>271</sup> According to Schulman, exercises would also heighten public awareness of national mobilization.

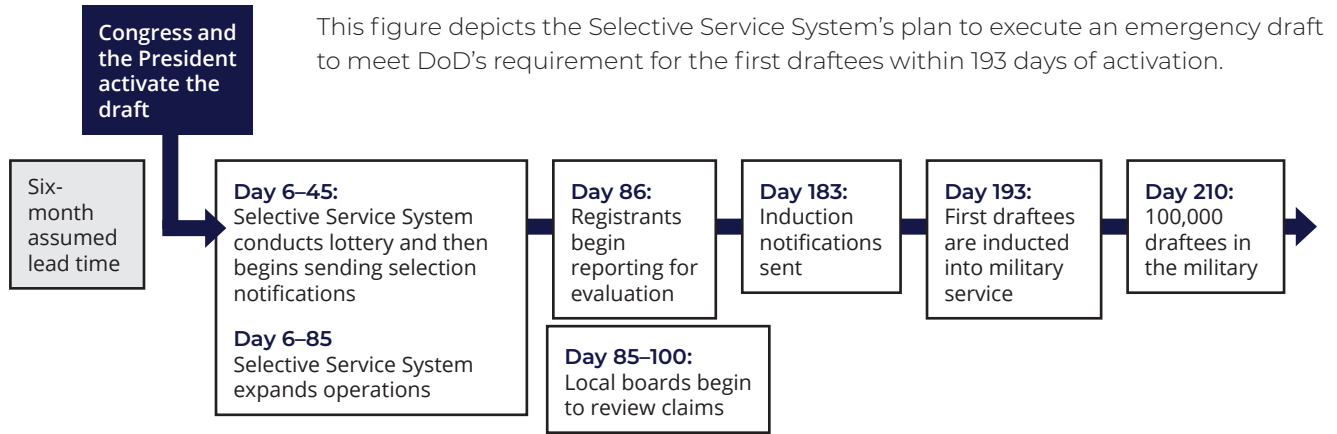
**41:** The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the Selective Service System to conduct a regular exercise that includes the full range of interagency mobilization stakeholders to review total and mass mobilization strategic and operational concepts. The Commission additionally recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to provide to Congress a report on the results, which may be delivered in a classified form.

**42:** The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of the Selective Service System to periodically exercise the agency’s mobilization responsibilities.

**43:** The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate additional funding for the Selective Service System to accompany exercises with a public awareness campaign that communicates their purpose.

A senior Joint Staff official also noted to the Commission that although there were no plans to expand the force at this time using conscription, models did exist to expand the military in the event that the United States needs more forces. Military plans are developed to be resource-informed, and in recent years have not incorporated the use of the draft or mobilization of the Selective Service System.<sup>272</sup> In early 2019, DoD’s Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation initiated an analytic review of national resources to support a

**Figure 11: The Current 193-Day Total Mobilization Plan**



Source: Selective Service System, correspondence to the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, July 10, 2019.

large-scale mobilization that exceeds DoD’s on-hand resources given that the 2018 National Defense Strategy Commission concluded that “unanticipated force demands” and “unfilled capability gaps” among other factors could prevent DoD from achieving its central goals.<sup>273</sup> Requiring table-top exercises will ensure regular, scoped-out exercises involving relevant entities as well as increase general awareness of the draft and national mobilization process.

**Updating National Mobilization Requirements**

National mobilization requirements are not actively considered within DoD. There is no central authority for managing national mobilization requirements—a process for which DoD does not dynamically plan. Furthermore, existing requirements are outdated, and current DoD entities are not structurally prepared for surges of additional personnel as a result of national mobilization. Identifying a central authority for national mobilization within the National Security Council would hold the defense entities responsible for maintaining national mobilization requirements and ensure best practices to maintain the national mobilization process.

**44: The Commission recommends that the President designate a lead national mobilization official within the staff of the National Security Council to coordinate whole-of-government and industry mobilization for any potential national mobilization effort.**

**45: The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to designate a lead national mobilization executive agent within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.**

The Commission identified the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (OUSD (P&R)) as the appropriate authority to manage military personnel and resourcing needs in a national mobilization scenario. First and foremost, this office is already responsible for providing the Director of the Selective Service System with the number of conscripts and personnel needed in a draft scenario. Furthermore, OUSD (P&R)’s current role in advising the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense for Total Force Management on personnel needs to ensure that the Armed Forces can mobilize and deploy as needed aligns well with potential draft requirements. OUSD (P&R) currently prioritizes active and reserve personnel already in the force structure.

Therefore, an executive agent, within OUSD (P&R), who focuses on national mobilization could uniquely bring together strategic planning and efforts to provide for a successful future national mobilization. This agent could also hold DoD accountable for regularly updating personnel requirements and appropriately planning for force expansion through a draft.

In a national mobilization scenario, today’s U.S. military may not possess either the capacity or institutional knowledge to efficiently and effectively integrate conscripts into the total force. An analysis by the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center of the ability of the military to rapidly expand has found that many assumptions about the military’s capacity for growth were “based upon institutions and practices that no longer exist or are extremely degraded, bringing into question the viability of the concept.”<sup>274</sup> The authors note that “with the demise of the draft and significant reductions in both the industrial and training bases, the bulk of assets for growing active forces will have to come from the Reserve components.”<sup>275</sup> But the capacity of the reserve components to respond to mobilization may be limited, given that they are currently employed as an operational force.<sup>276</sup> An Army War College report also states that “many mobilization experts assert the current processes may prove insufficient to mobilize the total Army force rapidly for large, sustained contingency operations.”<sup>277</sup>



Source: Selective Service System

Selective Service System employees test draft-lottery equipment.

Not since 1994 has DoD updated personnel requirements and the timeline for inducting draftees in the event of an emergency requiring mass mobilization.<sup>278</sup> One scholar told the Commission that the United States “may not have the months, even years, of leeway to adapt and transition from a peacetime to a wartime posture” in future conflicts requiring mobilization.<sup>279</sup> Moreover, the draft process is not structurally ready for large influxes of personnel. The Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation also highlighted the lack of structural readiness for expanding DoD capacity through a draft—a focal point of its strategic portfolio reviews.\* Updated personnel requirements, induction timelines, and processes for rapid force expansion are key components of the draft process and of sustaining a healthy national mobilization system. According to DoD, for FY 2019 the full physical capacity for all 65 Military Entrance Processing Stations is approximately 660,000.<sup>280</sup> An OUSD(P&R) representative told the Commission that during a potential surge, the available physical slots are not always in the location most needed.<sup>281</sup> DoD should therefore plan more diligently for an influx of volunteers or conscripts in the event of a

**46: The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to update the personnel requirements and timeline for obtaining draft inductees in the event of an emergency requiring mass mobilization.**

**47: The Commission recommends that the President require the Secretary of Defense, acting through the proposed lead national mobilization executive agent, to develop a plan, in conjunction with the Director of the Selective Service System, for responding to a large influx of volunteers—as may occur during a Presidential call for volunteers—and to report the plan to Congress.**

\* DoD’s Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation undertakes an annual strategic portfolio review (SPR). One of its 2019 SPRs focuses on national resources for war, outlining how DoD would expand capacity through the economy or broader society and identifying the draft as the sixth and final tier that DoD may utilize to expand capacity.



national mobilization, particularly if an emergency scenario requires that personnel be processed in areas ill-equipped to do so. The recommendations above should be a priority, for “the U.S. military will surely experience unanticipated force demands in coming years,” especially because of differing needs across theaters and unpredictable actions by adversaries.<sup>282</sup>

The current National Defense Strategy emphasizes military readiness and preparedness—the unclassified summary of the 2018 document “articulates [DoD] strategy to compete, deter, and win” in today’s security environment and definitively states that the “homeland is no longer a sanctuary.”<sup>283</sup> Thus the objectives laid out by DoD include “defending the homeland from attack” and “detering adversaries from aggression” against U.S. interests.<sup>284</sup> To accomplish its objectives, DoD’s strategy centers on building a more lethal force by prioritizing preparedness for war as well as by modernizing key capabilities.

**48: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to include in future Quadrennial Defense Reviews (QDRs) and National Defense Strategies (NDSs) a section on the state of the Selective Service System and the ability of the United States to rapidly mobilize personnel—both volunteers and draft inductees—in the event of an emergency.**

DoD has frequently emphasized the deterrent effect of the Selective Service System, although it has provided no evidence to support this claim. The inclusion in either a future QDR or a future NDS of a section related to national mobilization that discusses the state of the Selective Service System could help familiarize the public with the current threat landscape and procedures for mobilization, ensure the functionality of the system, and signal national resolve.

### A Path Forward

The Commission concluded in its deliberations that it is necessary for the Nation not only to maintain a draft contingency mechanism but also to strengthen its process for national mobilization. Fundamentally,



Source: U.S. Navy

Navy sailors aboard the USS *Nimitz* enter Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

the Government should create the conditions required for mobilization to succeed if the country is faced with a national emergency. The steps that must be taken include clarifying the purpose and value of a modernized and improved Selective Service System; ensuring that the process for mobilization is fair, equitable, and transparent; and conducting the planning and testing of national mobilization procedures necessary to achieve success.

The military selective service process is predicated on a common obligation that all persons eligible for military service share through a lottery system operated in a manner that is fair and just. The Commission moreover emphasizes that a draft conducted through the Selective Service System should be limited to ensuring adequate military personnel in a national emergency. In support of this goal, a Presidential call for volunteers before the activation of a draft in an emergency would signal the commitment and resolve of a unified Nation.

By undertaking the planning and preparation necessary to reevaluate mobilization requirements and responsibilities, as well as to test relevant processes, the Government will both identify potential roadblocks and areas of concern and increase the public understanding of registration and national mobilization processes. In addition, clearly stating who will serve when not all may be able to serve in the event of a draft—designed as a fair, equitable, and transparent system—will help enable the Government to develop a complete national

mobilization plan and maintain the trust of the American people.

In the case of a national emergency, a successful mobilization of the Nation may ultimately rely on the *moral mobilization* of the American people: their support for the cause, which is based on the context of the national emergency, their trust in Government, and their perception of an equally shared obligation. As Dr. Rostker has observed, “American history suggests that conscription works only when the cause enjoys overwhelming support among the general population and there is a generally held belief that all are participating with equal sacrifice.”<sup>285</sup> National leaders will benefit from communicating clearly and transparently with the American people in an emergency, and from maintaining a fair and equitable process for mobilization. By upholding the common obligation of all Americans to serve when called, this process will help protect the Nation and will support the larger effort to bolster a culture of service throughout the country.

*Please see Appendix B for additional details and implementation guidance concerning the emergency national mobilization recommendations.*

# EXPAND SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION

**M**ore than any other topic within the Commission’s mandate, the question of expanding Selective Service registration to all Americans\* evoked a range of passionate and heartfelt views. Through its public comments, discussions, and hearings, the Commission heard from and met with many Americans who argue that women and men should have equal obligations under the law to register for the Selective Service System and to serve if called to do so. Many others support women’s right to serve voluntarily in the military but oppose requiring women to register for a potential draft. After listening to a range of perspectives from the American people on this issue, the Commission consulted with—among others—experts in constitutional law and military personnel policy; political leaders at the local, State, and national level; local draft board members; and influential members of various religious communities. The Commission also thoroughly researched the available evidence surrounding the issue.

After extensive deliberations, the Commission ultimately decided that all Americans, men and women, should be required to register for Selective Service and be prepared to serve in the event a draft is enacted by Congress and the President.

\* The phrase “all Americans” is used in this report to refer to men and women residing in the United States, District of Columbia, and its territories on a nontemporary basis and to U.S. citizens living abroad.

**49:** The Commission recommends that Congress amend the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) to eliminate male-only registration and expand draft eligibility to all individuals of the applicable age cohort.

Recognizing the importance of this question and the many perspectives heard and discussions held, the Commission determined that a separate section should be devoted to this topic. This chapter includes context on registration and conscription, background on the debate over registering women for Selective Service, and a detailed review of the Commission’s findings, as well as a presentation of voices heard and considered in support of the existing all-male registration system.

## ***Registration and Its Connection to Conscription***

Registration is a process, separate from the draft, that provides the President with a pool of individuals for potential conscription into the Armed Forces upon congressional authorization. The MSSA authorizes the President to require men between the ages of 18 and 26 to register for possible conscription. The current practice of registering all men—even those ineligible for military service under today’s All-Volunteer Force standards—is intentionally designed to limit potential inequities in the draft process and set expectations of civic duty nationwide in advance of a national emergency.

America last used conscription in 1973. A new law would have to be passed before the President could conscript individuals into the Armed Forces.<sup>286</sup> If such



a law were passed, the Selective Service System would then conduct a random lottery and call select registrants in a sequence determined by year of birth. Individuals selected would next be examined by the Department of Defense (DoD) for mental, physical, and moral fitness before being inducted into the Armed Forces.<sup>287</sup>

If Congress and the President reinstated conscription, some registrants found eligible for military service might seek and qualify for a deferment or exemption from military service. Historically, deferments and exemptions have been offered to, among others, conscientious objectors, surviving sons or brothers, those whose induction would result in hardship to persons who depend on them for support, those working in specific occupations, ministers of religion, and certain elected officials.<sup>288</sup>

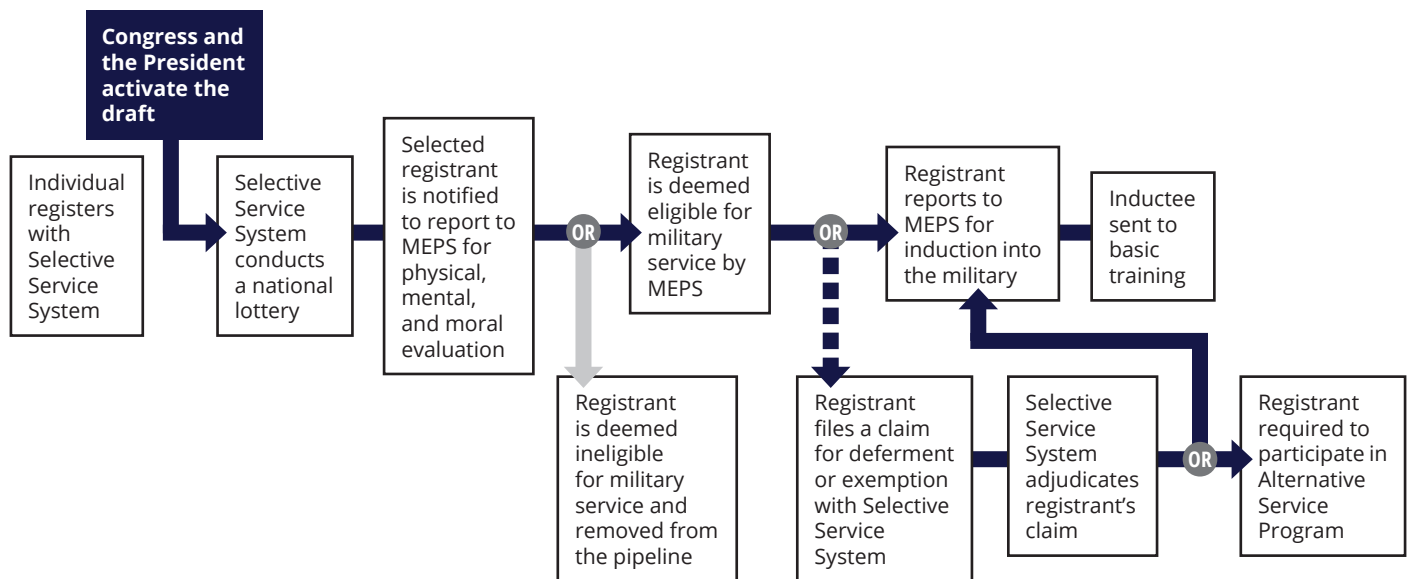
The questions of whether and how deferments or exemptions would apply to women should registration be expanded, and women were subsequently

conscripted, arise frequently in public debate. The Commission does not take a position on this issue but recognizes that Congress and the President could update deferments, exemptions, and criteria governing eligibility for induction to account for inclusion of this new cohort. In doing so, they might look to historical precedents as well as current policies and regulations within DoD and the Selective Service on related issues.

Although both the statute and regulations covering conscripts have varied over time, the Government has previously provided consideration for registrants who were married, had dependents, or were caretakers—indeed, fathers were eligible for deferment from 1963 to 1970.<sup>289</sup> These policies were focused primarily on the economic head of households and were ultimately repealed, but existing regulations provide a deferment option for fathers in the case of extreme hardship. Within DoD, today’s military regulations regarding parental leave govern the treatment of pregnant service

**Figure 12: Draft Induction Pipeline**

Inducting eligible individuals into the military through a draft is a multistep process involving the Selective Service System and DoD, which determines military eligibility criteria and screens registrants at Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS).



Source: Department of Defense.

members and those with children. Pregnant women are not deployed, and new mothers are deferred from deployment until 6 to 12 months after childbirth.<sup>290</sup> In addition, military deployment policies require both male and female service members who are single parents to establish child care arrangements that enable them to deploy.<sup>291</sup>

Regardless of whether deferments and exemptions are subsequently updated, the question before the Commission is that of registration. The Commission was created amid a debate over whether to expand the pool of potential draftees to include women—a debate that arose after a decision made in 2015 by the Secretary of Defense to open all military combat roles to women. Thus, the Commission pledged itself to a full examination of the myriad issues surrounding whether registration should be extended to women.

### ***The Debate Over “Combat Replacements”***

In 1980, alarmed by the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter decided to reactivate the registration requirement for possible conscription and proposed to Congress that all Americans should be required to register, regardless of gender.<sup>292</sup> Congress, however, chose to limit Selective Service registration to men. Following a legal challenge to all-male registration in the case of *Rostker v. Goldberg*, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the all-male system based on the Court’s view that the primary purpose of Congress in requiring registration was to prepare for a draft of combat replacement troops.<sup>293</sup> The Court’s position was that the existence of combat restrictions on women at the time meant that men and women were not similarly situated for purposes of draft registration. Consequently, the Court held that the decision of Congress to authorize the registration only of men was not a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

The Secretary of Defense’s decision to rescind the combat exclusion policy that prevented women from serving in certain combat roles and the implementation of this decision spurred new legal challenges to the Selective Service System. Two lawsuits—one filed in 2013 by the National Coalition of Men and the other filed in 2015 as a class action on behalf of young women—have argued that all-male registration is inconsistent with the Constitution’s guarantee of equal protection of the



Source: DoD

Navy sailors move a pallet of ammunition while on board the USS *Iwo Jima*.

law.<sup>294</sup> Regardless of the outcome of these cases, the Commission weighed the expansion of registration to include women under its congressional mandate, with the principal criterion being whether expansion of registration would best serve the interests of the country.

In exploring this question, the Commission recognized that the debate over expanding registration to women has in many ways centered on a misperception that the purpose of the draft is only to provide combat replacements to the Armed Forces. As discussed in the previous chapter, the MSSA states that the purpose of a draft is to achieve and maintain an “adequate armed strength,” which would include a variety of combat and noncombat positions.<sup>295</sup> Indeed, historical analysis shows that conscripts have been assigned to meet a range of military needs during conflict. For example, a comparison of the number of personnel inducted during World War II and the total assigned to combat roles reveals that less than half of all conscripts were assigned to ground combat roles in that conflict.<sup>296</sup> In today’s All-Volunteer Force, only around a third of positions in the Army—and less in the overall military—have been designated as “ground combat” positions. Should a national emergency require Congress and the President to activate a draft, the military would process and assign inductees based on individual qualifications to meet its many needs. These needs would include a wide range of positions, not solely combat roles.

## THE EXPANDING ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE U.S. MILITARY

Eligibility for the draft has historically centered on the contemporary judgment of Americans regarding who was fit for military service, starting with young adult white men and broadening over time.\* The question of whether women should register for the Selective Service has, not surprisingly, intensified as the role of women in the military has become more significant; today, more than 224,000 women currently serve on active duty.<sup>297</sup>

Since the Revolutionary War, women have served alongside male service members in the U.S. military, primarily in support roles. Women began serving in an official capacity as U.S. Army nurses starting in 1901; by World War II, about 350,000 women were serving throughout the military in noncombat positions.<sup>298</sup> In 1948, Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, which authorized women to serve in a regular and reserve status in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.<sup>299</sup> Before then, except for nurses, women could not serve in the regular forces in peacetime. For the next 30 years, women served largely in units separate from those of their male colleagues.

As the military transitioned to the All-Volunteer Force at the end of the Vietnam War, the military services began to more closely integrate men and women. Women continued to serve in a variety of noncombat roles throughout the 1980s, and in the early 1990s about 41,000 service women deployed to the Middle East in support of Operation Desert Storm.<sup>300</sup> Soon thereafter, Congress authorized women to fly combat missions and serve on combat ships.<sup>301</sup> Throughout this period, DoD continued to prohibit women from serving in ground combat roles. In fact, in 1988 DoD adopted the "risk rule," explicitly

excluding women from "combat units or missions which risk exposure to direct combat, hostile fire, or capture."<sup>302</sup> Although Congress repealed the "risk rule" in 1993, within a year DoD approved the "Direct Combat Definition and Assignment Rule," which banned "women from being assigned to combat units below the brigade level."<sup>303</sup>

During the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, female service members in noncombat units were nonetheless exposed to combat at much higher rates than in previous conflicts, often while accompanying combat units.<sup>304</sup> Because cultural barriers made it challenging for men to engage with local women in both Afghanistan and Iraq, infantry and special operations units developed all-female engagement teams to serve alongside combat units during their missions and to interact with local women. Included among these units were Army Lioness Teams and Marine Female Engagement Teams, composed of female service members who would "develop trust-based and enduring relationships with the Afghan women they [encountered] on patrols."<sup>305</sup> In 2010, U.S. Special Operations Command initiated and developed Cultural Support Teams consisting of military women who, after undergoing a rigorous selection and training process, accompanied special operators on deployment "to interact with Afghan women on the battlefield."<sup>306</sup>

In 2013, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced that the military would open all its jobs to qualified women. In 2015, Defense Secretary Ash Carter made this policy official by rescinding the combat-exclusion policy that previously had prevented women from serving in combat-designated roles.<sup>307</sup> Congress subsequently called for gender-neutral physical standards in the FY 2015 National Defense Authorization Act.<sup>308</sup> Since 2016, over 2,900 women have accessed into Army combat positions alone.<sup>309</sup>

\* Throughout American history, the military has excluded segments of the U.S. population. For example, black Americans served largely in segregated units until President Truman ended segregation in the military in 1948. Women were able to join the military after World War II, but efforts at integration have taken decades of incremental change.



## Findings and Recommendation

After careful consideration of a diverse range of perspectives, the Commission determined that the time is right to extend the registration requirement to all Americans, men and women. Doing so promotes the national security of the United States by allowing the President to leverage the full range of talent and skills available during a national mobilization. It also reaffirms the Nation's fundamental belief in a common defense, and signals that both men and women are valued for their contributions in defending the Nation. The current disparate treatment of women unacceptably excludes women from a fundamental civic obligation and reinforces gender stereotypes about the role of women, undermining national security.

### *Strengthen National Security . . .*

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Commission recognizes the value of the Selective Service System as a hedge or insurance policy against unforeseen threats. Devastating attacks, such as those that took place on September 11, 2001, reflect the changing nature of war and the reality that the homeland is not a sanctuary. In fact, national security experts maintain that the future remains uncertain and that threats to the security and well-being of the homeland persist and may be increasing.<sup>310</sup> Should future circumstances become so dire that a draft is required, it is in the national security interest of the United States to be able to draw on the best talent in the country for military service. Roughly doubling the pool from which the Nation might obtain conscripts would improve military readiness by raising the quality of those who might serve, as some women would be more qualified to serve than some men. Defense officials in recent years have noted that changing national demographics and low eligibility trends for qualified military recruits do little to alleviate future uncertainties. Indeed, these trends exacerbate concerns over meeting military personnel requirements in the event of an emergency. The population growth rate in the United States is at its lowest point in more than 80 years, and 7 of 10 young Americans—male and female—are currently ineligible to serve because they fail to meet physical, moral, educational, and health standards, including mental health criteria.<sup>311</sup> Consequently, the number of young people eligible for military service in the country is shrinking. Of those eligible, data from DoD's Joint Advertising,



Source: U.S. Army

An Army officer calls for artillery fire in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Market Research and Studies (JAMRS) suggests that young women are on average equally likely to qualify for military service as young men—29.3 percent of female qualified military applicants versus 29.0 percent of male qualified military applicants.\*

Because the existing registrant pool may prove inadequate to meet the personnel needs of DoD if a draft is required, it is critical to create a broader pool that includes women.<sup>312</sup> In a report to the Commission on the utility of the Selective Service System, DoD argued that “it would appear imprudent to exclude approximately 50 percent of the population—the female half—from availability for the draft in the case of a national emergency.”<sup>313</sup>

The bottom line remains that neither the Nation nor DoD will know for certain what a future conflict may entail, what skillsets will be necessary, or who would qualify for draft induction under specific qualification criteria. Therefore, enabling DoD to utilize all the Nation's talents and abilities is essential to mitigating the risks imposed by an uncertain future.

### *. . . By Recognizing Capability and Quality*

Although much of the public discourse related to whether to expand Selective Service registration to

\* Young men are more likely than women to be disqualified for military service for reasons involving drugs and personal conduct, whereas women are more often disqualified for medical and physical reasons. See Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), *Qualified Military Available Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2013).

women is focused on comparing women and men in combat positions, nearly 80 percent of today's military positions are classified as noncombat. Indeed, over half of all enlisted personnel in the military in World War II worked in just three occupations: mechanics, administrative and clerical workers, and providers of services to the force.<sup>314</sup> A future draft in support of today's modern military is likely to require these and similar positions, but may also require intelligence and communication specialists, linguists, logisticians, medical personnel, and drone or cyber operators, among others. The complexity of modern conflict, new technologies such as unmanned systems, and the need to generate and sustain combat power across space and cyber domains discredit the notion that a draft would be needed only to replace personnel in frontline, combat roles.

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*“Instead of machinery technicians, future warfare calls for data scientists, network engineers, cloud security specialists, satellite communications engineers[,] . . . and system development engineers.”*

—Jacquelyn Schneider, U.S. Naval War College

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Regarding combat positions, the Commission heard repeatedly from veterans that the potential for ground combat should not be a basis for excluding women from the registration requirement. Further, many recent combatants argue that the very notion of a front line is outdated. Both male and female service members with deployment experience on the ground in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom noted that combat, particularly counterinsurgency operations without a uniformed enemy, can be ill-defined. They explained that the improvised explosive devices that plagued the U.S. military in both Iraq and Afghanistan paid no regard to military occupation or gender. In addition, these combat veterans argued that having

*The bottom line remains that neither the Nation nor DoD will know for certain what a future conflict may entail, what skillsets will be necessary, or who would qualify for draft induction under specific qualification criteria.*

military women serve alongside men during operations enabled the units not only to interact more effectively with the local population but also to gather intelligence and share critical perspectives on what were often fluid and evolving situations. These warriors emphasize the importance of capability over gender: they just want people who can get the job done.

Many currently serving members of the Armed Forces as well as combat veterans who had served during Vietnam, the invasion of Panama, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and more recent conflicts emphasized the importance of standards. They assert that anyone capable of meeting the established standard should be allowed to serve. These combatants feel that the exceptional performance of women in the military over the taxing years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan has nullified previously hypothetical questions over whether women could meet such standards. As Lieutenant General (Ret.) Mark Hertling has argued, “Having served with women in combat, and having seen their courage and skills, I can personally say I have ZERO concerns about women on the front lines in combat units.”<sup>315</sup>

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*“It is my personal view that based on this lifting of restrictions for assignment to unit [military occupational specialty], that every American who is physically qualified should register for the draft.”*

—General (Ret.) Robert Neller,  
former Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps

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Indeed, then Assistant Secretary of Defense James Stewart testified to the Commission that women are already contributing to increased force lethality.<sup>316</sup> DoD currently maintains this effectiveness in part by setting gender-neutral requirements, which apply to both male and female service members for the positions they seek. This stance is particularly reinforced by the graduation and accession of women from Infantry Officer courses across the services, with women accessing into Army





Source: U.S. Army

Army soldiers provide perimeter security outside a village in Afghanistan's Kandahar province.

combat positions and at least 30 women successfully completing U.S. Army Ranger School as of August 2019.<sup>317</sup> Another way in which DoD maintains standards is by striving to recruit high-quality personnel. Maximizing the number of individuals, regardless of sex, who meet or exceed initial accession standards is crucial to improving performance across military units and sustaining a strong force.

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*“I went to war in Afghanistan where I flew daily combat missions in support of my colleagues fighting on the ground. A generation prior, a woman’s ability to fly, shoot, and stay calm under fire was hotly debated; for my generation, it is simply expected.”*

—Katey van Dam, U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran

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Since 1980, the military has adopted the practice

of striving to recruit high-quality military applicants. This effort has been in part motivated by a frequently cited 1982 study demonstrating that “lower-aptitude Army recruits are much more likely to fail [certain] on-the-job-performance tests across a wide range of Army jobs, including combat arms specialties,” when compared to high-aptitude recruits.<sup>318</sup> Other studies have suggested that high-quality recruits are more likely to “complete their enlistment and will have fewer instances of indiscipline during their time in the Army.”<sup>319</sup> Further, when measured for aptitude, high-quality recruits were found to contribute to successful operation outcomes as signal personnel, and were linked with improved performance as gunners and tank commanders.<sup>320</sup> While these efforts concern the All-Volunteer Force, high quality or its absence has had an equal effect on the performance of conscripts. During the 1960s, standards were lowered in an effort to expand eligibility for the military under Secretary McNamara’s “Project 100,000” New Standards Program. Unfortunately, conscripts and



volunteers inducted under this program were more likely than their peers to die in Vietnam, wash out of training, or be dishonorably discharged.<sup>321</sup> Clearly, the Nation will benefit by inducting the highest quality Americans available—those who are more likely to complete training successfully and be more proficient at their jobs.

Expanding draft eligibility to women will enable the military to access the most qualified individuals, regardless of sex. Doing so will ultimately leverage the capabilities of all Americans to fill the variety of positions that would be required in the event of a national emergency. It will strengthen U.S. national security by ensuring that the Nation has access to the full range of Americans' skills and capabilities.

### ***Affirm Registration as a Common Civic Duty***

For many, the rights and freedoms that come with being an American citizen are accompanied by responsibilities—one of which is to defend the Nation if called to do so. Consequently, the disparate treatment of women in the context of Selective Service registration unacceptably bars women from sharing in this fundamental civic obligation. Forty years ago, Jacqueline Grennan Wexler explained this principle, arguing that men and women alike may respond to a call to serve by saying, “I don’t like to interrupt my studies or my career. I can hardly conceive of carrying a weapon, but if my country needs me, I’ll go.” Wexler emphasized, “That, and that alone, is the issue.”<sup>322</sup>

Dr. Kori Schake agrees, advocating strongly that all Americans register for Selective Service. She told the Commission, “It’s insulting to suggest America’s mothers and wives and daughters couldn’t contribute, whether the need were rebuilding levees after a natural disaster or repelling an invasion from our shores.” Schake continued, “Nor is it fair to allow women a broader range of choice for their compulsory service than their male counterparts. America’s daughters should be slotted into service as their physical and emotional suitability proves capable of, just like America’s sons.”<sup>323</sup>

*Expanding draft eligibility to women will enable the military to access the most qualified individuals, regardless of sex.*

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***“I live in America. I am a full citizen, and I have a full obligation to protect my country.”***

—Lieutenant General (Ret.) Flora Darpino,  
former Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Army

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The linking of Selective Service registration with the concept of civic duty is not new. In fact, the prominent military sociologist Dr. Charles Moskos asserted, “In contrast to the All-Volunteer Force, the Selective Service System was premised on the notion of citizenship obligation.”<sup>324</sup> That women register, and perhaps be called up in the event of a draft, is a necessary prerequisite for their achieving equality as citizens, as it has been for other groups historically discriminated against in American history.

Male-only registration sends a message to women not only that they are not vital to the defense of the country but also that they are not expected to participate in defending it. In his testimony to the Commission, Dr. Jason Dempsey stressed: “And to be clear, this is more than an argument for fairness. This is an argument about fully utilizing the talent and potential of American citizens to meet the challenges of a changing, yet continually dangerous, world. America is simply stronger when we all engage in the obligations of citizenship.”<sup>325</sup>

The Commission also heard from female members of the Armed Forces who indicated that their disparate treatment with respect to registration was yet another way in which the Government signaled that their contributions and sacrifices were not as valued as those of their male colleagues. One active duty service member pointed out that expanding registration to women would give equal standing to women in any debate over whether to go to war and enact a draft, and thus would likely lead to a more comprehensive conversation over the options available to the United States.

Given the national security value of expanding registration to include women, reluctance to extend the registration requirement to women may be in part a consequence of gender stereotypes about the proper role for women and their need for special protection.

As Eleanor Smeal, then President of the National Organization for Women, articulated in 1981, “[T]he Government says that every man, regardless of any disability, must register, but that all women, regardless of competency, cannot.” She argued that this distinction creates the “myth that all men are more competent than all women” while also signaling that a woman requires the protection of men, leaning into the traditional trope of women as the weaker sex.<sup>326</sup> Lucy Katz, a noted legal scholar, has observed that denying the obligations of registration to women “condemns them to second-class status and perpetuates an image of women that is destructive to efforts at real equality.”<sup>327</sup>

In the eyes of many, the exclusion of women from Selective Service registration is a form of institutionalized, Government-sponsored prejudice against women that must be corrected.

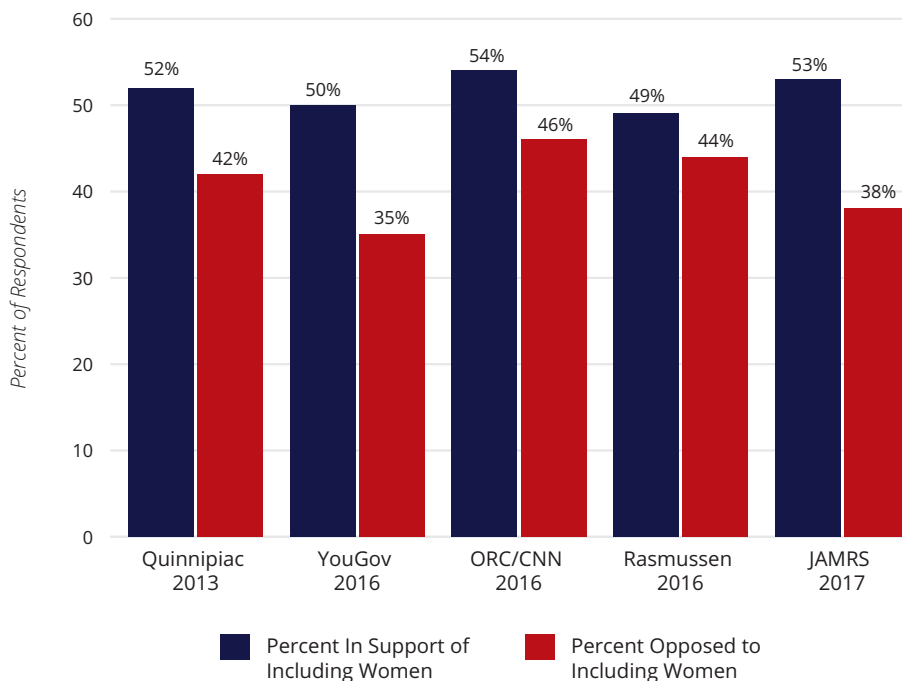
**Voices Heard in Support of the Existing All-Male Registration System**

Although the Commission does not endorse the existing all-male Selective Service System registration, it acknowledges and appreciates the deeply held views of organizations and individuals who support maintaining the status quo. Many individuals who engaged with the Commission fervently expressed their perspective that

**Figure 13: Public Opinion on Including Women in a Draft or Selective Service Registration**

Americans’ opinions on women’s registration with the Selective Service System is mixed; a slight majority of respondents supports women’s registration. Because of differences in surveys, including the wording, order, and context of questions, as well as their conflation of conducting a draft with Selective Service registration, public opinion polls are not a definitive source of information for those wishing to draw conclusions about the preferred policy choice of the American people.

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to refusals, rounding, and neutral or “do not know” responses.



Source: Various sources.<sup>328</sup>

women should not be required to register for a potential draft. Acknowledging that public opinion data on whether to expand registration to women is mixed, with no overwhelmingly dominant public voice in this debate,<sup>329</sup> the Commission determined it was important to identify and present the major arguments it weighed that supported the current Selective Service registration model.

### ***Equal Rights, Different Responsibilities***

Many Americans believe that women hold unique status in society as wives, mothers, caregivers, and nurturers, and feel that their ability to perform such roles would be damaged by conscripted military service. By compelling women to serve in the military, the Government not only would fail to recognize women's important roles and responsibilities in families, in nurturing and caring for others, and in bearing and raising children, but would actively interfere with families and society in ways that are unacceptable. Some advocates for women argue that requiring draft registration and potentially conscripting women into the military would interfere with a woman's ability to bear and raise children, given that a future draft would likely target individuals between the ages of 18 and 26. As Dr. Mark Coppenger of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary testified to the Commission, "I'm saying that women, in the prime years for bearing and raising children, should not be consigned by the state *away* from hearth and home should they choose to work there."<sup>330</sup>

For some, women's unique biological distinction—their ability to conceive and bear children—is an immutable difference that justifies differential treatment and raises the concern that military service may adversely affect the fertility of female service members. These individuals argue that service through a draft would interfere with or deny many women the ability to embrace the vocation of motherhood. Such a step, they further assert, would be disruptive to American society because men and women have different social and familial roles. These individuals therefore view the conscription of women as inherently inconsistent with the dreams and aspirations of countless women who provide love and leadership to their families.

In addition, many raise concerns that women would be conscripted to serve in combat positions without preparation. Some argue that the registration

and conscription of women is unnecessary as a matter of national policy, because under current law and policy women may volunteer to serve in the All-Volunteer Force. Others, including several faith-based organizations from which the Commission heard, argue that men and women have distinct physiologies that make most women ill-suited for conscripted service.<sup>331</sup> One such organization, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, articulated the perspective of many members of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. For reasons "rooted in biblical convictions, historic understandings of natural law, and reason-based common sense," the Synod supports those women who voluntarily serve in the military but is opposed to the extension of Selective Service registration to all women.<sup>332</sup>

*"...I can't fault the women who choose a life of military service, but to draft all of us to such an obligation: No, absolutely not. This civilization depends on the nurturing, loving influence that women bring to the public discourse and to the business of raising a healthy citizenry."*  
—Public Comment

This position is shared by many Americans who argue that women are equal to men under the law, but that lawful equality does not, and should not, require women to be conscripted into military service. Drawing a distinction between equality and identical obligation, they hold that while every American can and should be engaged during a national mobilization, such engagement need not take the form of compulsory military service as there will be numerous and varied opportunities to serve the country and society. As author Ashley McGuire testified to the Commission, "I am deeply committed to the principles of sexual equality. But equality between men and women is not established by treating them as identical."<sup>333</sup>

Some individuals also expressed concern that changing the MSSA to require all Americans to register would erode, not enhance, women's rights. It would impose on millions of women a registration requirement with which they are not currently burdened, subject them to financial and legal exposure they don't currently have, and mandatorily subject them to the physical demands and inherent dangers of military service.



### Questions Concerning Military Readiness

While the purpose of the Selective Service System is to provide personnel to meet all military needs in a national emergency, many Americans raise concerns over the possible risks to women posed by service in combat roles. Many individuals contend that any conflict in which a draft is authorized is likely to involve the need for additional personnel in combat positions.

Should a draft be activated that primarily inducts personnel for combat positions, some proponents of the existing registration system assert that the administrative burden of finding qualified women would harm the Nation. Elaine Donnelly of the Center for Military Readiness declares that such an administrative burden would “hinder the flexibility, efficiency, and speed necessary to respond to a national crisis.”<sup>334</sup> She and others believe that men are far better suited to fill combat roles, and therefore contend that to fill the same number of positions as an all-male draft, the Government would need more people to be selected, evaluated, inducted, and trained—after which many would subsequently be found unable to serve in combat arms positions.

The Commission also heard from individuals who believe that because of the physical differences between men and women, women would be at greater risk in combat in the event of a draft, and therefore should not be required to register for the Selective Service System. According to a RAND review of the available literature comparing the physical performance of men and women, men on average score better on tests of muscular strength and cardiovascular endurance.<sup>335</sup> Further, female service members are more likely to be injured in training, raising concerns that military readiness will be degraded if female conscripts are integrated into military units. A study published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* in 2000 tracked 861 young men and women as they underwent eight weeks of Army basic training. The authors found that “women experienced twice as many injuries as men . . . and experienced serious time-loss injuries almost 2.5 times more often than men.”<sup>336</sup> They also noted that as basic training begins, women often start with a lower level of physical fitness than do their male counterparts.<sup>337</sup> In a more recent study published in *Military Medicine*, using data from the Total Army Injury and Health Outcomes Database, researchers found that between January 2002



Source: DoD

A Marine Corps aviator inspects munitions on the flight deck of the *USS Kearsarge*.

and September 2007, 61 percent of women and 39 percent of men in basic combat training “sustained at least one injury.”<sup>338</sup>

While the data on injury rates focuses on performance in basic training, advocates for the existing registration system assert that integrating female conscripts via a draft would have a significant impact on overall military readiness, due in large part to natural physical differences between men and women that have practical consequences for the lethality of gender-integrated fighting units.

The most commonly cited recent data in support of this argument is a U.S. Marine Corps study, conducted from July 2014 to February 2015 by the Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity (MCOTEA) on the Ground Combat Element Integrated Task Force, a battalion of 100 female and 300 male volunteers. Using sample sizes of varying numbers, MCOTEA evaluated participants’ performance in combat exercises. It found that all-male squads generally completed tasks more quickly and had better accuracy, factors used as proxies to measure lethality. MCOTEA also found differences between men and women in the performance of basic combat tasks and evacuating casualties.<sup>339</sup> The study concluded that female Marines demonstrated that they are capable of the tasks required, but not at the same level as their male counterparts; it also identified gender and military occupational specialty as the best

predictors of injury and illness.<sup>340</sup>

Some combat veterans and Special Operations personnel who completed numerous deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan raised similar concerns over integrating female conscripts. These combatants explained that they entrust their lives to those with whom they serve and accept the solemn responsibility of keeping their fellow warriors alive. They relentlessly test one another to expose vulnerabilities within their unit, and their lives are at risk when they are paired with anyone who lacks the physical strength to carry a wounded comrade away from danger. To remain effective as a combat unit, they must have faith in one another and in the stringent training standards to which each person is held. On these fronts, and others, some combat veterans feel that their confidence is being tested. They firmly believe that combat physical readiness standards, critical to the lethality of the force, must be realistic and rigorous; and they acknowledge that many men and women may not be able to attain those standards.

These veterans explained there is only one certainty in combat: things go wrong. Weapons malfunction, ammunition runs out, positions are compromised, and supplies are not replenished. In such situations, warriors are forced to rely on the human body, which, more than any other weapon or resource, is often the determining factor in success or failure of an operation. When hand-to-hand combat is the only weapon left, strength and endurance are essential to survival. They caution that the horrors of war cannot be realistically simulated in training and they echo the sentiments of General (Ret.) Robert Barrow, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, who described combat as “uncivilized” and “done in an environment that is often as difficult as you can possibly imagine.”<sup>341</sup> In order to survive life or death encounters, war required them to reach levels of strength and stamina well beyond that which they had demonstrated in the most difficult and demanding training situations. For motivated volunteers, this is extraordinarily challenging. For women conscripted against their will, these combat veterans fear, it may be even more difficult.

Finally, the Commission heard from some advocates of the status quo who questioned the need for change or who worried about the unintended consequences of extending registration to women. Individuals who



Source: DoD

An Army tank commander prepares her platoon for a training mission at Fort Irwin, California.

prioritize preserving a feasible draft mechanism fear that including women in a draft would increase the political stakes associated with authorizing conscription should it truly be needed, raising concerns for the well-being of the All-Volunteer Force during dire times. Some who would maintain the status quo assert that extending registration to women would fuel social discord and undermine the national will to commit to the shared sacrifice of war. For these Americans, all conditions that could endanger national will and effective moral mobilization in a future draft scenario should be avoided, including the potential conscription of women.

### **The Time Is Right to Register All Americans**

Ultimately, the Commission determined the time is right to require women to register with Selective Service. This policy change represents a necessary—and overdue—step that is in the best interests of the United States. Requiring all Americans to register with the Selective Service System is needed to ensure that during a national emergency, the Government would be able to call on the talents of all Americans and demonstrate the resolve of a united country.

The next time America must turn to a draft, it will need to include everyone who is capable and qualified. It would be harmful to the Nation’s security to leave out the skills and talents of half of the U.S. population.

Some of the voices the Commission heard from argue that the decision to register women should be delayed until the time of the next draft. But waiting until the moment when the Nation must exercise that contingency would undermine the preparations required to successfully insure against inadequate military strength. Building a robust, efficient draft contingency plan requires the immediate implementation of difficult policy decisions—such as extending registration to women.

*“I am in favor of expanding the Selective Service registration to all Americans. . . The policy leaders must be bold and lead our Nation towards improved equality and readiness. I say improved equality because there is not now, nor has there ever been, a justifiable reason to exclude the value of half of the population based on gender alone. There is a gradient of capability and skill across all Americans that we should proudly ask to serve.” —Public Comment*

The Government has an inherent responsibility to inform and, to some degree, educate the American people about their potential obligations. In extending registration to women, it recognizes a fundamental shift in American society that values women as equal in the workforce, in the military, and in democracy. Making the choice to register women now will send a signal to American women that they may be expected to serve, as is now true of men, in a national emergency, and would best position the Government to prepare an effective military selective service infrastructure.

*It would be harmful to the Nation’s security to leave out the skills and talents of half of the U.S. population.*

Key elements of that infrastructure are not easy to quickly change. The Selective Service System infrastructure performs best if it is designed to meet the expected demands placed on the system in an emergency and if it is robustly exercised and evaluated prior to activation. Doing so requires an up-front investment in time and money. If women are required to register, the Selective Service System estimates that the agency would need about \$16 million in additional funding in the first year, and a total of \$59 million over the first five years to complete the policy change.\* The systems that process registration and inductees as well as the military plans and procedures necessary to successfully implement a draft are all components that should not be created in a rush at the last minute.

This Commission adamantly hopes that the United States will be able to avoid a conflict requiring the conscription of its citizens. However, the registration of all Americans for the Selective Service System recognizes the utmost importance of upholding the common obligation that all Americans share to defend the Nation. Amending the MSSA to include all Americans would enable the country to deploy the full range of talents within its population should the day ever come when the Nation must stand united in the face of a crisis that necessitates the return of a draft.

\* The sums required are largely due to the backlog of women in the 18- to 25-year-old cohort and the need for additional marketing before registration falls principally to 18-year-old women. Data provided by the Selective Service System in response to the Commission’s request for information.



# APPENDIX A:

## List of Recommendations

### ELEVATE ALL FORMS OF SERVICE

#### *Prioritize Civic Education and Service Learning*

1. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate \$450 million per year for civic education and service learning.

- 1a. The Commission recommends that Congress create a Civic Education Fund and provide an initial investment of \$200 million each year to State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations, via the U.S. Department of Education, to develop and implement best practice curricula that incorporate civic education, applied civics, and service learning across the K–12 experience and to provide teacher development opportunities in civic education, applied civics, and service learning. The goals, by 2031, are all K–12 students exposed to civic education and all students in 4th, 8th, and 12th grades test at or above “Proficient” in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test in civics.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the U.S. Secretary of Education to create a dedicated position or office within the U.S. Department of Education responsible for overseeing and administering the Civic Education Fund and coordinating other civic education and service-learning initiatives of the Federal Government.

- 1b. The Commission recommends that Congress create a Service-Learning Fund and provide \$250 million each year from the above appropriation to SEAs, LEAs, IHEs, State Service Commissions, and nonprofit organizations, via CNCS, to develop and implement service-learning programs and opportunities for hands-on community service for K–12 and postsecondary students across the country. The goals, by 2031, are all K–12 students receiving in-class service-learning experiences, 1 million 6th to 12th grade students participating in a Summer of Service program each year, and 1 million 9th to 12th grade students participating in a Semester of Service program each year.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to create a dedicated position or office within CNCS responsible for overseeing and administering the Service-Learning Fund.

2. The Commission recommends that Congress amend the law to require States to participate in the NAEP civics assessment, require the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to publish results of the NAEP civics assessment both in the aggregate for the Nation and separately for each State, and require schools to administer the NAEP civics assessment every two years.
3. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds for the U.S. Secretary of Education to create an award and recognition program to highlight both excellence

in the delivery and teaching of civic education, applied civics, and service learning and excellence by students in addressing community needs through civic education, applied civics, and service learning.

4. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds for the Library of Congress, Institute of Museum and Library Services, and National Archives to coordinate the development and distribution of information on civic education and effective citizenship produced by the U.S. Government.
5. The Commission recommends that SEAs, LEAs, schools, and nonprofit organizations explore ways to provide quality, research-based civic education, applied civics, and service learning to K–12 students, and to prepare teachers to teach these subjects and use these methodologies. To accomplish these goals, the Commission encourages SEAs, LEAs, schools, and nonprofit organizations to consider the best practices endorsed by the Commission.

The Commission recommends that IHEs and nonprofit organizations explore ways to integrate quality, research-based civic education and service-learning methodologies into curricula, consider best practices, and prepare teachers to use service-learning methodologies.

The Commission recommends that State Governors and legislatures consider amendments to State law to stimulate robust civic education and service learning for their students.

6. The Commission recommends that Congress issue a resolution to honor and express support for the work of teachers to inspire civic engagement through their dedication as public servants and to issue a call to Americans to join the profession of teaching.

### *Designate a Governmentwide Lead for Service*

7. The Commission recommends that Congress establish and appropriate funds for a Council on Military, National, and Public Service in the Executive Office of the President, to be headed by an Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service.
  - 7a. The Commission further recommends that the President award cabinet rank to the Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service.

### *Create a Service Platform*

8. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate multiyear funds for an internet-based service platform under the supervision of the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.

## **ADVANCE MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

### **Military Service Recommendations**

#### *Improve Military Outreach Around the Country*

9. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to increase public understanding of the military, and particularly of the broad spectrum of career opportunities available and represented in military service, by increased outreach to communities.
  - 9a. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to increase tours of military bases and facilities; to evaluate access restrictions at military installations in order to allow—to the greatest extent practicable, given security requirements—increased and regular

## APPENDIX A: List of Recommendations

civilian access to military installations; and to increase outreach to community-based cadet and youth programs, including traditional athletics, video gaming clubs, and other youth organizations.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to utilize existing authority to develop recruiting incentives that are targeted to areas with lower rates of propensity and recommends that Congress extend the temporary authority which expires on December 31, 2020, to December 31, 2023.

The Commission recommends that the President and State Governors call on State and local educators to eliminate barriers to access by military members, including recruiters, and to grant the same access to school activities as is afforded to representatives of higher education, technical trade training programs, and similar groups that provide information to students and their families on career opportunities.

- 9b. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to develop pilot programs that utilize Guard and Reserve units—particularly in areas with lower rates of propensity and exposure—to partner with school districts, schools, and community service organizations in order to develop long-term relationships that build understanding, increase exposure, and share information on military service; to promote increased understanding of the tradition of citizen service to the Nation; and to provide opportunities for mentorship to youth interested in careers with both civilian and military applications.

- 9c. The Commission recommends that Members of Congress as well as Federal, State, local, and Tribal officials use their offices and goodwill to increase awareness of, and call on youth to consider, military service opportunities. The Commission further recommends that Members of Congress support and participate in military outreach in their districts, including assistance for constituents to apply to the military service academies each year.

### *Increase Opportunities for Youth to Explore Service*

10. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to expand opportunities for youth to explore military service.
- 10a. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to develop a basis of allocation for JROTC units that would ensure a fair and equitable distribution of JROTC units in school districts across the United States and recommends that Congress support an increase in JROTC units to no fewer than 6,000 by 2031. The Commission further recommends that Congress expand the JROTC curriculum to include an introduction to relevant national and public service opportunities.

The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense, acting through existing programs, including JROTC, cadet corps, Starbase, and Youth ChalleNGe, partner with educators and community service organizations in providing service-learning opportunities for youth both during the K–12 school year and during summer programs.

The Commission recommends that State Governors and State and local legislators share best practices for academies of leadership. The Commission is aware that several States, such as Kansas, Texas, and Florida,



have developed and supported academies of leadership in their middle schools. These citizenship programs have enabled younger Americans to be exposed to and learn leadership skills and to develop leadership qualities at a young age.

- 10b. The Commission recommends that the President and the States promote ASVAB CEP administration in schools.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, the Director of OPM, and the CEO of CNCS to evaluate the potential applicability of the ASVAB CEP program to national service and Federal public service.

### *Strengthen Military Recruiting and Marketing*

11. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President develop policies to better allocate military recruiting and marketing resources for the future.

- 11a. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate additional funding for DoD to invest in and provide incentives for existing Hometown Recruiting Programs.

- 11b. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate multiyear funding for military marketing and advertising.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the GAO and subject-matter experts, to conduct a review of the efficacy of legacy advertising and marketing models. The review should identify ways to apply current and future information platforms used by young people and their influencers to convey to young people a more thorough and informed understanding of the opportunities and benefits associated with military service.

### *Develop Educational Pathways for Military Service*

12. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President expand and improve educational pathways for entering the military.

- 12a. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for the military departments to provide limited tuition grants for pre-service professional degrees, certificates, and certifications in exchange for an enlisted service commitment.

The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretary of one of the military departments, to run a pilot program establishing a partnership with community colleges and vocational schools that would provide professional degrees, certificates, and certifications through technical education programs.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the military departments fund and apply tuition assistance (TA) in a consistent manner, given the importance of TA to young new service members. The Secretary should consider allowing the military departments to prioritize TA funds to service members who are seeking to complete a degree, certificate, or certification program that leads to a critical skill.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to follow the efforts of the Army, which has developed programs that leverage private-sector certifications for soldiers, reduce transition costs, increase retention, and create a more skilled force.

- 12b. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of the Army, in coordination with the Army Cyber Institute and

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U.S. Army Cadet Command, to continue to expand access to the Cyber Leadership Development Program (CLDP) to Army ROTC cadets across the country, and to work with service cadet commands to facilitate the participation of Navy, Marine, and Air Force ROTC cadets—in addition to Army ROTC cadets—in CLDP.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to continue funding for ROTC cadets to participate in summer programs, internships, and opportunities through CLDP, even if not co-located with the ROTC cadet's university.

The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding to the newly established Cyber Institutes authorized in the NDAA for FY 2019 and consider expansion to other universities if proof of concept is successful.

### *More Effectively Manage Military Personnel*

13. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to utilize existing personnel tools and resources to more effectively manage military personnel.

13a. The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies and departments of the Federal Government, including DoD and the military departments, through their leadership, to use existing personnel management authorities to facilitate a “continuum of service” that fosters efficient and effective permeability between all components of Government service, and between the Government and the private sector.

The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Secretaries of each of the military departments to develop a new

personnel management structure for recruiting and retaining a specific military occupational specialty, such as cyber or engineering. In developing a new personnel management structure, the military departments should leverage existing authorities and consider how individuals with specific skillsets—such as medical workers, attorneys, and chaplains—are currently managed in order to improve talent management of personnel within the chosen career field.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to use existing authorities to establish warrant officers as an optimal pathway for individuals transitioning into and out of military service, to provide flexibility in compensation, and to retain existing service members who are not interested in pursuing military command leadership.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to establish permanent billets at Defense Digital Service and similar entities, as opposed to the current short-term temporary duty assignments, to facilitate greater cyber development opportunity and enable promotion boards and service leadership to better recognize the institutional value in such assignments.

The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies and departments of the Federal Government, including DoD and the military departments, through their leadership, to consider options for allowing and incentivizing individuals in cyber career tracks who leave for the private sector to agree that they can be called back into service when needed, or on a part-time basis.

13b. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense,

acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to collect data on the usage of new FY 2019 authorities with regard to recruiting and retaining cyber talent and report that information to Congress, along with identified challenges, additional authority requirements, and future plans for expanded implementation or justifications as to why such authorities are not appropriate.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to collect more robust individual performance data and administer a standardized exit survey to identify retention challenges, increase transparency, and support the use of new authorities in areas such as merit promotion, lateral entry, and constructive credit.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to provide an annual report to Congress on the use, by military department, of recruitment and retention bonuses paid to individuals in cyber career tracks in order to formulate a better appraisal of the incentive structures necessary for the military to remain competitive in attracting such individuals and ensure that service branches are fully utilizing the incentives at their disposal.

## National Service Recommendations

### *Cultivate Universal Awareness and Improve Recruitment*

14. The Commission recommends that the President direct all agencies and departments to work toward increasing public familiarity with national service opportunities, promote cross-service marketing and recruitment efforts, and expand pathways for those who serve to continue their service.

14a. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding for a public awareness campaign to educate key influencers of youth, including parents, grandparents, teachers, guidance counselors, clergy, and coaches, so that they can inform students about the opportunities for and impacts of national service.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to implement a national program to recognize institutions of higher education that champion service and service alumni on campus.

### *Restructure the Value, Flexibility, and Use of Service Benefits*

15. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take actions to improve benefits to national service participants.

15a. The Commission recommends that the President and Congress encourage the CEO of CNCS and heads of grantee organizations in the AmeriCorps State and National program to exercise their full authorities to increase the living allowances for members and provide adequate cost-of-living and geographic adjustments to those living allowances, and that Congress accordingly appropriate funds.

The Commission recommends that Congress eliminate the Senior Corps' maximum stipend restriction and appropriate funds to increase the stipend that volunteers receive to at least 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage.

15b. The Commission recommends that Congress amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude the Segal Award from gross income, thereby eliminating Federal taxation of the award.

The Commission recommends that Congress eliminate the provisions anchoring the



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Segal Award to the Pell Grant and appropriate funds to increase the overall value of the Segal Award.

The Commission recommends that Congress allow all AmeriCorps alumni to opt in to receive a discounted end-of-service cash stipend in lieu of the Segal Award.

The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the CEO of CNCS to expand the usability of the Segal Award beyond Title IV schools to include the same types of training and assistance programs authorized in the Post-9/11 GI Bill for all AmeriCorps alumni, not just veteran AmeriCorps alumni.

- 15c. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to work with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the National Governors Association to encourage members to offer in-state tuition rates to all national service alumni.

The Commission encourages all State Governors and State legislatures to require public institutions of higher education to offer all national service alumni and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) application fee waivers and/or course credit incentives in recognition of service experience.

- 15d. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the CEO of CNCS to allow all AmeriCorps alumni who entered service over the age of 55 to transfer their Segal Award to a family member or legally recognized dependent.
- 15e. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to study whether a restructuring of the current benefits package would contribute to breaking down barriers to service and create greater incentives to pursue service opportunities.

The Commission encourages the President to direct the CEO of CNCS to ease the restrictions on the AmeriCorps child care allowance program that prohibit young parents from receiving any additional child care assistance, even from their parents, during service, as well as the AmeriCorps child care eligibility requirements that restrict the amount of income a member can earn and the amount of family assistance a member can receive.

- 15f. The Commission recommends that the President encourage the CEO of CNCS to direct the heads of AmeriCorps member organizations to collect socioeconomic and demographic data during the member application process, not as a basis for selecting members but rather as a way of better understanding the challenges facing national service members, and to report the results to the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.
- 15g. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to provide individuals completing any federally sponsored national service a record of completion that would include information on training received and certifications/licenses earned, as well as allow service members to authorize CNCS to provide their contact information to other service organizations and Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments for the purpose of learning about additional service and employment opportunities.

### *Restructure Senior Corps*

16. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps necessary to improve the Senior Corps grant process and increase the geographic diversity of Senior Corps programs in order to expand the number of service opportunities available to seniors.
  - 16a. The Commission recommends that Congress restructure the Senior Corps Foster

Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs as competitive grant models.

- 16b. The Commission recommends that Congress provide the CEO of CNCS with all appropriate authorities, and the President provide the CEO of CNCS with all appropriate direction, to preserve geographic coverage of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) while also creating flexibility for growth.

*Expand Opportunities*

17. The Commission recommends that the President direct CNCS to expand social, educational, and economic opportunities, especially for underserved populations, through participation in national service programs.
- 17a. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding to double by 2031 the number of opportunities in existing national service programs that engage opportunity youth and Tribal communities, including YouthBuild, run by the Department of Labor; the Youth Conservation Corps, run by the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior; and the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to provide service opportunities for individuals with diverse abilities, such as Americans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, so that they may participate in and benefit from national service.

- 17b. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate additional funding for CNCS to provide dedicated financial support to AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA programs that demonstrate philanthropic challenges or high costs per member due to the provision of wraparound services.

- 17c. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to study best practices for service as a means to facilitate reintegration of ex-offenders and to explore the “reintegration of ex-offenders” as a grant priority.

The Commission encourages the Bureau of Prisons, State legislatures, State courts, and local magistrates to offer incentives for ex-offenders who complete a term of service.

*Explore New Models*

18. The Commission recommends that Congress take bold action to expand national service through the implementation of new fellowship and pilot programs.
- 18a. The Commission recommends that Congress replace the ServeAmerica Fellowship program and make an appropriation for the CEO of CNCS to launch a new national service fellowship program that awards individuals “service grants” that provide them funding to complete terms of service in certified nonprofit or community organizations.
- 18b. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funds for the CEO of CNCS to run novel demonstration projects.

*Increase Private-Sector Investment*

19. The Commission recognizes that many organizations in the private sector have made a commitment to support service and develop strategies to provide service opportunities for their employees and the communities within which they operate. The Commission encourages others in the private sector to embrace this trend by, for example, offering technical support for service organizations; pledging to hire military, national, and public service alumni; forming mission-driven partnerships with service entities; and enhancing and expanding service opportunities for their employees.

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### *Reimagine Public-Sector Coordination*

20. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President direct Federal agencies to implement flexible and, where appropriate, coordinated efforts to expand or enhance national service programming.
  - 20a. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the Director of the Peace Corps to conduct demonstration projects to expand the flexibility of Peace Corps Response Volunteers located in the United States to support efforts abroad.
  - 20b. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS and the Secretary of Labor to coordinate and develop more national service models that qualify as DOL apprenticeships.
  - 20c. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to review the current program limitations on participation, particularly in the area of disaster relief, and determine whether the extension of program participation would be beneficial to the long-term stability of the program and to the execution of requirements, particularly in disaster relief (e.g., the ability to recall recent graduates who have the requisite skillset and experience to respond to disasters).

### **Public Service Recommendations**

#### *Reform Federal Hiring*

21. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps to improve and simplify the competitive hiring process so that it is possible to more efficiently and effectively hire talented individuals by, among other things, reviewing and substantially revising USAJOBS, its interoperability with outside vendors, and the way it functions to facilitate hiring so as to make it easier to attract and employ talent.

- 21a. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM and agencies to revise job descriptions, add interoperability between USAJOBS and third-party job boards, and accept short, standard resumes for civil service positions.
  - 21b. The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies to avoid keyword-based resume reviews and self-assessments and direct the Director of OPM to issue guidance to require agencies to involve hiring managers and subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and assessment. The Commission further recommends that Congress appropriate funds to help agencies adopt advanced assessment tools.
  - 21c. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to implement the recently authorized, more flexible, ranked-list assessment option, allowing managers to select from top-ranked candidates.
  - 21d. The Commission recommends that the President encourage the Director of OPM to direct agencies to notify applicants of key milestones during the hiring process.
  - 21e. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to assess barriers to interagency transfers among competitive and excepted service employees and take steps to streamline such transfers.
  - 21f. The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to enhance the ability of agencies to use temporary and term appointments to address short-term needs.
22. The Commission encourages Congress and the President to promote and facilitate the use of existing noncompetitive hiring authorities that are currently underutilized and that would enhance the Government's ability to attract and retain talent.



- 22a. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to develop and agencies to use (1) standardized documentation for NCE and (2) noncompetitive hiring rosters by agency to allow candidates with NCE or VRA to identify agencies and career fields of interest.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to update USAJOBS to notify the hiring manager immediately when a candidate with NCE or VRA applies for a job posting.

The Commission recommends that the President issue an Executive order directing agencies to eliminate policies that restrict the use of noncompetitive hiring beyond those required by statute or OPM regulation, and to establish policies that proactively encourage HR staff and hiring managers to use available noncompetitive hiring authorities to efficiently and effectively meet workforce needs.

- 22b. The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS, Director of OPM, and Secretary of Defense to implement training for individuals with NCE, including national service alumni, alumni of fellowship and scholarship programs, and individuals with VRA.

- 22c. The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to change the criteria for granting direct-hire authority to agencies so that agencies may obtain direct-hire authority in case of a shortage of “highly qualified” candidates.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to modify regulations to allow agencies to use direct-hire authority without conducting a minimum-qualifications review for every applicant.

23. The Commission recommends that Congress update hiring preferences and noncompetitive eligibility.

- 23a. The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to change veterans’ preference within competitive examining to a tiebreaker between equally qualified candidates.

The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to limit eligibility for veterans’ preference to individuals who are not employed by a Federal agency and Federal employees within two years of their first use of the preference.

The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to establish a 10-year time limit, beginning upon separation from the military, for preference-eligible veterans to use veterans’ preference.

- 23b. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize 12 months of NCE for successful completion of federally sponsored internships, scholarships, and fellowships; grant 36 months of NCE to all full-time AmeriCorps alumni and RPCVs; and extend VRA to 10 years after separation.

The Commission recommends that Congress authorize NCE for select high-performing and qualified civilian employees who leave the Government, allowing them to return at a higher grade.

- 23c. The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to require that eligibility for preferences be determined centrally by OPM rather than in a decentralized manner by each agency during every hiring process.

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### *Revamp Hiring Systems for Students and Recent Graduates*

24. The Commission encourages the President and Congress to take steps to improve access to public service employment, and in particular to improve the process for recruiting and hiring students and recent graduates both by better positioning agency officials to engage in effective recruiting and hiring when students are looking for jobs and by promoting additional pathways to service through internships.

24a. The Commission recommends that Congress improve governmentwide hiring authorities for students and recent graduates.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to streamline internship and recent-graduate hiring programs.

24b. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the Director of OPM to allow agencies to conduct a demonstration program that would allow the use of new reform authorities to hire students and recent graduates in areas of critical skills, as identified by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, into the new internship program or directly into positions identified by the agencies as critical.

24c. The Commission recommends that Congress pass legislation to require that all Federal Government internships be paid.

24d. The Commission recommends that Congress increase the statutory cap on the direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates.

24e. The Commission recommends that Congress establish a Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center, within OPM and supervised by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, to administer, streamline, and expand fellowship and scholarship programs across the Government and to

promote fellowship and scholarship programs, particularly in areas of critical need to the Nation.

24f. The Commission recommends that the President revitalize the PMF Program by devolving responsibility to agencies and establishing a separate track for fellows with a technical focus.

24g. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to OPM and other agencies to support a Public Service Corps, similar but not identical to ROTC and in partnership with universities and other levels of government, that awards scholarships and provides special coursework to participants in exchange for a public service commitment.

The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to the military service academies to bring in a cohort of public service cadets or midshipmen who would be subject to the same five-year service commitment, but in public service rather than in military service, at a Federal agency in a civilian capacity. The number of public service cadets should represent at least 5 percent of the total incoming class at each academy, with no corresponding decline in enrollment of military cadets or midshipmen.

24h. The Commission recommends that Congress establish and appropriate funds for a competitive grant program for 50 IHEs to establish public service academies. Grants would provide funding over four years, covering 75 percent of the full operating costs in year one, 50 percent of the operating costs in year two, 50 percent of the operating costs in year three, and 50 percent of the operating costs in year four.

*Promote a High-Performing Personnel Culture*

25. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President emphasize the importance of strategic workforce planning, which should be prioritized and more effectively facilitated by, in particular, agencies and departments emphasizing more strongly the importance of personnel management skills for supervisors; promoting the development of human resources staff and the involvement of subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and assessment; and making the best use of all available hiring authorities and other legal and regulatory options to meet their workforce needs.
  - 25a. The Commission recommends that Congress direct the CHCO Council to establish competency standards for HR specialists, including technical knowledge, analytics, and collaborative skills.
  - 25b. The Commission recommends that the President require each Federal agency head to identify and/or appoint one or more individuals within the Federal agency to develop a workforce plan.
  - 25c. The Commission recommends that the President direct Federal agencies to communicate with the public in order to increase public awareness of their mission and inspire the next generation to serve. To accomplish these ends, the Commission further recommends that the President direct Federal agencies to designate a reasonable percentage of appropriated funds for the purpose of promoting service with the agency, informing the public about agency activities, and recruiting aspiring public servants, and that Congress enact legislation to provide Federal agencies with the authority to engage in robust public communication about their mission.

*Address Critical-Skills Challenges*

26. The Commission encourages the President and Congress to take steps to address the current shortage in Federal-agency health care professionals by streamlining the hiring process and the process for obtaining certain health-related skills and licenses and by promoting appropriate portability of such licenses.
27. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President support agencies and departments in improving the hiring process and the compensation options for cybersecurity, IT, and STEM professionals with high-demand talent; in developing and maintaining high-demand skills in the existing Federal workforce; and in improving the work environment within the Federal Government so that it more effectively accommodates the needs of such employees.
  - 27a. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize every Federal agency to adopt the Cyber Talent Management System, the special personnel system for civilian cybersecurity professionals managed by DHS.
  - 27b. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President invest in upgrading the skills of the existing Federal workforce.
  - 27c. The Commission recommends that the President direct that an appropriate portion of the evaluations for CIOs, CHCOs, and agency heads be based on their ability to utilize all available authorities to recruit and retain IT professionals for their agency.
  - 27d. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to create a Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve pilot program.



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### *Increase Competitiveness of Benefits*

28. The Commission recommends that the President and Congress create additional flexibility in the benefits packages for Government employees to better compensate and recruit individuals who do not foresee career-long employment with the Federal Government and furthermore take steps to improve employees' understanding of the benefits available to them.

28a. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Council on Military, National, and Public Service to create an advisory committee, with representatives from various stakeholders, that would review and develop recommendations on how to improve and update benefits for Federal civilian employees to meet the needs of the future workforce.

The Commission recommends that Congress authorize OPM to offer a new benefit option for newly hired, non-public safety, Federal civil service employees with fully portable retirement benefits, flexible time off, paid parental leave, and comprehensive disability-income insurance.

The Commission recommends that Congress establish a cafeteria plan for certain Federal employee benefits.

28b. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize Federal employees who are alumni of service corps operated by Federal agencies the option to purchase FERS pension service credit.

28c. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to include an estimated benefits statement with all Federal-agency job offers and to send it to all Federal employees on an annual basis.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to improve data collection on agency-specific benefits and on Federal employee views regarding current and potential new benefits.

28d. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President preserve competitive benefits structures for emergency response and public safety officers, commensurate with their job requirements and their responsibilities to the public.

### *Develop a New Personnel System*

29. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and the President direct implementation of a modern talent-management system across the Federal Government.

29a. The Commission recommends that Congress expand OPM's demonstration authority to test changes to personnel systems, loosening the time and personnel restrictions as well as enabling OPM to expand demonstrated successes without statutory changes.

29b. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize OPM to pilot a new personnel system, covering hiring, classification, compensation, transfer, and promotion, at agencies with a significant number of STEM employees.

29c. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President require a comprehensive evaluation of changes to Federal personnel policy made in response to the Commission's report.

29d. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and the President direct the development of comprehensive proposals for a modern talent-management system to meet modern workforce needs.

## Integrate Military, National, and Public Service

30. The Commission recommends that Congress and the President develop and improve mechanisms that connect service opportunities and promote the vision “every American inspired and eager to serve.”

30a. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for a pilot program overseen by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service and run in appropriate agencies and departments to invest recruiting resources for military, national, and public service in underserved markets as defined by each service—focusing on gender, geography, socioeconomic status, and critical skills—to better reflect the demography of the Nation and ensure that recruiting needs are met into the future.

The Commission recommends that Congress direct and appropriate the necessary funds for the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps to collaborate on joint advertising campaigns and to share marketing research resources.

The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the CEO of CNCS and the Director of the Peace Corps, to develop and provide to the Armed Services Committees a plan for providing ineligible or non-selected applicants with information about the other forms of service.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps to sign an interagency agreement (IAA) formally committing their agencies to develop and implement cross-service incentives for recruitment and retention purposes.

The Commission recommends that Congress require the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, together with the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps, to jointly produce a quadrennial report that is focused on evaluating cross-service participation and that contains recommendations for increasing joint awareness and recruitment initiatives.

30b. The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to work with the CEO of CNCS to provide information on national and public service to transitioning military service members through DoD’s Transition Assistance Program, and to provide military and public service information to individuals completing national service.

The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS and the Director of the Peace Corps to work with the Secretary of Defense and Director of OPM to provide military service and public service information to transitioning national service members.

## STRENGTHEN EMERGENCY NATIONAL MOBILIZATION

### *The Purpose and Value of the Selective Service System*

31. The Commission reaffirms the continued need for a draft contingency mechanism to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during a national emergency.

32. The Commission recommends that Congress clarify the purpose of the Selective Service by revising the MSSA purpose statement to read: “The Congress hereby declares that an adequate military strength must be achieved and maintained to insure the security of this Nation by insuring adequate personnel with the requisite capabilities to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during

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a national emergency and not solely to provide combat replacements.”

33. The Commission affirms the key values of a draft contingency mechanism, namely (1) as a hedge against the risk of military personnel shortages in DoD during a national security emergency, and (2) as a symbol of U.S. national resolve to mobilize the Nation to meet commitments to its Armed Forces, allies, and partners.

### *Reaffirming the American Approach for Defending the Nation*

34. The Commission recommends that the President issue an Executive order setting out policy for issuing a call for volunteers before exercising a draft contingency.
35. The Commission reaffirms the SSS’s pre-mobilization registration posture and recommends that Congress and the President maintain the Selective Service pre-mobilization registration requirement.
36. The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to require the SSS to develop and implement methods to convey to registrants the solemn obligation for military service in the event of a draft and to appropriate funds to accomplish this.

### *Providing a Fair, Equitable, and Transparent System*

37. The Commission recommends that the President review the existing exemptions and deferments for the draft and propose revisions intended to update existing legislation to promote equitable obligations in the event a draft is enacted.
38. The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to provide any individual who has been denied a Federal benefit due to nonregistration with the SSS an opportunity to register within 30 days, no matter the individual’s age at

the time of denial, and to become eligible for the benefit denied.

### *Addressing the Need for Critical Skills*

39. The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to generate and maintain a list of the type and number of currently needed critically skilled personnel.
40. The Commission recommends that Congress authorize an Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) of personnel with critical skills for the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement.

### *Improving the Readiness of the National Mobilization System*

41. The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Secretary of Defense and the Director of SSS to conduct a regular exercise that includes the full range of interagency mobilization stakeholders to review total and mass mobilization strategic and operational concepts. The Commission additionally recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to provide to Congress a report on the results, which may be delivered in a classified form.
42. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of SSS to periodically exercise the agency’s mobilization responsibilities.
43. The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate additional funding for the SSS to accompany exercises with a public awareness campaign that communicates their purpose.
44. The Commission recommends that the President designate a lead national mobilization official within the staff of the National Security Council to coordinate whole-of-government and industry mobilization for any potential national mobilization effort.



45. The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to designate a lead national mobilization executive agent within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.
46. The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to update the personnel requirements and timeline for obtaining draft inductees in the event of an emergency requiring mass mobilization.
47. The Commission recommends that the President require the Secretary of Defense, acting through the proposed lead national mobilization executive agent, to develop a plan, in conjunction with the Director of SSS, for responding to a large influx of volunteers—as may occur during a Presidential call for volunteers—and to report the plan to Congress.
48. The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to include in future Quadrennial Defense Reviews (QDRs) and National Defense Strategies (NDSs) a section on the state of the SSS and the ability of the United States to rapidly mobilize personnel—both volunteers and draft inductees—in the event of an emergency.

### **EXPAND SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION**

49. The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to eliminate male-only registration and expand draft eligibility to all individuals of the applicable age cohort.

# APPENDIX B:

## Implementation Guidance

**T**his appendix contains all recommendations of the Commission, along with implementation guidance for each recommendation. Implementation guidance appears beneath each top-line recommendation and provides detail and additional steps proposed by the Commission to achieve each recommendation. The Legislative Annex of the Commission’s Final Report contains legislative proposals for those recommendations and implementation steps that are marked with an asterisk (\*).

### ELEVATE ALL FORMS OF SERVICE

#### Prioritize Civic Education and Service Learning

**1:** The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate \$450 million per year for civic education and service learning.

##### 1a. Create a Civic Education Fund.

**>>** The Commission recommends that Congress create a Civic Education Fund and provide an initial investment of \$200 million each year to State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations, via the U.S. Department of Education, to develop and implement best practice curricula that incorporate civic education, applied civics, and service learning across the K–12 experience and to provide teacher development opportunities in civic education, applied civics, and service

learning. The goals, by 2031, are all K–12 students exposed to civic education and all students in 4th, 8th, and 12th grades test at or above “Proficient” in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test in civics.\*

- Of the \$200 million in the Civic Education Fund, the Commission proposes that half be dedicated to teacher development across the country under title 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), and the remaining half be available for developing and implementing effective civic education, applied civics, and service-learning programs under title 4 of ESEA.
- The Commission proposes that grants be available to SEAs, LEAs, IHEs, nonprofit organizations, and consortia of these. The Department of Education would have responsibility for developing appropriate criteria for assessing grant proposals based on need and the strength of proposals and for determining the amount of each award.
- The Commission further proposes that at least 50 percent of title 2 funds and at least 50 percent of title 4 funds be reserved for programs at high-need schools, that the remaining funds be available for all schools on a competitive basis, and that grantees for programs in non-high-need schools be required to provide matching funds.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the U.S. Secretary of Education to create a dedicated position or office within the U.S. Department of Education responsible for overseeing and administering the Civic Education Fund and coordinating other civic education and service-learning initiatives of the Federal Government.

### 1b. Create a Service-Learning Fund.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress create a Service-Learning Fund and provide \$250 million each year from the above appropriation to SEAs, LEAs, IHEs, State Service Commissions, and nonprofit organizations, via the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), to develop and implement service-learning programs and opportunities for hands-on community service for K-12 and postsecondary students across the country. The goals, by 2031, are all K-12 students receiving in-class service-learning experiences, 1 million 6th to 12th grade students participating in a Summer of Service program each year, and 1 million 9th to 12th grade students participating in a Semester of Service program each year.\*

- The Commission proposes to create a Service-Learning Fund to provide grants to SEAs, LEAs, IHEs, State Service Commissions, and nonprofit organizations to undertake three types of programs:
  - *Service-learning programs.* The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate \$50 million per year to the Service-Learning Fund to sponsor service-learning programs in public schools and IHEs. Of these funds, CNCS

would distribute 80 percent for programming at elementary and secondary schools and 20 percent for programming at institutions of higher education.

- *Summers of Service.* The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate \$100 million per year to fund Summer of Service pilot programs across the country for students who will be enrolled in grades 6-12 at the end of the summer.
- *Semesters of Service.* The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate \$100 million per year to fund Semester of Service pilot programs across the country for students in grades 9-12.
- The Commission proposes that Congress require CNCS to reserve no less than 50 percent of funds for projects in economically disadvantaged communities and that grantees outside of such communities be required to provide matching funds. Criteria for assessing grant proposals and determining the amount of each award would be determined by CNCS.
- The Commission also proposes that Congress amend section 119 of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended (NCSA), to ensure that the programs reach the target populations and to better align the programs with the objectives set forth in the Commission's Final Report.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CNCS to create a dedicated position or office within CNCS responsible for overseeing and administering the Service-Learning Fund.



## APPENDIX B: Implementation Guidance

### 2: Improve NAEP participation and information sharing.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend the law to require States to participate in the NAEP civics assessment, require the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to publish results of the NAEP civics assessment both in the aggregate for the Nation and separately for each State, and require schools to administer the NAEP civics assessment every two years.\*
- The Commission proposes to amend 20 U.S.C. § 9622 to require NCES to conduct the NAEP civics assessment every two years with results published both in the aggregate and separately for each State, similar to the approach currently taken for mathematics and reading.
- The Commission further proposes to amend 20 U.S.C. § 6311 on State plans and 20 U.S.C. § 6312 on LEA plans to require that State and local entities participate in the NAEP civics assessment if selected to do so.

### 3: Create civic education and service-learning award programs.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds for the U.S. Secretary of Education to create an award and recognition program to highlight both excellence in the delivery and teaching of civic education, applied civics, and service learning and excellence by students in addressing community needs through civic education, applied civics, and service learning.\*
- The Commission proposes an award for States, districts, schools, teachers, and students (individually or as a group) modeled on awards granted through existing National Blue Ribbon Schools or National

Teacher of the Year programs. This award would highlight stellar civic education and service-learning programs and thereby provide examples that other entities can emulate.

- The Commission proposes that a select committee created by the Secretary of Education assess candidate applications and select finalists. Applications should include information on the types of innovative civic education or service-learning programs administered or completed, the impact of the project on addressing community or national needs, the impact of the project on measurable civics outcomes and learning, and the ability of the program to be implemented more broadly across the Nation.

### 4: Fund the development of civic education and service-learning curricular resources.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds for the Library of Congress, Institute of Museum and Library Services, and National Archives to coordinate the development and distribution of information on civic education and effective citizenship produced by the U.S. Government.\*
- The Commission recognizes that engagement with primary source documents guided by subject-matter experts provides students with an optimal learning experience in civic education and effective citizenship. The Commission is concerned that many students do not have access to these resources and experiences.
- The Commission proposes that the Library of Congress, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, and the National Archives enhance existing online resources and support the distribution of hard copy and digital materials to local

libraries, polling locations, and schools, especially in rural areas.

**5: Integrate best practices in civic education, service learning, and applied civics.**

>> The Commission recommends that SEAs, LEAs, schools, and nonprofit organizations explore ways to provide quality, research-based civic education, applied civics, and service learning to K-12 students, and to prepare teachers to teach these subjects and use these methodologies. To accomplish these goals, the Commission encourages SEAs, LEAs, schools, and nonprofit organizations to consider the best practices endorsed by the Commission.

- The best practices endorsed by the Commission are included in **Appendix C, Part I** (civic education), and **Appendix C, Part II** (service learning).

>> The Commission recommends that IHEs and nonprofit organizations explore ways to integrate quality, research-based civic education and service-learning methodologies into curricula, consider best practices, and prepare teachers to use service-learning methodologies.

- The best practices endorsed by the Commission are included in **Appendix C, Part III**.

>> The Commission recommends that State Governors and legislatures consider amendments to State law to stimulate robust civic education and service learning for their students.

- The Commission encourages States to consider adopting provisions included in **Appendix C, Part IV**, to supplement their existing legislation on civic education and

service learning. These provisions are based on extensive research into legislation and best practices in States across the country.

**6: Issue a resolution honoring and supporting teachers.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress issue a resolution to honor and express support for the work of teachers to inspire civic engagement through their dedication as public servants and to issue a call to Americans to join the profession of teaching.\*

**Designate a Governmentwide Lead for Service**

**7: Establish and fund an interagency Council on Military, National, and Public Service.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress establish and appropriate funds for a Council on Military, National, and Public Service in the Executive Office of the President, to be headed by an Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, provide a separate appropriation for the Council, and require the President to appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, an Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service (the “Assistant to the President”), who shall serve as the Director of the Council.
- Under the proposal, members of the Council would include the Assistant to the President along with senior Administration officials, including the Secretaries of

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State, Defense, the Interior, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Veterans Affairs, and Homeland Security; the Directors of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), National Intelligence, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and the Peace Corps; and the Chief Executive Officer of CNCS.

- Under the proposal, the Council would have responsibility for advising the President and coordinating and overseeing executive branch action on policies and initiatives to foster an increased sense of service and civic responsibility among all Americans; to promote, expand, enhance, and make available opportunities for military, national, and public service for all Americans; and to promote governmentwide policy and interagency coordination related to military, national, and public service.
- Specific responsibilities of the Council would include:
  - Developing policies to cultivate pathways for Americans to develop critical skills and contribute those skills to the Nation and its communities through military, national, and public service;
  - Leading the Federal Government's effort to develop joint awareness and recruitment, retention, and marketing initiatives involving military, national, and public service, including the sharing of marketing and recruiting research across service agencies;
  - Serving as the interagency lead for critical skills, responsible for coordinating whole-of-government efforts to address gaps in critical skills;
  - Preparing a Quadrennial Report on Cross-Service Participation and a Quadrennial Military, National, and Public Service Strategy;

- Preparing a separate analysis, by budget function, agency, and initiative area, for inclusion in the President's budget submission; and
- Developing a formal definition of national service that incorporates domestic and international service and a joint national service messaging strategy that both CNCS and the Peace Corps would promote.

### 7a. Award cabinet rank to the President's service advisor.

>> The Commission further recommends that the President award cabinet rank to the Assistant to the President for Military, National, and Public Service.

- The Commission proposes that the President, in establishing the Council, issue an Executive order that endorses the mission of the Council to promote all streams of service, identifies priorities for the Council's activities, and awards cabinet rank to the Assistant to the President.

## Create a Service Platform

### 8: Establish an internet-based service platform to connect Americans with service opportunities.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate multiyear funds for an internet-based service platform under the supervision of the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.\*

- The Commission proposes creating a one-stop-shop, internet-based service platform to provide a centralized resource for Americans to learn about and connect with opportunities and organizations

covering the breadth of military, national, and public service and for organizations in military, national, and public service to connect with individuals about potential opportunities.

- Individuals could use the platform to identify opportunities with service organizations, including employment, dedicated service terms, service sabbaticals, availability for emergency or disaster response volunteering, and willingness to join the military during an emergency requiring national mobilization.
- Participation in the platform would be entirely voluntary, although individuals desiring to take advantage of the platform's functionality would provide personal information, at their discretion.
  - Additional information may include contact details, service preferences, career goals, licenses and unique skills, and willingness to be contacted by different types of organizations.
  - Information provided would be shared with participating national service and public service organizations unless an individual opts out, and with military service organizations only if the individual opts in.
  - The Commission recommends that the platform administrators explore ways to enable individuals to upload information they have included in online professional databases.
- The proposal provides for participation from a range of organizations involved in military, national, and public service.
  - If enacted, the proposal would require the U.S. military departments and all Federal agencies to participate in the platform. State, local, and Tribal governments would be encouraged but not required to participate. It would also encourage nongovernmental organizations to participate if they comply with standards and procedures to be developed by the platform administrators.
- The Selective Service System, in addition, would be required to provide a link to the service platform during online Selective Service registration and allow Selective Service registrants to opt into the service platform.
- In addition, the Federal Government would be permitted to use information in the platform to identify individuals who have expressed a willingness to join the military during an emergency requiring national mobilization. Such individuals would be prompted to confirm their willingness on an annual basis.
- The Commission proposes that the Director of OMB be responsible for establishing and maintaining the service platform, with oversight by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, if established.
- The Commission further proposes that the President direct the Selective Service System to include information about the platform with the confirmations it sends to Selective Service registrants.



**ADVANCE MILITARY, NATIONAL,  
AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Military Service Recommendations**

*Improve Military Outreach Around the Country*

**9: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to increase public understanding of the military, and particularly of the broad spectrum of career opportunities available and represented in military service, by increased outreach to communities.**

**9a. Facilitate military outreach to areas of the country with low propensity.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to increase tours of military bases and facilities; to evaluate access restrictions at military installations in order to allow—to the greatest extent practicable, given security requirements—increased and regular civilian access to military installations; and to increase outreach to community-based cadet and youth programs, including traditional athletics, video gaming clubs, and other youth organizations.

- The Commission proposes that field trips to bases be run as an official mission of military installation commands—such as the U.S. Army Installation Management Command—and by base commanders, in coordination with operational units.
- The Commission further proposes that military installation commands make efforts to connect with schools and community groups in surrounding areas in order to encourage their participation

in base visits and explore innovative approaches to engaging with youth through schools, community groups, and other means.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to utilize existing authority to develop recruiting incentives that are targeted to areas with lower rates of propensity and recommends that Congress extend the temporary authority which expires on December 31, 2020, to December 31, 2023.\*

- The Commission proposes that the President encourage the Secretaries of the military departments to explore innovative approaches, within existing authority, to incentivize individuals in areas with lower rates of propensity.
- The Commission proposes legislation to extend the authority provided in section 522 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, Pub. L. No. 114-92 (2015), until December 31, 2023, which would allow the Secretaries of the military departments to continue to develop and provide recruiting incentives.

>> The Commission recommends that the President and State Governors call on State and local educators to eliminate barriers to access by military members, including recruiters, and to grant the same access to school activities as is afforded to representatives of higher education, technical trade training programs, and similar groups that provide information to students and their families on career opportunities.

**9b. Utilize the National Guard and Reserves to increase local outreach.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to develop pilot programs that utilize Guard and Reserve units—particularly in areas with lower rates of propensity and exposure—to partner with school districts, schools, and community service organizations in order to develop long-term relationships that build understanding, increase exposure, and share information on military service; to promote increased understanding of the tradition of citizen service to the Nation; and to provide opportunities for mentorship to youth interested in careers with both civilian and military applications.

- In implementing this recommendation, the Commission proposes that members of the Guard and Reserve be permitted to use paid drill periods to undertake these outreach efforts.

**9c. Increase congressional participation in military outreach.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Members of Congress as well as Federal, State, local, and Tribal officials use their offices and goodwill to increase awareness of, and call on youth to consider, military service opportunities. The Commission further recommends that Members of Congress support and participate in military outreach in their districts, including assistance for constituents to apply to the military service academies each year.

*Increase Opportunities for Youth to Explore Service***10: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to expand opportunities for youth to explore military service.****10a. Expand and strengthen JROTC and other youth cadet programs.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to develop a basis of allocation for Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) units that would ensure a fair and equitable distribution of JROTC units in school districts across the United States and recommends that Congress support an increase in JROTC units to no fewer than 6,000 by 2031. The Commission further recommends that Congress expand the JROTC curriculum to include an introduction to relevant national and public service opportunities.\*

- The Commission proposes the appropriation of additional funding sufficient to support an increase of JROTC units along with an amendment to 10 U.S.C. § 2031, the statute governing JROTC programs, to authorize a change in the curriculum to include an introduction to service opportunities in military, national, and public service.

- >> The Commission recommends that the Secretary of Defense, acting through existing programs, including JROTC, cadet corps, Starbase, and Youth Challenge, partner with educators and community service organizations in providing service-learning opportunities for youth both during the K-12 school year and during summer programs.

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- >> The Commission recommends that State Governors and State and local legislators share best practices for academies of leadership. The Commission is aware that several States, such as Kansas, Texas, and Florida, have developed and supported academies of leadership in their middle schools. These citizenship programs have enabled younger Americans to be exposed to and learn leadership skills and to develop leadership qualities at a young age.

### **10b. Encourage administration of the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Career Exploration Program (ASVAB CEP).**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President and the States promote ASVAB CEP administration in schools.
  - >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, the Director of OPM, and the CEO of CNCS to evaluate the potential applicability of the ASVAB CEP program to national service and Federal public service.
- The Commission encourages the use of the ASVAB CEP to, in addition to providing career-relevant information to students by highlighting areas of occupational interest and assessing strength in specific skills for military service, also share information about potential opportunities for national and public service.
  - The Commission further encourages the Department of Defense (DoD) to pursue efforts to implement an online version of the ASVAB CEP.
  - The Commission supports efforts to consider rebranding the ASVAB CEP to better reflect the broad applicability of

the test to identify skills in all realms of service—military, national, and public.

### *Strengthen Military Recruiting and Marketing*

#### **11: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President develop policies to better allocate military recruiting and marketing resources for the future.**

##### **11a. Invest military recruiting resources in underserved markets.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate additional funding for DoD to invest in and provide incentives for existing Hometown Recruiting Programs.
- The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate funding for each of the military services' Hometown Recruiting Programs, through DoD appropriations bills. A portion of additional funding should be targeted at low propensity areas and otherwise underserved demographics.
  - The Commission further proposes that participation in Hometown Recruiting Programs be done on a temporary duty, or TDY, basis, rather than relying on personal time or on a policy of permissive TDY.

##### **11b. Update military advertising and marketing for today's youth.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate multiyear funding for military marketing and advertising.\*
- The Commission proposes multiyear funding to allow and enable the military to more efficiently contract for marketing and advertising, and thereby lower the costs associated with marketing and advertising purchases.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, in cooperation with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and subject-matter experts, to conduct a review of the efficacy of legacy advertising and marketing models. The review should identify ways to apply current and future information platforms used by young people and their influencers to convey to young people a more thorough and informed understanding of the opportunities and benefits associated with military service.

*Develop Educational Pathways for Military Service*

**12: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President expand and improve educational pathways for entering the military.**

**12a. Expand opportunities for educational attainment prior to and during military service.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for the military departments to provide limited tuition grants for pre-service professional degrees, certificates, and certifications in exchange for an enlisted service commitment.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize individuals to receive grants for technical degrees, certificates, or certifications in areas identified by the military departments in return for an enlisted service commitment. The individuals would apply the grants to educational programs at community colleges and vocational schools. The Commission proposes Congress require the military departments to update the list of eligible degree,

certification, and certificate programs at least once every five years.

- An individual would be entered into the relevant military department’s Delayed Entry Program upon signing an enlistment contract. Any individual who receives a tuition grant and is unable or unwilling to access into the military would be required to repay the tuition funding received or serve a period equal to the military service commitment in a federally sponsored national service program.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretary of one of the military departments, to run a pilot program establishing a partnership with community colleges and vocational schools that would provide professional degrees, certificates, and certifications through technical education programs.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize a pilot program in one of the military departments to facilitate the ability of service members to obtain degrees, certificates, and certifications in areas of critical need during their military service.
- The proposed pilot program would run for an initial term of two years, with no more than three community college or vocational school partners. Criteria, guidelines, and other policies for the technical education programs should be coordinated by the selected military department and the partner schools.
- The Commission proposes that the selected military department contribute at least half of the funding to host and staff the technical educational programs, with partner schools providing the remaining funding and associated staffing and facilities.



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- In addition to current service members, the Commission proposes that the technical education programs be open for participation by civilian students and military recruits, as a way to encourage military recruitment.
- At the conclusion of the initial term, the Secretary of Defense would undertake an assessment of the pilot program's performance and report the findings to Congress to determine whether to expand the program to more partners for a subsequent term.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of the Defense to ensure that the military departments fund and apply tuition assistance (TA) in a consistent manner, given the importance of TA to young new service members. The Secretary should consider allowing the military departments to prioritize TA funds to service members who are seeking to complete a degree, certificate, or certification program that leads to a critical skill.
- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to follow the efforts of the Army, which has developed programs that leverage private-sector certifications for soldiers, reduce transition costs, increase retention, and create a more skilled force.

### **12b. Strengthen existing platforms for growing digital talent.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of the Army, in coordination with the Army Cyber Institute and U.S. Army Cadet Command, to continue to expand access to the Cyber Leadership Development Program (CLDP) to Army Reserve Officers'

Training Corps (ROTC) cadets across the country, and to work with service cadet commands to facilitate the participation of Navy, Marine, and Air Force ROTC cadets—in addition to Army ROTC cadets—in CLDP.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to continue funding for ROTC cadets to participate in summer programs, internships, and opportunities through CLDP, even if not co-located with the ROTC cadet's university.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding to the newly established Cyber Institutes authorized in the NDAA for FY 2019 and consider expansion to other universities if proof of concept is successful.\*

- The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate additional funds to expand the Cyber Institutes program created by section 1640 of the John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019, Pub. L. No. 115-232 (2018). These Cyber Institutes were authorized to be established at institutions of higher learning with ROTC programs, with special consideration given to the senior military colleges.
- To assist the Congress in assessing appropriate expansion of the Cyber Institutes program, the Commission proposes requiring the Secretary of Defense to issue a report addressing the effectiveness of the program and expansion to other universities.

*More Effectively Manage Military Personnel*

**13: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to utilize existing personnel tools and resources to more effectively manage military personnel.**

**13a. Utilize existing authorities and opportunities to facilitate a “continuum of service.”**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies and departments of the Federal Government, including DoD and the military departments, through their leadership, to use existing personnel management authorities to facilitate a “continuum of service” that fosters efficient and effective permeability between all components of Government service, and between the Government and the private sector.
- >> The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Secretaries of each of the military departments to develop a new personnel management structure for recruiting and retaining a specific military occupational specialty, such as cyber or engineering. In developing a new personnel management structure, the military departments should leverage existing authorities and consider how individuals with specific skillsets—such as medical workers, attorneys, and chaplains—are currently managed in order to improve talent management of personnel within the chosen career field.\*

- The Commission proposes that Congress require the military departments to submit their plans for developing a new personnel management structure within 120 days.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to use existing authorities to establish warrant officers as an optimal pathway for individuals transitioning into and out of military service, to provide flexibility in compensation, and to retain existing service members who are not interested in pursuing military command leadership.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to establish permanent billets at Defense Digital Service and similar entities, as opposed to the current short-term temporary duty assignments, to facilitate greater cyber development opportunity and enable promotion boards and service leadership to better recognize the institutional value in such assignments.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies and departments of the Federal Government, including DoD and the military departments, through their leadership, to consider options for allowing and incentivizing individuals in cyber career tracks who leave for the private sector to agree that they can be called back into service when needed, or on a part-time basis.

**13b. Collect data on the usage of new authorities and other personnel management tools.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to collect data on the usage of new FY 2019 authorities with regard to recruiting and retaining cyber talent and report that information to Congress, along with identified

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challenges, additional authority requirements, and future plans for expanded implementation or justifications as to why such authorities are not appropriate.

- The Commission proposes that the report to Congress occur annually for the first five years.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Secretaries of the military departments, to collect more robust individual performance data and administer a standardized exit survey to identify retention challenges, increase transparency, and support the use of new authorities in areas such as merit promotion, lateral entry, and constructive credit.

- The Commission encourages the military departments to use 360-degree performance reviews and collect more robust individual performance data to facilitate greater standardization of promotion criteria and identification of pain points and blind spots in the current personnel system.
- The Commission proposes that the military departments contract with data scientists and other experts to create a standardized exit survey, implemented uniformly across the services, to generate data regarding shared and unique retention challenges among the services.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to provide an annual report to Congress on the use, by military department, of recruitment and retention bonuses paid to individuals in cyber career tracks in order to formulate a better appraisal of the incentive structures necessary for the military to remain competitive in

attracting such individuals and ensure that service branches are fully utilizing the incentives at their disposal.

### National Service Recommendations

#### *Cultivate Universal Awareness and Improve Recruitment*

**14:** The Commission recommends that the President direct all agencies and departments to work toward increasing public familiarity with national service opportunities, promote cross-service marketing and recruitment efforts, and expand pathways for those who serve to continue their service.

#### **14a. Launch a public awareness campaign for national service.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding for a public awareness campaign to educate key influencers of youth, including parents, grandparents, teachers, guidance counselors, clergy, and coaches, so that they can inform students about the opportunities for and impacts of national service.\*

- The Commission proposes that Congress provide CNCS with funds for a public awareness campaign that could identify best practices, establish and carry out national outreach efforts, produce and make materials available to K-12 schools, facilitate access to national service information and opportunities, and provide nationwide marketing opportunities. CNCS would be permitted to use funds for salary and expenses, in addition to programming. The legislation would also require CNCS to provide Congress with a report on the public awareness campaign and an

assessment of the value of continuing the campaign in subsequent fiscal years.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to implement a national program to recognize institutions of higher education that champion service and service alumni on campus.

- The Commission proposes that CNCS recognize 25 institutions of higher education a year as Campuses of Service, using the authority granted in section 118A of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12561a).

*Restructure the Value, Flexibility, and Use of Service Benefits*

**15: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take actions to improve benefits to national service participants.**

**15a. Increase national service living allowances.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President and Congress encourage the CEO of CNCS and heads of grantee organizations in the AmeriCorps State and National program to exercise their full authorities to increase the living allowances for members and provide adequate cost-of-living and geographic adjustments to those living allowances, and that Congress accordingly appropriate funds.\*

- The Commission proposes that Congress increase appropriations to CNCS and require the CEO of CNCS to annually review and adjust the AmeriCorps State and National stipend to reflect cost-of-living and geographic adjustments, as well as annual updates for inflation.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress eliminate the Senior Corps' maximum stipend restriction and appropriate funds to increase the stipend that volunteers receive to at least 60 percent of the Federal minimum wage.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend 42 U.S.C. § 5011(d) to increase the Senior Corps stipend. This amendment would apply to the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs, but not to the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, as that program does not offer a stipend.

**15b. Improve the value and flexibility of the Segal Award.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress amend the Internal Revenue Code to exclude the Segal Award from gross income, thereby eliminating Federal taxation of the award.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend sections 108 (Income from discharge of indebtedness) and 117 (Qualified scholarships) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. §§ 108, 117) to exclude the Segal Award from gross income, thereby eliminating Federal taxation of the award.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress eliminate the provisions anchoring the Segal Award to the Pell Grant and appropriate funds to increase the overall value of the Segal Award.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend section 147(a) of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12603(a)) to eliminate the provisions anchoring the Segal Award to the maximum amount of the Federal Pell Grant and to increase the overall value of the Segal Award to the average cost of one year of in-state tuition at a public college



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or university. The Commission further proposes an increase in congressional appropriations to support this increase in the Segal Award amount.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress allow all AmeriCorps alumni to opt in to receive a discounted end-of-service cash stipend in lieu of the Segal Award.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to permit all AmeriCorps members to select a cash-out option in lieu of the Segal Award. The proposal is similar to section 105 of the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, as amended (DVSA) (42 U.S.C. § 4955), which provides a cash-out option for AmeriCorps VISTA participants. It also includes conforming amendments to ensure that national service participants who choose the cash stipend are not eligible for the Segal Award.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the CEO of CNCS to expand the usability of the Segal Award beyond Title IV schools to include the same types of training and assistance programs authorized in the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill for all AmeriCorps alumni, not just veteran AmeriCorps alumni.\*

- The Commission proposes to clarify section 148(a) of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12604(a)) to permit the use of the Segal Award to pay expenses in vocational training, apprenticeship, and other programs, regardless of veteran status. In the past, appropriations bills have restricted the use of the Segal Award for all populations other than veterans. The proposal will make clear that the Segal Award may be used for all training programs approved under 38 U.S.C. Chapter 36.

- The Commission further recommends that Congress revisit its standard appropriations bill language for CNCS programs and remove the restriction on use of the Segal Award for certain vocational, apprenticeship, and other programs by participants who are not military veterans.

### 15c. Expand national service incentives through institutions of higher education.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to work with the American Association of State Colleges and Universities and the National Governors Association to encourage members to offer in-state tuition rates to all national service alumni.
- >> The Commission encourages all State Governors and State legislatures to require public institutions of higher education to offer all national service alumni and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) application fee waivers and/or course credit incentives in recognition of service experience.

### 15d. Allow for greater transferability of the Segal Award.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the CEO of CNCS to allow all AmeriCorps alumni who entered service over the age of 55 to transfer their Segal Award to a family member or legally recognized dependent.\*
- The Commission proposes to amend section 148(f) of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12604(f)) to expand the transfer option to include all national service members 55 years or older and to expand the categories of eligible recipients. In addition, the Commission proposes to amend section 148(d)(3) of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12604(d)

(3) to adjust the period of time in which the Segal Award may be used so that potential recipients will be old enough to use the award.

**15e. Incorporate a more flexible benefits compensation model into AmeriCorps.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to study whether a restructuring of the current benefits package would contribute to breaking down barriers to service and create greater incentives to pursue service opportunities.
- >> The Commission encourages the President to direct the CEO of CNCS to ease the restrictions on the AmeriCorps child care allowance program that prohibit young parents from receiving any additional child care assistance, even from their parents, during service, as well as the AmeriCorps child care eligibility requirements that restrict the amount of income a member can earn and the amount of family assistance a member can receive.

- The Commission proposes that CNCS use its full authority under section 105(c)(2) of the DVSA (42 U.S.C. § 4955(c)(2)) to establish guidelines on the circumstances in which members can receive child care allowances.

**15f. Collect member socioeconomic and demographic data.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President encourage the CEO of CNCS to direct the heads of AmeriCorps member organizations to collect socioeconomic and demographic data during the member application process, not as a basis for selecting members but rather as a way of better understanding the challenges facing national service members, and to report the results to the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.

**15g. Issue all national service members a completion of service certificate.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to provide individuals completing any federally sponsored national service a record of completion that would include information on training received and certifications/licenses earned, as well as allow service members to authorize CNCS to provide their contact information to other service organizations and Federal, State, local, and Tribal governments for the purpose of learning about additional service and employment opportunities.

- The Commission proposes that the record of completion be modeled on the DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) that military members receive upon separation. The proposed record of completion would serve as an official certification that an individual has completed a term of national service—in AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, or other appropriate national service programs—and that the individual could use to qualify for benefits or employment preferences that public or private organizations may offer.

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### *Restructure Senior Corps*

**16: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps necessary to improve the Senior Corps grant process and increase the geographic diversity of Senior Corps programs in order to expand the number of service opportunities available to seniors.**

**16a. Restructure the Foster Grandparent Program and Senior Companion Program as competitive grants.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress restructure the Senior Corps Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion Programs as competitive grant models.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend sections 201, 227, and 412 of the DVSA (42 U.S.C. §§ 5001, 5027, and 5052) to allow grants for the Senior Corps Foster Grandparent and the Senior Companion Programs to be awarded on a competitive basis. The current statutes allow programs to renew grants without competition.

**16b. Increase geographic diversity of Senior Corps programs.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress provide the CEO of CNCS with all appropriate authorities, and the President provide the CEO of CNCS with all appropriate direction, to preserve geographic coverage of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) while also creating flexibility for growth.\*

- The Commission proposes to clarify the authority in section 201(e)(2)(B) of the DVSA (42 U.S.C. § 5001(e)(2)(B)) to ensure geographic coverage of RSVP while allowing flexibility to support new programs in

existing geographic areas. The proposal removes confusion about whether CNCS is permitted to award new grants to new organizations in existing RSVP geographic areas and sets the year of enactment as a floor for the number of grants awarded.

### *Expand Opportunities*

**17: The Commission recommends that the President direct CNCS to expand social, educational, and economic opportunities, especially for underserved populations, through participation in national service programs.**

**17a. Expand existing national service programs targeting diverse populations.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funding to double by 2031 the number of opportunities in existing national service programs that engage opportunity youth and Tribal communities, including YouthBuild, run by the Department of Labor (DOL); the Youth Conservation Corps, run by the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior; and the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program.\*

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to provide service opportunities for individuals with diverse abilities, such as Americans with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, so that they may participate in and benefit from national service.

- The Commission proposes that CNCS make a concerted effort to utilize its existing authority to focus on improving efforts to attract individuals with diverse abilities, as well as individuals with disabilities in general, to participate in national service. To ensure attention in this area,

the President or the CEO of CNCS may consider requiring an annual report documenting efforts made.

### **17b. Reduce hardship in the provision of wraparound services.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate additional funding for CNCS to provide dedicated financial support to AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA programs that demonstrate philanthropic challenges or high costs per member due to the provision of wraparound services.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to clarify CNCS's authority to provide support for grantees who provide wraparound services to meet the needs of three populations of AmeriCorps participants: (a) individuals ages 17–26 who are not enrolled in school and not working, (b) participants located in Tribal areas, and (c) participants located in rural areas. The legislation would direct CNCS to develop guidelines for the provision of wraparound services to these populations and to identify the types of wraparound services—such as career counseling, transit assistance, training and certification programs, and mental health assistance—to be provided. The legislation would also amend the law to clearly state that wraparound services are excluded from the calculation of maximum living allowances under these AmeriCorps programs.
- The Commission further proposes that Congress appropriate funding to be used solely to provide additional wraparound services to the populations identified above and that CNCS submit to Congress a report on its use of funds after two years. The Commission also proposes that

ongoing appropriations be contingent on favorable reporting outcomes.

### **17c. Employ national service to support the reintegration of ex-offenders.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to study best practices for service as a means to facilitate reintegration of ex-offenders and to explore the “reintegration of ex-offenders” as a grant priority.
- >> The Commission encourages the Bureau of Prisons, State legislatures, State courts, and local magistrates to offer incentives for ex-offenders who complete a term of service.

- The Commission proposes that State legislatures and courts take service into consideration when offering expungements or probationary incentives.
- The Commission further encourages Congress to consider the role of service in criminal justice reform as it evaluates the passage of reform acts such as the Next Step Act. Among other proposals, the Commission suggests that Congress consider veteran or national service alumnus or alumna status as a mitigating circumstance in the imposition of a sentence under 18 U.S.C. § 3553 and authorize a rehabilitation program in which a national service term results in earlier release or different probation and expungement standards under 18 U.S.C. § 3601 et seq.
- In addition, the Commission proposes that the U.S. Sentencing Commission issue a policy statement on the value of service and its importance as a factor to be considered in sentencing, as authorized in 18 U.S.C. § 3553(a)(5)(a).



## APPENDIX B: Implementation Guidance

### *Explore New Models*

**18:** **The Commission recommends that Congress take bold action to expand national service through the implementation of new fellowship and pilot programs.**

**18a. Launch a fellowship program to encourage national service growth.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress replace the ServeAmerica Fellowship program and make an appropriation for the CEO of CNCS to launch a new national service fellowship program that awards individuals “service grants” that provide them funding to complete terms of service in certified nonprofit or community organizations.\*

- The Serve America Act, which became law in 2009, authorized the ServeAmerica Fellowships program, currently at section 198B of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12653b). Congress has not appropriated any dedicated funds for the ServeAmerica Fellowships. The Commission proposes to replace section 198B with a new national service fellowship program better aligned with the objectives set forth in the Commission’s Final Report.
- The proposed fellowship program would provide a stipend and allowance to individuals ages 18–25 to participate in a term of service—1,700 or more hours in a year— with a registered nonprofit, a national service organization, or a non-Federal public service organization (such as State, local, or Tribal governments). The stipend and allowance would be equal to the current AmeriCorps VISTA members’ living allowance for the geographic region where the service would be performed.

- Fellows would be eligible for the Segal Award or a discounted cash pay-out at the end of their successful term of service. In addition, fellows without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent would be required to take GED courses during their service term.
- Fellows would be selected by a randomized lottery. CNCS would award 80 percent of fellowships distributed according to a set formula across all congressional districts, with a portion reserved for opportunity youth and Tribal youth. CNCS would award the remaining 20 percent of fellowships based on the local communities’ targeted service strategies and proposals for leveraging the fellows.
- Fellows selected through the lottery process would have three months to identify a certified host organization for their service term. CNCS would maintain a waitlist in case a fellow does not identify a host organization or changes their mind before the fellowship commences.
- The Commission further recommends that all host organizations within each congressional district arrange service-related events for fellows to serve alongside each other, which may occur, for example, on the Martin Luther King, Jr. and the 9/11 Days of Service.
- The Commission proposes that Congress provide appropriations sufficient to begin the national service fellowship program with 25,000 initial service positions and expand it at a rate of 25,000 per year to reach a total of 250,000 positions per year in 2031.

**18b. Appropriate funds for CNCS to launch pilot programs.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate funds for the CEO of CNCS to run novel demonstration projects.\*

- The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate funds to enable CNCS to conduct five demonstration projects over a period of three years. The Commission recommends that these demonstration projects focus on two areas: concentrated, single-community national service projects designed to solve an important local issue, sometimes referred to “place-based models”; and projects supporting the reintegration of ex-offenders.

### *Increase Private-Sector Investment*

**19:** The Commission recognizes that many organizations in the private sector have made a commitment to support service and develop strategies to provide service opportunities for their employees and the communities within which they operate. The Commission encourages others in the private sector to embrace this trend by, for example, offering technical support for service organizations; pledging to hire military, national, and public service alumni; forming mission-driven partnerships with service entities; and enhancing and expanding service opportunities for their employees.

- The Commission encourages private-sector, for-profit organizations to create corporate service corps, sponsor service sabbaticals, and support paid service programs and volunteer opportunities for employees. The Commission further encourages these organizations to make efforts to provide needed technical assistance to service organizations.
- The Commission encourages private-sector, for-profit organizations to work with the public sector and nonprofit community to develop pilot projects involving national service to address local and community needs.

- To further support private-sector initiatives, the Commission proposes that Congress authorize a national recognition program to award private-sector organizations that have made significant contributions to national service. This program could be modeled on the Campuses of Service program authorized by section 118A of the NCSA (42 U.S.C. § 12561a).\*

### *Reimagine Public-Sector Coordination*

**20:** The Commission recommends that Congress and the President direct Federal agencies to implement flexible and, where appropriate, coordinated efforts to expand or enhance national service programming.

#### **20a. Expand flexibility of Peace Corps volunteer opportunities.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the Director of the Peace Corps to conduct demonstration projects to expand the flexibility of Peace Corps Response Volunteers located in the United States to support efforts abroad.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to enable the Peace Corps to expand programming to allow older Americans and those with disabilities who are unable to undertake the physical challenges of serving in foreign countries to contribute to Peace Corps missions remotely from the United States.

#### **20b. Increase coordination in the creation of apprenticeships.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS and Secretary of Labor to coordinate and develop more national service models that qualify as DOL apprenticeships.

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- The Commission proposes that DOL issue guidance to enable 1,700-hour AmeriCorps programs to qualify as competency-based apprenticeships. In connection with this, DOL should evaluate whether AmeriCorps programs may be waived from the compensation-increase requirements.
- The Commission encourages CNCS to develop and issue guidance to grantees about how their programs can be qualified as registered apprenticeships, identify existing grantees with robust models, offer technical support to grantees interested in applying for registered apprenticeship status, and coordinate with DOL to ensure that AmeriCorps programs meet apprenticeship standards.

### 20c. Improve disaster relief national service programs.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS to review the current program limitations on participation, particularly in the area of disaster relief, and determine whether the extension of program participation would be beneficial to the long-term stability of the program and to the execution of requirements, particularly in disaster relief (e.g., the ability to recall recent graduates who have the requisite skillset and experience to respond to disasters).

## Public Service Recommendations

### *Reform Federal Hiring*

**21:** The Commission recommends that Congress and the President take steps to improve and simplify the competitive hiring process so that it is possible to more efficiently and effectively hire talented individuals by, among other things, reviewing and substantially revising USAJOBS, its interoperability with outside vendors, and the way it functions to facilitate hiring so as to make it easier to attract and employ talent.

### 21a. Improve the job posting and application processes.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM and agencies to revise job descriptions, add interoperability between USAJOBS and third-party job boards, and accept short, standard resumes for civil service positions.

- The Commission proposes that OPM update USAJOBS to incorporate functionality that enables hiring managers to easily promote Federal agency job openings to high-potential candidates on third-party job sites and to track applications from those sources.
- The Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance to agencies advising ways for human resources (HR) specialists to collaborate with subject-matter experts to ensure that job descriptions and job announcements use current terminology commonly used within the occupational field, instead of technical terms rooted in classification standards that are not meaningful to applicants.

- The Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance to agencies indicating best practices for limiting job applications to a resume of no more than two pages, with an optional one-page cover letter, unless a different approach that is competitive with other employers is required for a specific business need.
- The Commission encourages OPM to establish a temporary resource center to train and support agency staff throughout the transition to new job descriptions.

### **21b. Transform how agencies assess candidates for employment.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct agencies to avoid keyword-based resume reviews and self-assessments and direct the Director of OPM to issue guidance to require agencies to involve hiring managers and subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and assessment. The Commission further recommends that Congress appropriate funds to help agencies adopt advanced assessment tools.\*

- The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate additional funds to each agency to support the adoption and use of advanced assessment tools from OPM or other sources that have been validated by occupational psychologists. This appropriation would represent an ongoing increase in agency budgets.
- The Commission proposes that OPM issue new guidance to agencies with best practices for assessing candidates. The guidance would include ways to involve hiring managers and subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and

assessment; direction to eliminate keyword-based, automated resume reviews; and a prohibition against asking candidates to self-assess their qualifications for the position.

- In addition, the Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance to advise agencies on how to adopt valid, relevant, advanced assessment tools in the qualification and assessment processes for positions expected to attract a large volume of applicants, and to establish passing grades for these assessments to help identify a qualified pool of candidates for further assessment and selection. OPM could highlight its own USA Hire system as a model for this process and identify third-party tools that have been appropriately validated.

### **21c. Allow agencies to use the method of selecting candidates that best meets agency workforce needs.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to implement the recently authorized, more flexible, ranked-list assessment option, allowing managers to select from top-ranked candidates.

- The Commission proposes that OPM issue regulations to implement the selection method authorized in section 1107 of title XI of the John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019, Pub. L. No. 115-232 (2018).
- In addition, the Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance clarifying that agencies may use any of the authorized selection methods, rescinding the previous guidance that limited agencies to category rating when assessing candidates as part of competitive examining.



### 21d. Promptly notify applicants of key milestones during the application process.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President encourage the Director of OPM to direct agencies to notify applicants of key milestones during the hiring process.
- The Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance requiring agencies to promptly notify applicants of key milestones during the application process, such as qualification, assessment, and referral to the hiring manager. Agency HR offices would be responsible for the notifications, which should generally occur within one business day of major actions in the hiring process.

### 21e. Streamline interagency transfers.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to assess barriers to interagency transfers among competitive and excepted service employees and take steps to streamline such transfers.

### 21f. Increase the use of term and temporary appointments.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to enhance the ability of agencies to use temporary and term appointments to address short-term needs.\*
- The Commission proposes legislation to amend 5 U.S.C. Chapter 31 to allow agencies to extend temporary and term appointments up to a maximum of three years and six years, respectively, and permit noncompetitive temporary and term appointments, limited to 18 months, to meet critical hiring needs.

### 22: The Commission encourages Congress and the President to promote and facilitate the use of existing noncompetitive hiring authorities that are currently underutilized and that would enhance the Government's ability to attract and retain talent.

#### 22a. Increase agency use of noncompetitive hiring systems.

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to develop and agencies to use (1) standardized documentation for noncompetitive eligibility (NCE) and (2) noncompetitive hiring rosters by agency to allow candidates with NCE or Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) to identify agencies and career fields of interest.
- The Commission proposes that OPM develop a standardized format for documentation to serve as evidence of noncompetitive eligibility. National service programs, OPM, and DoD would establish processes or continue to provide NCE documentation in the standardized format; discharged veterans would continue to receive a DD-214, which confirms their eligibility for VRA.
- The Commission proposes that OPM establish noncompetitive hiring rosters at each agency to allow candidates with NCE or VRA, as well as interns eligible for conversion to a permanent appointment, to identify agencies and career fields of interest, submit documentation for verification, and upload a resume and cover letter accessible to and searchable by hiring managers. The new centralized system should be integrated with existing job posting, application, assessment, and onboarding systems. It would allow candidates to indicate interest in employment with specific agencies or in a specific

career field at any agency, and complete online assessments relevant to specific career fields. HR staff and hiring managers at agencies should be able to access information about candidates who have expressed interest in a specific agency or career field.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to update USAJOBS to notify the hiring manager immediately when a candidate with NCE or VRA applies for a job posting.

- The Commission proposes that OPM establish functionality within USAJOBS that automatically—without any manual effort required on the part of HR staff—notifies and forwards application materials to the hiring manager when a candidate with NCE or VRA applies for a job posting, enabling the hiring manager to contact that candidate and proceed with the selection process if the candidate is qualified.

>> The Commission recommends that the President issue an Executive order directing agencies to eliminate policies that restrict the use of noncompetitive hiring beyond those required by statute or OPM regulation, and to establish policies that proactively encourage HR staff and hiring managers to use available noncompetitive hiring authorities to efficiently and effectively meet workforce needs.

- The Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance to agencies explaining the rules and covering best practices for the use of noncompetitive hiring authorities, including NCE and VRA, to meet agency workforce needs.

### **22b. Inform individuals with noncompetitive eligibility about how to utilize this status.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS, Director of OPM, and Secretary of Defense to implement training for individuals with NCE, including national service alumni, alumni of fellowship and scholarship programs, and individuals with VRA.

- The Commission proposes that OPM develop training on how to use NCE and VRA to obtain employment at a Federal agency. Appropriate agencies—such as DoD, CNCS, the Peace Corps, DOL, and OPM—should offer this training to national service members, military service members, veterans, military spouses, and fellowship and scholarship participants. The training could be incorporated into offboarding processes, current training programs (such as the Transition Assistance Program), or informational websites (such as the Veterans' Employment and Training Service website).

### **22c. Expand the usability of direct-hire authority.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to change the criteria for granting direct-hire authority to agencies so that agencies may obtain direct-hire authority in the case of a shortage of “highly qualified” candidates.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend 5 U.S.C. § 3304 to change the standard for granting direct-hire authority to a shortage of “highly qualified” candidates, up from “minimally qualified.” This change would require OPM to make conforming

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modifications to its regulations at 5 CFR 337, Subpart B.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to modify regulations to allow agencies to use direct-hire authority without conducting a minimum-qualifications review for every applicant.

- The Commission proposes that OPM amend regulations to (1) stop requiring agencies to review all applicants for minimum qualifications, and (2) clarify that agencies may select a qualified candidate for postings covered by direct-hire authority without reviewing all applicants for minimum qualifications.

### **23:** The Commission recommends that Congress update hiring preferences and noncompetitive eligibility.

#### **23a. Modernize veterans' preference.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to change veterans' preference within competitive examining to a tiebreaker between equally qualified candidates.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend 5 U.S.C. §§ 3313 and 3319 to specify the application of veterans' preference in ranked list and alternative selection (category rating) procedures as a tiebreaker between equally qualified candidates. This would mean that preference-eligible candidates would receive preference within the quality category to which they were originally assessed and would no longer be moved to a higher quality category on the basis of preference.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to limit eligibility for veterans' preference to individuals who are not employed by a Federal agency and Federal employees within two years of their first use of the preference.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend 5 U.S.C. § 2108 to provide veterans' preference only to applicants who have not obtained a permanent competitive service position, and to Federal employees who are within two years of their first use of veterans' preference. This change would require OPM to make conforming modifications to its regulations at 5 CFR § 332.401 and 5 CFR Part 211.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to establish a 10-year time limit, beginning upon separation from the military, for preference-eligible veterans to use veterans' preference.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend 5 U.S.C. § 2108 to revise the definition of preference eligible to specify that veterans who were discharged more than 10 years ago are not eligible for veterans' preference within competitive examining. This change would require OPM to make conforming modifications to its regulations at 5 CFR § 332.401 and 5 CFR Part 211.

### 23b. Standardize and extend noncompetitive eligibility.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize 12 months of NCE for successful completion of federally sponsored internships, scholarships, and fellowships; grant 36 months of NCE to all full-time AmeriCorps alumni and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers; and extend VRA to 10 years after separation.\*
- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize and require OPM to award 12 months of NCE to all federally funded developmental positions—including fellowships, scholarships, and internships that are offered directly by Federal agencies or by third-party contractors or subcontractors—and to direct OPM to issue NCE documentation.
- The Commission proposes to amend the NCSA as well as section 415(d) of the DVSA (42 U.S.C. § 5055(d)) and 22 U.S.C. § 2504, part of the Peace Corps Act, to extend NCE to 36 months for any individual who has successfully completed one or more full-time terms of AmeriCorps service, for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, and for alumni of other full-year civilian national service programs certified as eligible by OPM, in consultation with CNCS. These changes should not affect the currently existing NCE rights of Peace Corps employees.
- The Commission further proposes amendments to 38 U.S.C. § 4214 to remove military retirees' VRA eligibility, except for individuals who qualify for disability retirement, and to 38 U.S.C. § 4211 to redefine “recently separated veteran” as one within 10 (rather than 3) years of separation. These changes would require OPM to make conforming modifications to regulations at 5 CFR § 315.605 and 5 CFR § 307.102.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize NCE for select high-performing and qualified civilian employees who leave the Government, allowing them to return at a higher grade.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize OPM to issue six years of NCE to departing high-performing and qualified civilian employees who are recommended by their agency to facilitate their return to Government service at a grade commensurate with their new experience.

### 23c. Streamline preference-eligibility determinations within the hiring process.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress amend existing law to require that eligibility for preferences be determined centrally by OPM rather than in a decentralized manner by each agency during every hiring process.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to establish a streamlined process for determining eligibility for hiring preferences within competitive examining, NCE, and VRA. The proposed legislation would require OPM to establish processes for Federal job applicants to access their determination of eligibility and to appeal any determination within OPM. The legislation would also require Federal agencies to rely on the OPM determination of eligibility in preparing certificates of eligibility.
- In addition, the Commission proposes that OPM issue updated and improved competitive-hiring guidance for agencies, update its Delegated Examining Operations Handbook at least once every five years, and continue to improve USAJOBS to provide a better user experience for applicants and agency officials.



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### *Revamp Hiring Systems for Students and Recent Graduates*

**24:** The Commission encourages the President and Congress to take steps to improve access to public service employment, and in particular to improve the process for recruiting and hiring students and recent graduates both by better positioning agency officials to engage in effective recruiting and hiring when students are looking for jobs and by promoting additional pathways to service through internships.

#### **24a. Improve the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates hiring programs.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress improve governmentwide hiring authorities for students and recent graduates.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend the language in 5 U.S.C. §§ 3115 and 3116 to establish statutory authority for the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs, modifying these programs, as necessary, to increase hiring of postsecondary students and recent graduates.
- In addition, the Commission proposes that Congress establish a statutory goal, to be met within five years, of hiring no fewer than 30,000 students and recent graduates per year into term or permanent, competitive service positions through any available authorities, and no fewer than 50,000 students and recent graduates per year by 2031.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to streamline internship and recent-graduate hiring programs.

- The Commission proposes that OPM amend regulations at 5 CFR Part 362 to eliminate required agreements between Federal agencies and OPM for the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs and that OPM regularly review and update program regulations, based on agency feedback, to improve performance.
- The Commission further proposes that OPM modify 5 CFR §§ 362.201–204, authorizing agencies to hire high-performing Pathways Internship Program interns after a typical, 10-week full-time internship (rather than a yearlong part-time or full-time internship).
- The Commission also proposes that OPM, in partnership with regional Federal Executive Boards, establish a structured campus recruiting process as part of the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs by modifying the regulations at 5 CFR §§ 362.301–305 and that OPM issue guidance to agencies on best practices for implementing campus outreach, recruiting, and hiring through the modernized Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs.

#### **24b. Pilot new hiring programs for critical skills.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize the Director of OPM to allow agencies to conduct a demonstration program that would allow the use of new reform authorities to hire students and recent graduates in areas of critical skills, as identified by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, into the new internship program or directly into positions identified by the agencies as critical.\*

- The Commission proposes language to establish a specific demonstration project to utilize new hiring authorities to

onboard students and recent graduates into internships and Federal employment in critical skill and critical need areas. The demonstration would test whether such authorities achieve this goal, make little difference, or limit agencies' ability to bring in young talent.

### **24c. Pay all Federal Government interns.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress pass legislation to require that all Federal Government internships be paid.\*

- The legislation would require that all branches of the Federal Government provide direct financial compensation for internships.
- The legislation would make an exception for student interns who receive school credit, with the permission of their educational institution, through a formal program established by the Government office or agency to provide educational experiences for the student.

### **24d. Make a technical correction to existing direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress increase the statutory cap on the direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates.\*

- The Commission proposes to amend 5 U.S.C. §§ 3115 and 3116 to increase the cap on direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates to the greater of (1) 15 percent of the number of individuals that the agency head appointed during the previous FY to a permanent position, or (2) 1 percent of the average number of permanent employees in the agency during the previous FY.

- This proposal would temporarily increase the overall cap on direct-hire authority for students and recent graduates by the size of the hiring shortfall for the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs in the previous FY, measured by the difference between the statutory hiring goal for the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs (as proposed in Recommendation 24a) and the actual number of individuals hired. This increase would be distributed as additional direct-hire allowances to Federal agencies based on their proportionate share of the Federal civilian workforce.

### **24e. Streamline and expand fellowship and scholarship programs.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress establish a Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center, within OPM and supervised by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, to administer, streamline, and expand fellowship and scholarship programs across the Government and to promote fellowship and scholarship programs, particularly in areas of critical need to the Nation.\*

- The Commission proposes creation of a Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center (FFSC) to be led by a career Senior Executive Service (SES) member appointed to a five-year term and supervised by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service.
- The FFSC's core responsibilities would include hosting an internet-based platform with information on all Federal-agency fellowships and scholarships; approving, promoting, and facilitating agency-funded fellowship and scholarship programs within the Federal Government to meet workforce requirements of Federal agencies, especially in areas of critical need; developing a standard application for Federal fellowships

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and scholarships; and awarding NCE for Federal employment to all individuals who have successfully completed Federal fellowship and scholarship programs.

- The FFSC would also operate a virtual service, including maintaining and expanding the Virtual Student Federal Service, which would be relocated to the FFSC from the Department of State, and exploring potential new public service remote volunteer programs.

### **24f. Revitalize the Presidential Management Fellows Program.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President revitalize the Presidential Management Fellows Program by devolving responsibility to agencies and establishing a separate track for fellows with a technical focus.

- The Commission proposes a fundamental restructuring of the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program by devolving most responsibility for the PMF Program from OPM to individual Federal agencies and creating two separate tracks: first, a leadership-development track based on the John S. McCain Strategic Defense Fellows Program (an existing two-year DoD leadership development program that recruits promising recent graduates for rotations at the Pentagon and in the field); and second, a technical track based on the Honors Attorneys programs.
- The Commission proposes that individual hiring agencies undertake responsibility for the recruitment, assessment, and selection of fellows. While agencies could design and operate their own application processes, they could opt to participate in a central application process facilitated by OPM.
- OPM would serve in an advisory capacity and would also provide a centralized

application process that agencies could choose to use. The centralized application process would permit applicants to rank their preferred agencies, and agencies would rank their preferred candidates from the pool of finalists. OPM would then match finalists and hiring agencies using their ranked lists.

- The agency-based Honors program, based on the Honors Attorneys programs, would offer a technical track with eligibility standards similar to those of the current PMF Program but would include only rotations into designated technical areas, including engineering, acquisitions, and cybersecurity.

### **24g. Establish new postsecondary education pipelines to public service.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to OPM and other agencies to support a Public Service Corps, similar but not identical to the Reserve Officers' Training Corps and in partnership with universities and other levels of government, that awards scholarships and provides special coursework to participants in exchange for a public service commitment.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize the Federal Government to support a nationwide Public Service Corps of postsecondary students. Members of the Public Service Corps would receive two- to four-year scholarships in exchange for a commitment to serve with a Federal agency upon completion of educational requirements. The value of each Federal scholarship would be no less than the value of a Pell Grant.
- Federal agencies would have responsibility for interviewing candidates and selecting scholarship recipients. Candidates

could be current or incoming students at designated IHEs. To ensure socioeconomic diversity, a portion of these scholarships would be reserved for students who meet Pell Grant eligibility requirements.

- Once chosen, scholarship recipients would participate in structured academic and experiential leadership training, community service projects, and an internship with their sponsoring agency. Scholarships could include additional conditions, such as coursework relevant to future job responsibilities or academic certificates. In addition, Federal agencies that require new employees to possess a security clearance would sponsor Corps members to obtain their clearances.
- Upon completion of the program, Corps members would receive an offer of employment from the sponsoring agency. If no position is available, members would receive noncompetitive eligibility for Federal employment at other agencies. An individual who fails to complete the service commitment would be required to repay benefits received.
- IHEs would be designated by the head of the Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center at OPM to ensure consistency across the Federal Government. IHEs would be chosen through a competitive process guided by predetermined criteria, such as a demonstrated commitment to fostering public service careers and anticipated student demand for a Public Service Corps program.
- The Commission also encourages IHEs to explore creating Public Service Corps arrangements with agencies in State, local, and Tribal government. Students receiving scholarships from non-Federal agencies could then be integrated into programming for recipients of Federal scholarships.

- In addition, the Commission encourages IHEs that host both Public Service Corps and ROTC programs on the same campus to establish connections between the two cohorts by providing joint leadership training opportunities, offering new courses relevant to both programs, and allowing Public Service Corps members and ROTC cadets to enroll in courses for the other program on a space-available basis.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to the military service academies to bring in a cohort of public service cadets or midshipmen who would be subject to the same five-year service commitment, but in public service rather than in military service, at a Federal agency in a civilian capacity. The number of public service cadets should represent at least 5 percent of the total incoming class at each academy, with no corresponding decline in enrollment of military cadets or midshipmen.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation for the Superintendents of the military service academies to develop detailed plans for creating and implementing public service cadet and midshipmen programs at each academy, with plans to be submitted to Congress within one year.

### **24h. Establish a Public Service Academy grant program.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress establish and appropriate funds for a competitive grant program for 50 institutions of higher education to establish public service academies. Grants would provide funding over four years, covering 75 percent of the full operating costs in year one, 50 percent of the operating costs in year two, 50 percent of the operating costs in year three,



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and 50 percent of the operating costs in year four.\*

- The U.S. Department of Education would establish a process by which IHEs could apply for a grant to support the development of a Public Service Academy at an existing campus. The Education Department would set out evaluation criteria for the grants, which may include the extent to which the program's curriculum would prepare students for public service employment or develop critical skills; how the program would select students so as to include Pell-eligible students; whether the program has established partnerships for internships or recruiting efforts with Federal agencies, non-Federal Government agencies, or Tribal Governments; or how the program would partner with any ROTC programs in the region to provide joint leadership or curriculum opportunities.

### *Promote a High-Performing Personnel Culture*

**25:** **The Commission recommends that Congress and the President emphasize the importance of strategic workforce planning, which should be prioritized and more effectively facilitated by, in particular, agencies and departments emphasizing more strongly the importance of personnel management skills for supervisors; promoting the development of human resources staff and the involvement of subject-matter experts in recruitment, qualification, and assessment; and making the best use of all available hiring authorities and other legal and regulatory options to meet their workforce needs.**

#### **25a. Elevate the human resources function.**

**>>** The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Chief Human Capital Officers Council to establish competency standards for HR specialists, including technical knowledge, analytics, and collaborative skills.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend section 1303 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. No. 107-296 (2002), to require the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, in consultation with OMB, to establish and regularly update competency standards for HR specialists for use in hiring and evaluation. Standards covering technical knowledge, analytics, collaborative skills, and other critical areas needed by HR employees could be met through a combination of education, experience, a portfolio of work, performance on examinations, completion of certification programs, and other valid methods.

### 25b. Encourage agency heads to prioritize talent management.

>> The Commission recommends that the President require each Federal agency head to identify and/or appoint one or more individuals within the Federal agency to develop a workforce plan.

- The Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance on instituting reforms to leverage available authorities to meet workforce goals, including hiring, retention, reskilling, and reporting results. Among these could be best practices for workforce plan development, reporting, and managing change, including but not limited to the use of Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey data, establishment of career development paths, and use of employee-recognition programs.

### 25c. Increase agencies' public communication about their mission.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct Federal agencies to communicate with the public in order to increase public awareness of their missions and inspire the next generation to serve. To accomplish these ends, the Commission further recommends that the President direct Federal agencies to designate a reasonable percentage of appropriated funds for the purpose of promoting service with the agency, informing the public about agency activities, and recruiting aspiring public servants, and that Congress enact legislation to provide Federal agencies with the authority to engage in robust public communication about their mission.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to clarify that agencies are not prohibited from undertaking efforts to educate and inform the public about a Federal agency's

activities and mission, promoting service with the agency, and recruiting aspiring public servants.

>> The Commission further proposes the following steps to achieve a high-performing personnel culture:

- The Commission proposes legislation to require agencies to annually report to OPM the following figures: (1) the total number of people employed directly by the agency, (2) the total number of contractors issued credentials to access agency property or computer systems, (3) the total number of grantees issued credentials to access agency property or computer systems, and (4) a count of the blended workforce, including employees, contractors, and grantees. The legislation should also require OPM to compile and report this information on its website.\*
- The Commission proposes a congressional resolution expressing the position that agencies should manage the blended workforce of Federal employees, contractors, and grantees as effectively and efficiently as possible, within budget, without a full-time equivalent (FTE) or headcount limitation.\*
- The Commission proposes that OPM issue regulations establishing a reporting process for the blended workforce, including timelines and technical instructions that facilitate reporting of comparable figures from each agency.
- The Commission proposes that OPM provide support and incentives to help agencies use the authorities created by the Competitive Service Act of 2015, including permitting multiple agencies to hire employees from a single job announcement, to meet agency workforce needs.
- The Commission proposes that OPM circulate guidance to agencies with best

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practices for attracting and hiring members of underrepresented groups.

- The Commission proposes that agencies base a reasonable percentage of the evaluation of General Schedule (GS) and SES supervisors upon personnel management, recruiting, and human capital responsibilities.

### *Address Critical-Skills Challenges*

**26: The Commission encourages the President and Congress to take steps to address the current shortage in Federal-agency health care professionals by streamlining the hiring process and the process for obtaining certain health-related skills and licenses and by promoting appropriate portability of such licenses.\***

- To implement some of the Commission on Care's recommendations for addressing the shortage of health care professionals in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Commission proposes that Congress pursue legislation within 38 U.S.C. Chapter 5 to authorize the VA to issue regulations and guidance to implement a single personnel system to cover all health care providers (for example, doctors, nurses, physician assistants, pharmacists, and physical therapists) and health care support professionals (for example, house-keeping and custodial workers, business analysts, and HR specialists).
- The new personnel system should include streamlined hiring processes, offer competitive pay and benefits, and standardize advancement, performance evaluation, and disciplinary processes. In developing regulations for the new personnel system, the VA should be required to coordinate with other Federal agencies that use personnel pursuant to title 38 of the United

States Code, with labor organizations, and with veterans service organizations to ensure that the new system both meets the needs of all Federal agencies that hire clinical health care and support personnel and maintains merit-based selection procedures, veterans' preference, and due process for adverse personnel actions.

- The Commission further proposes legislation for extending portability of health care licensure to all Federal employees, so long as the practice is within the scope of authorized Federal activities. The legislation is modeled on licensure portability provisions found at 10 U.S.C. § 1094(d) and 14 U.S.C. § 508.

**27: The Commission recommends that Congress and the President support agencies and departments in improving the hiring process and the compensation options for cybersecurity, information technology (IT), and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professionals with high-demand talent; in developing and maintaining high-demand skills in the existing Federal workforce; and in improving the work environment within the Federal Government so that it more effectively accommodates the needs of such employees.**

**27a. Extend special authorities to attract and retain cybersecurity workers.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize every Federal agency to adopt the Cyber Talent Management System, the special personnel system for civilian cybersecurity professionals managed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend 6 U.S.C. § 658 to extend the

authority to operate a special personnel system for cybersecurity professionals—currently limited to DHS—to all Federal agencies. The legislation would also require DHS to coordinate with other Federal agencies to facilitate governmentwide implementation.

- The Commission proposes that DHS issue guidance to agencies with best practices to implement the Cyber Talent Management System.

### **27b. Reskill the Federal workforce.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress and the President invest in upgrading the skills of the existing Federal workforce.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize OPM to establish a process for agencies to appoint current Federal employees who are graduates of OMB-approved reskilling programs to a position in their new field at a grade level commensurate with their demonstrated competency, but no lower than the employee's current grade level.

### **27c. Use all available means to maintain a sufficient cybersecurity and IT workforce.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct that an appropriate portion of the evaluations for chief information officers (CIOs), chief human capital officers (CHCOs), and agency heads be based on their ability to utilize all available authorities to recruit and retain IT professionals for their agency.

- The Commission proposes that OPM issue guidance directing agency heads to take steps to establish work environments that support the needs of technical specialists

in order to attract and retain these individuals with critical skillsets. These work environments can be made supportive by, among other things, accommodating flexible hours, permitting telework capabilities specific to technical specialists, establishing work-life balance programs, providing prompt access to necessary development tools, and funding ongoing professional development.

- The Commission further proposes a regular report by OMB to Congress on the actions taken by Federal agencies to implement this requirement and on the resulting outcomes.

### **27d. Pilot a Federal Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funds to create a Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve pilot program.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize, and accordingly appropriate funds for, a demonstration project of a Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve, compelling members to return to full-time civilian employment with the Federal Government if the agency head determines that their services are required to address an emergency that exhausts agency cybersecurity capability.
- This program would be voluntary and by invitation only. It would be open to former civilian cybersecurity employees of DHS and the National Security Agency (NSA) as well as transitioning members of the military with requisite qualifications.
- In exchange for an agreement to return, DHS and NSA would compensate the reservist and maintain the reservist's security clearance, and the reservist would receive service credit toward the Federal



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Employees Retirement System (FERS) pension and, in some circumstances, eligibility to contribute to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) with an agency match. Reservists who fail to report to duty would face penalties. Specific penalties, which would be determined by DHS and NSA, could include loss of security clearance, a fine, recoupment of pay earned and travel and training costs incurred during membership in the Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve, and forfeiture of FERS pension benefits. The program would also permit the establishment of a second tier of reservists who have different incentives but who cannot be compelled involuntarily to return to full-time Government employment.

- The Commission proposes that GAO conduct an evaluation of the pilot program after five years of operation to help inform policymakers about potential decisions to modify, extend, and expand the pilot into a permanent program.

### *Increase Competitiveness of Benefits*

**28:** **The Commission recommends that the President and Congress create additional flexibility in the benefits packages for Government employees to better compensate and recruit individuals who do not foresee career-long employment with the Federal Government and furthermore take steps to improve employees' understanding of the benefits available to them.**

#### **28a. Improve and update benefits for Federal civilian employees.**

- >> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Council on Military, National, and Public Service to create an advisory committee, with representatives from various stakeholders, that would review and develop recommendations

on how to improve and update benefits for Federal civilian employees to meet the needs of the future workforce.

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize OPM to offer a new benefit option for newly hired, non-public safety, Federal civil service employees with fully portable retirement benefits, flexible time off, paid parental leave, and comprehensive disability-income insurance.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to authorize OPM to establish a benefit demonstration project. Up to three agencies could participate in the pilot. Newly hired employees would have the opportunity to choose between the current benefit package and a new option, described below. Current employees who were hired during the previous five years would have the opportunity to switch from the current benefit package to the new option.
- The proposed new option would be of equivalent value to the current benefit package with the following features: (1) an enhanced TSP benefit, including eligibility for a total agency contribution (matching and automatic contributions) of not less than 10 percent of pay, vested immediately; (2) no less than 12 weeks of paid parental leave for new mothers and fathers; (3) immediate eligibility for agency-paid short-term and long-term disability-income insurance that replaces no less than 60 percent of the employee's current salary; and (4) no less than five weeks of flexible time off accrued each year, in lieu of separate annual and sick leave. Employees who select the new benefit package would not be eligible for the FERS pension or retiree health care.
- The Commission proposes that OPM consult with employee benefit experts, actuaries, and labor unions when developing

the exact specifications of the new benefit option to ensure that the new benefits are competitive, workable, and compliant with the requirement that the new option be of equivalent value to the current benefit package.

- The Commission proposes that OMB, GAO, and the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) publish a report to OPM and Congress evaluating the demonstration project and then offering recommendations on a way ahead.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress establish a cafeteria plan for certain Federal employee benefits.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to establish a cafeteria plan offering each Federal employee a set agency contribution, on a budget-neutral basis, to be divided among the following options: cash, flexible spending arrangements for health care or dependent care, a health savings account, life insurance, disability-income insurance, dental insurance, and vision insurance. The legislation should ensure that the agency contribution grow annually by a percentage linked to an appropriate inflation-related indicator such as the Consumer Price Index or the Employment Cost Index.
- The Commission further proposes that OPM issue new regulations and modify existing regulations to implement the cafeteria plan.

**28b. Treat alumni of Federal service corps equally with regard to pension credit.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize Federal employees who are alumni of service corps operated by Federal agencies the option to purchase FERS pension service credit.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend 5 U.S.C. § 8411 and 8422 to extend the option to purchase FERS credit for service as a volunteer or volunteer leader to alumni of service corps operated by Federal agencies, such as the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), FEMA Corps, Youth Conservation Corps, and Public Lands Corps.

**28c. Improve communication and data collection regarding benefits.**

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to include an estimated benefits statement with all Federal-agency job offers and to send it to all Federal employees on an annual basis.

- The Commission proposes that OPM direct agencies to provide the summary with all job offers and to all Federal employees on an annual basis. OPM should issue guidance to agencies reminding agency leadership of the importance of offering educational materials and communicating regularly with current employees about available Federal employee benefits.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of OPM to improve data collection on agency-specific benefits and on Federal employee views regarding current and potential new benefits.

- The Commission proposes that OPM issue a request for information to agencies to collect data on the availability and usage of agency-specific benefits, such as student loan repayment and tuition assistance.
- The Commission proposes that OPM amend the Federal Employee Benefits Survey to obtain information on the views of current and prospective Federal

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employees on the relative value of existing Federal employee benefits and potential new benefits.

### **28d. Maintain competitive benefits for emergency response and public safety officers.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress and the President preserve competitive benefits structures for emergency response and public safety officers, commensurate with their job requirements and their responsibilities to the public.

### *Develop a New Personnel System*

### **29: The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and the President direct implementation of a modern talent-management system across the Federal Government.**

#### **29a. Revamp personnel demonstration-project authority.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress expand OPM's demonstration authority to test changes to personnel systems, loosening the time and personnel restrictions as well as enabling OPM to expand demonstrated successes without statutory changes.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend 5 U.S.C. § 4703 to increase the time period for demonstration projects from five years to ten years, eliminate the cap on the number of covered employees, and require all demonstration projects to be evaluated independently by GAO, OMB, and NAPA every five years. If at least two of these three organizations recommend that a demonstration project be expanded governmentwide, the OPM Director could

promulgate regulations to make permanent the demonstration project without receiving separate statutory approval.

#### **29b. Pilot a new personnel system at select agencies.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize OPM to pilot a new personnel system, covering hiring, classification, compensation, transfer, and promotion, at agencies with a significant number of STEM employees.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to require OPM to design and operate a personnel pilot project covering newly hired employees or, at the option of the agency, newly hired and current employees. OPM should design the project in consultation with agencies that employ a significant number of STEM professionals.
- The pilot project would test changes to personnel policies, including but not limited to more-flexible job classification; competency-based hiring; market-based pay; promotion based on experience, skills, and performance rather than time in position; and streamlined transfer between agencies. OPM would invite a small number of agencies to participate in this pilot project.

#### **29c. Monitor the progress of the Commission's recommended reforms.**

- >> The Commission recommends that Congress and the President require a comprehensive evaluation of changes to Federal personnel policy made in response to the Commission's report.\*
- The Commission proposes legislation to require GAO, OMB, and NAPA to conduct separate, comprehensive evaluations

of all changes to laws, regulations, and policies governing the Federal civil service that address or reflect recommendations made by the Commission. No later than December 31, 2026, each organization would provide Congress and the public with recommendations for additional adjustments to improve the effectiveness of these changes.

#### 29d. Generate proposals for a new personnel system.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and the President direct the development of comprehensive proposals for a modern talent-management system to meet modern workforce needs.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to require GAO, OMB, and NAPA to publish separate, comprehensive proposals for a new civil service personnel system that would cover classification, hiring, compensation, evaluation, promotion, and any other personnel-related topics the authors deem relevant, incorporating evidence from previous changes to personnel systems and considering views of relevant stakeholders. The proposals would be due to Congress no later than December 31, 2031.

### Integrate Military, National, and Public Service

**30:** The Commission recommends that Congress and the President develop and improve mechanisms that connect service opportunities and promote the vision “every American inspired and eager to serve.”

#### 30a. Optimize cross-service marketing and recruitment opportunities.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress authorize and appropriate funding for a pilot program overseen by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service and run in appropriate agencies and departments to invest recruiting resources for military, national, and public service in underserved markets as defined by each service—focusing on gender, geography, socioeconomic status, and critical skills—to better reflect the demography of the Nation and ensure that recruiting needs are met into the future.\*

- The Commission proposes that this pilot program be overseen by the Council on Military, National, and Public Service in order to leverage interagency coordination with respect to identifying underserved markets and pursuing recruiting efforts in those underserved markets.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress direct and appropriate the necessary funds for the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps to collaborate on joint advertising campaigns and to share marketing research resources.\*

- The Commission proposes a joint marketing campaign similar to the



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authorization of DoD's Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies in the NDAA for FY 2004. Because 10 U.S.C. § 503 prohibits the sharing of student directory information with other agencies, the Secretary of Defense would be required to share only market research, rather than individual student names.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the CEO of CNCS and the Director of the Peace Corps, to develop and provide to the Armed Services Committees a plan for providing ineligible or non-selected applicants with information about the other forms of service.\*

- The Commission proposes that DoD, CNCS, and the Peace Corps have responsibility for developing and implementing this proposal, given that those Federal agencies are best positioned to understand the needs and the process that may be required. The Commission further proposes that Congress authorize appropriations to carry out this program.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps to sign an interagency agreement (IAA) formally committing their agencies to develop and implement cross-service incentives for recruitment and retention purposes.

- The Commission proposes that the Secretary of Defense consider guidance directing Secretaries of the military departments to categorize eligible national service alumni, including RPCVs, as Tier-1 recruits and accelerate their promotion from E-1 to E-2.

- The Commission proposes that the CEO of CNCS consider amending program policies for AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA, and NCCC to allow or require Team Lead or second-year member status eligibility for military veterans as defined in title 38 of the United States Code and for RPCVs. The CEO of CNCS should take additional steps to ensure project sponsor compliance.

>> The Commission recommends that Congress require the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, together with the Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps, to jointly produce a quadrennial report that is focused on evaluating cross-service participation and that contains recommendations for increasing joint awareness and recruitment initiatives.\*

- The Commission proposes that this report contain robust information on the service members participating in multiple forms of service and programs to inform service participants of other service opportunities. The Secretary of Defense, the CEO of CNCS, and the Director of the Peace Corps should be required to consult with each other and should be authorized to undertake studies and recruiting efforts they deem necessary to carry out this initiative.

### **30b. Promote continued service for those completing a term of service.**

>> The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to work with the CEO of CNCS to provide information on national and public service to transitioning military service members through DoD's Transition Assistance Program, and to provide military and public service information to individuals completing national service.\*

- The Commission proposes amending 10 U.S.C. §§ 1143 and 1144 to enable DoD to share information with CNCS about transitioning service members, with their consent, and to ensure that CNCS participates as a full interagency partner in the veteran transition process. The Commission proposes requiring CNCS to provide information concerning national service opportunities to qualified veterans.
- The Commission further proposes requiring the CEO of CNCS to ensure that individuals completing a partial or full national service term receive information about military and public service opportunities for which they may qualify.

>> The Commission recommends that the President direct the CEO of CNCS and the Director of the Peace Corps to work with the Secretary of Defense and the Director of OPM to provide military service and public service information to transitioning national service members.

## STRENGTHEN EMERGENCY NATIONAL MOBILIZATION

### *The Purpose and Value of the Selective Service System*

**31:** The Commission reaffirms the continued need for a draft contingency mechanism to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during a national emergency.

**32:** The Commission recommends that Congress clarify the purpose of the Selective Service by revising the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) purpose statement to read: “The Congress hereby declares that an adequate military strength must be achieved and maintained to insure the security of this Nation by insuring adequate personnel with the requisite capabilities to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during a national emergency and not solely to provide combat replacements.”\*

- The Commission proposes that section 1(b) of the MSSA (50 U.S.C. § 3801(b)) be amended to include the purpose statement identified above.
- This change would not alter the language of section 1(c) of the MSSA (50 U.S.C. § 3801(c)), which states: “The Congress declares that in a free society the obligations and privileges of serving in the armed forces and the reserve components thereof should be shared generally, in accordance with a system of selection which is fair and just, and which is consistent with the maintenance of an effective national economy.”

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**33:** The Commission affirms the key values of a draft contingency mechanism, namely (1) as a hedge against the risk of military personnel shortages in DoD during a national security emergency, and (2) as a symbol of U.S. national resolve to mobilize the Nation to meet commitments to its Armed Forces, allies, and partners.

*Reaffirming the American Approach for Defending the Nation*

**34:** The Commission recommends that the President issue an Executive order setting out policy for issuing a call for volunteers before exercising a draft contingency.

- The Commission proposes that the President issue an Executive order expressing that it is the policy of the Federal Government to issue a call for volunteers prior to exercising a draft contingency. In addition, the Commission proposes that the Executive order identify roles and responsibilities within the Federal Government required for implementation; address the use of the Selective Service registration database to amplify the call for volunteers through direct communication with individuals registered in the database; and address procedures to connect interested volunteers with opportunities to serve in the military, the national security inter-agency, and the defense industrial base.

**35:** The Commission reaffirms the Selective Service System's pre-mobilization registration posture and recommends that Congress and the President maintain the Selective Service pre-mobilization registration requirement.

**36:** The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to require the Selective Service System to develop and implement methods to convey to registrants the solemn obligation for military service in the event of a draft and to appropriate funds to accomplish this.\*

- The Commission proposes that the Selective Service System identify methods to more effectively convey to registrants the solemn obligation for military service in the event of a draft. Congress should amend section 3 of the MSSA (50 U.S.C. § 3802) to include a new subsection (c) that requires the regulations governing registration to include methods that convey to registrants that solemn obligation.
- The Commission encourages the Selective Service System to consider, among other potential methods, the following: changing the website and written materials of the Selective Service System to bring the individual obligation and purpose of the Selective Service System to a more prominent position; using Federal holidays as touchstones to remind the public that the Selective Service System exists; requiring online applicants to watch a video on military service and their potential obligation as citizens before completing registration or as part of acknowledging successful registration; and holding registration ceremonies in front of a judge at a courthouse or in the presence of at least two witnesses, similar to what is required for driver's licenses in some States, or holding post-registration ceremonies for new registrants.

*Providing a Fair, Equitable, and Transparent System*

**37:** The Commission recommends that the President review the existing exemptions and deferments for the draft and propose revisions intended to update existing legislation to promote equitable obligations in the event a draft is enacted.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation requiring the Director of the Selective Service System, in coordination with the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security, to submit a report to the Congress within 120 days containing a review of existing exemptions and deferments in the Military Selective Service Act and proposed revisions to those exemptions and deferments, taking into account registration of all Americans.

**38:** The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to provide any individual who has been denied a Federal benefit due to nonregistration with the Selective Service System an opportunity to register within 30 days, no matter the individual's age at the time of denial, and to become eligible for the benefit denied.\*

- The Commission proposes an opportunity for persons who fail to register with the Selective Service System to correct a mistake by registering within a 30-day period, even if they are more than 25 years old. Current law permits such persons to become eligible for Federal benefits upon proof that failure to register was not "knowing and willful."

*Addressing the Need for Critical Skills*

**39:** The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to generate and maintain a list of the type and number of currently needed critically skilled personnel.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to require DoD to annually report the personnel capabilities that are deemed critical skills and provide an estimate of the number of personnel with each critical skillset that must be retained and/or recruited to meet those goals.
- The Commission further proposes that this DoD effort be undertaken in conjunction with the Council on Military, National, and Public Service, which the Commission, separately, proposes be established to oversee a whole-of-government critical skills effort.

**40:** The Commission recommends that Congress authorize an Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) of personnel with critical skills for the Secretary of Defense to develop and implement.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to establish a new IRR component for individuals with critical skills, as determined by DoD, that would provide the military departments with authority to access personnel, regardless of prior military service. Members of this new IRR component would be subject to activation by the President. The legislation would direct the Secretary of Defense to develop guidance for eligibility, recruitment, military training, and military status of IRR members.



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### *Improving the Readiness of the National Mobilization System*

**41: The Commission recommends that Congress direct the Secretary of Defense and the Director of the Selective Service System to conduct a regular exercise that includes the full range of interagency mobilization stakeholders to review total and mass mobilization strategic and operational concepts. The Commission additionally recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to provide to Congress a report on the results, which may be delivered in a classified form.\***

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend 10 U.S.C. § 10208, “Annual mobilization exercise,” to require that DoD undertake once every five years an exercise of plans and procedures for a potential draft and draftee induction. This exercise would require input from and coordination with relevant executive branch agencies, including the Selective Service System and the Departments of Homeland Security, Commerce, and Labor. The Commission also proposes that funds be appropriated for this exercise.
- The Commission proposes two options for the structure of this exercise. The first option would focus on roles, responsibilities, procedures, and sequencing of force mobilization in a national mobilization. It would allow stakeholders to synchronize feedback and information protocols, develop a mutual understanding of other institutions’ plans, and test critical questions concerning mitigation of homeland sanctuary disruption, examining the capacities of non-prior service volunteers and draftees and the timing of key decision points during a national mobilization.

- The second option would focus on the pipeline for generating personnel in a national mobilization scenario, inclusive of All-Volunteer Force mobilization, non-prior service volunteers, and draftees. It would examine the capability and capacity of the national mobilization pipeline at various points at the full range of relevant institutions—including Military Entrance Processing Stations, training bases, military units, force generation installations, and transportation systems—with the goals of identifying gaps and challenges and testing different mobilization strategies.

**42: The Commission recommends that the President direct the Director of the Selective Service System to periodically exercise the agency’s mobilization responsibilities.**

- The Commission additionally proposes that Congress amend section 10(a) of the MSSA (50 U.S.C. § 3809(a)), to require the Selective Service System to conduct a comprehensive exercise every four years that includes the full scope of procedures required for executing a draft.\*

**43: The Commission recommends that Congress appropriate additional funding for the Selective Service System to accompany exercises with a public awareness campaign that communicates their purpose.**

- The Commission proposes that Congress appropriate funds to the Selective Service System to create a public awareness campaign that communicates the purpose of the mobilization exercises.\*

**44:** The Commission recommends that the President designate a lead national mobilization official within the staff of the National Security Council to coordinate whole-of-government and industry mobilization for any potential national mobilization effort.

- The Commission additionally proposes legislation to formalize assignment of this function to the National Security Council and its staff.\*

**45:** The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to designate a lead national mobilization executive agent within the Office of the Secretary of Defense.\*

**46:** The Commission recommends that Congress require the Secretary of Defense to update the personnel requirements and timeline for obtaining draft inductees in the event of an emergency requiring mass mobilization.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to require DoD to report to Congress an updated plan for obtaining draft inductees as part of a mobilization timeline for the Selective Service. The plan should address any assumed lead times prior to the authorization of a draft and should include the plans, resources, locations, and assessed capabilities of the military services to train, equip, and integrate non-prior service personnel in the total force and at different benchmarks of new personnel: 300,000, 600,000, and 1 million. The Commission proposes that the report use real-world information and that it may be provided in classified form.

**47:** The Commission recommends that the President require the Secretary of Defense, acting through the proposed lead national mobilization executive agent, to develop a plan, in conjunction with the Director of the Selective Service System, for responding to a large influx of volunteers—as may occur during a Presidential call for volunteers—and to report the plan to Congress.

- The Commission proposes that DoD develop plans that can accommodate a rapid increase in the processing of volunteers through the accession pipelines. The proposed lead national mobilization executive agent should report this plan for responding to a large influx of volunteers to Congress.

**48:** The Commission recommends that the President direct the Secretary of Defense to include in future Quadrennial Defense Reviews and National Defense Strategies a section on the state of the Selective Service System and the ability of the United States to rapidly mobilize personnel—both volunteers and draft inductees—in the event of an emergency.

### EXPAND SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION

**49:** The Commission recommends that Congress amend the MSSA to eliminate male-only registration and expand draft eligibility to all individuals of the applicable age cohort.\*

- The Commission proposes legislation to amend section 3(a) of the MSSA (50 U.S.C. § 3802(a)) by striking the term “male” from the phrases “male citizen” and “male person” and making conforming changes throughout the MSSA, to include changing terms such as “himself” to “themself,” “him” to “them,” and “his” to “their”.

# APPENDIX C:

## Best Practices in Civic Education and Service Learning

### Part I. Best Practices for K–12 Civic Education

The Commission encourages State educational agencies<sup>1</sup> (SEAs) and local educational agencies<sup>2</sup> (LEAs) to deliver high-quality civic education to all students by adopting and implementing the following practices for elementary school (grades K–5) instruction and assessment:

- Expose students to civic education, including the basics of government, history, law, and democracy.
- Provide and encourage guided use of civics-related materials in elementary school.
- Incorporate interactive, hands-on learning opportunities, including having students participate in plays about American history and take civics-oriented field trips.

The Commission encourages SEAs and LEAs to deliver high-quality civic education to all students by adopting and implementing the following practices for middle school (grades 6–8) instruction and assessment:

- Provide students with at least one semester of course work devoted to civic education, which incorporates age-appropriate, nonpartisan discussion of current events.
- Integrate civic education into non-social studies coursework, including math and science.

- Engage students in at least one interactive, student-led applied-civics project before they graduate from eighth grade.
- Encourage and facilitate extracurricular programs focused on civic responsibility and community service.
- Encourage students to participate in civics-oriented activities, such as student government, civics-based competitions (for example, quiz bowl, geography bowl, model UN, mock trial, history day, or essay contests on civic or political themes), and nationwide civics programs.

The Commission encourages SEAs and LEAs to deliver high-quality civic education to all students by adopting and implementing the following practices for high school (grades 9–12) instruction and assessment:

- Provide students with a full year of civic education as a condition of graduation and consider ways to integrate civic education into non-social studies coursework, including math and science.

In addition to State-specific elements of civic education (for example, State history), the Commission recommends that such coursework should include hands-on applied civics opportunities; civics simulations; age-appropriate lessons on and discussions of current events; lessons on Federal, State, local, and Tribal government functions; the military and its role in U.S. society (including the importance and consequences of

1 The term “State educational agencies,” unless otherwise specified, refers to Government educational agencies within each of the 50 States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the territories and possessions of the United States.

2 The term “local educational agencies” includes tribally sanctioned educational authorities, as that term is defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.



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Selective Service registration); the roles and responsibilities of citizens; and voting (including how to vote, how to register to vote, how primaries work, and how to read ballots and referenda).

- Administer and require an end-of-course civics assessment designed to measure students' content knowledge and civic skills developed during formal instruction.
- Engage students in at least one interactive, student-led applied-civics project before they graduate from high school.
- Encourage and facilitate extracurricular activities and programs focused on civic responsibility and community service.
- Encourage students to participate in civics-oriented activities such as student government, civics-based competitions, and nationwide civics programs.
- Encourage in-class discussion of current affairs in a way designed to develop an understanding of different viewpoints using best practices—including by teaching social-emotional skills—in an effort to develop core ethical values critical to civic responsibility, including self-awareness, social awareness, respectful engagement, and responsible decision making.

The Commission encourages SEAs and LEAs to deliver high-quality civic education for all students by adopting and implementing the following practices:

- Ensure that curricular standards or frameworks contain robust guidelines for civic education, including applied civics, by implementing recognized best practices.
  - Continue collaborating with other educational agencies and nonprofits to develop model standards or frameworks for civic education, applied civics, and service learning.
  - Develop and publicly release metrics to measure performance and accountability for civic education, applied civics, and service learning.
- Commit additional funds to promote and expand civic education in K–12 public schools.
  - Collaborate with philanthropic, corporate, and nonprofit entities to support civic education and ensure transparency regarding the origins of funds and resources provided by those entities.
  - Promote the development of a cadre of content and instructional specialists that can travel the state to help train teachers in civics-related pedagogy and hands-on instructional techniques.
  - Ensure that civic education materials are available for use in homeschooling environments and that homeschooled students have access to information and resources to pursue student-led civics projects and participate in civics-related field trips.
  - Apply all State civic education graduation requirements to homeschooled students.
  - Develop scholarship programs for students to participate in applied-civics projects.
  - Create a recognition program for schools, teachers, and students who perform exceptionally in civic education coursework and projects.
  - Form youth advisory councils, made up of local high school students, to advise government officials and legislators and raise issues of interest to area students.
  - Allow students to obtain course credit for applied civics activities in excess of what the SEA or LEA already requires.

### Part II. Best Practices for K–12 Service Learning

The Commission encourages SEAs and LEAs to take steps to support service-learning and hands-on community service projects by students in K–12 by adopting and implementing the following best practices:

- Ensure that curricular standards or frameworks contain robust guidelines for service learning, by implementing recognized best practices.
  - Continue collaborating with other educational agencies and nonprofits to develop model standards or frameworks for service learning.
  - Develop and publicly release metrics to measure performance and accountability for service learning.
  - Integrate service-learning methodologies into K–12 classrooms, including by providing appropriate training to teachers of all subjects.
  - Encourage and facilitate extracurricular activities and programs focused on civic responsibility and community service.
  - Support teachers who build service-learning opportunities into their regular curricula.
  - Commit funds to support service-learning initiatives.
  - Prioritize the development of a Summer of Service program for students completing grades 8–10.
  - Prioritize the development of a Semester of Service program for students in grades 9–12.
  - Collaborate with philanthropic, corporate, and nonprofit entities to support service-learning programs.
  - Promote the development of a cadre of content and instructional specialists that can travel the state to help train teachers in service-learning teaching techniques.
- Ensure that service-learning, Semester of Service, and Summer of Service programs are made available to homeschooled students.
  - Develop scholarship programs for students to participate in service-learning projects.
  - Create a recognition program for schools, teachers, and students who perform exceptionally in service-learning projects.
  - Allow students to obtain course credit for service-learning activities in excess of what the State or local education authority already requires.
  - Encourage high school counselors to provide information to students on all streams of service not only as a potential career path but as a way to develop critical job skills.

### Part III. Best Practices for Civic Education and Service Learning in Higher Education

The Commission encourages institutions of higher education (IHEs) to improve their civic education and service-learning efforts by adopting the following practices:

- Offer to undergraduates at least one course in civic education that includes an applied-civics component.
- Develop and make available at least one civic education course for online and adult education programs.
- Develop partnerships with area school districts to place undergraduate and graduate students at area schools to provide weekly lessons on civic education.
- Offer workshops for K–12 students to foster skill development in student leadership and community learning.
- Develop workshops to train teachers of all K–12 subjects to incorporate applied civics and service learning into their curricula.
- Offer a bridge-year program to enable incoming students to devote a full year to national

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service work in the United States or abroad prior to beginning academic studies.

- Incorporate civics and service-oriented goals into university charters, university learning outcomes, mission statements, and commitments.
- Create award and recognition programs to honor those students, student organizations, professors, and community partners who demonstrate excellence in civic engagement.
- Ensure that career services offices provide information to students on all streams of service as paths both for careers and for developing critical job skills.
- Partner with local and State governments to provide credit-earning internships for undergraduates in government offices and agencies.
- Allow students to receive college credit for applied civics and service-learning activities undertaken prior to college, similar to Advanced Placement credit programs.
- With respect to teacher education programs, (a) include specific training in the teaching of service-learning methodologies for all subjects and (b) provide civic education instruction to all teachers.

The Commission encourages IHEs to improve their civic education and service-learning efforts by exploring the feasibility of adopting one or more identified innovative practices:

- Develop applied-civics incubators that provide infrastructure and assistance for middle school students and high school students to engage in applied-civics work—engaging civically to address local and community needs.

- Develop partnerships with community organizations and local government to create community engagement centers to work together to create and implement innovative solutions to community problems.
- Create a social innovator accelerator program to foster innovative student initiatives to address pressing community, social, and global needs.
- Create a Public Service Academy to develop pipelines into all streams of service.
- Encourage all students to take part in student voting and governance by offering multiple levels of involvement and making it possible for the student body to meaningfully affect student life.
- Create financial incentives, such as loan reduction programs and scholarships, for (a) students who pursue careers in teaching civic education as well as service learning; (b) students who commit at least two years to military, national, or public service; and (c) national service alumni.
- Offer semester-long, spring break, or winter break options to perform service for credit, either domestically or abroad.
- Develop and offer “earn-and-learn” programs for low-income students who want to serve their communities. Such a program could be modeled on the U.S. Department of Labor’s YouthBuild program.
- Conduct a survey of incoming freshmen on civic knowledge, civic participation, service history, desire to serve, and other salient topics and compare the results to those of an outgoing survey to establish data with which to evaluate the success of civic education initiatives.
- Participate in civic engagement programs.

### Part IV: Sample Legislative Provisions

The Commission encourages States to consider the following provisions to supplement their existing legislation on civic education and service learning. The Commission developed these based on extensive research of legislation and best practices in States across the country.

**SECTION 1. TITLE.** This Act shall be titled the State Civic Education and Engagement Act.

#### SECTION 2. CIVIC EDUCATION.

- A. In all public or private schools of this State charged with elementary, middle, or secondary education that are supported or maintained in whole or in part by public funds or whose property is exempt from taxation, history of the United States of America and social science, including civics, shall be taught as required subjects to promote civic service and a greater knowledge thereof and to prepare students, morally and intellectually, for the duties of citizenship.
- B. The State educational agency (SEA) shall appoint a Director to carry out the purposes of this Act and shall provide said Director with such facilities, funding, and assistance as may be needed for the discharge of their duties.
- C. The Governor shall appoint a Special Advisor for Civic Education whose responsibilities shall be to advise the Governor on efforts to enhance civic education within the State.

#### SECTION 3. DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIC EDUCATION STANDARDS.

- A. The SEA, as guided by the Director, shall develop standards or frameworks for instruction under this section and shall prepare a model curriculum for pupils in grades kindergarten to 12, inclusive.
- B. In developing standards or frameworks as well as a model curriculum, the SEA and the

Director shall incorporate evidence-based and applied instructional practices for developing civic service-learning skills and shall identify the ways in which the model curriculum aligns with, and is supportive of, the State's educational standards, including standards for civic education.

- C. In developing the model curriculum under this section, the SEA and the Director shall consult with leaders of community organizations, pupils, parents, classroom teachers, school administrators, postsecondary educators, representatives of business and industry, and other persons with knowledge or experience that the Director deems appropriate to the task, and shall also take account of best practices implemented in this and other States.
- D. Such standards or frameworks and the model curriculum shall include instruction, at a minimum, in the following: (i) the history of the United States of America; (ii) the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights; (iii) the Declaration of Independence; (iv) the State constitution; (v) local history and government; (vi) the function, composition, and interaction of the branches of local, State, and Federal Government; (vii) the roles and responsibilities of a citizen in a democracy; (viii) the development of skills to access, analyze, and evaluate written and digital media as they relate to history and civics; (ix) proper etiquette and correct use and display of the flag of the United States; (x) opportunities for citizen participation and involvement in the governmental process; (xi) exposure to current government affairs; (xii) the importance and forms of military, national, and public service; (xiii) the role of the military in the United States and United States history; (xiv) the importance and consequences of voter registration and the role of voting in civic duty; (xv) arguments relating to the adoption of the United States' republican form of government, as they are embodied in its foundational



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documents; and (xvi) the importance, value, and history of the First Amendment, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion, and their unique roles in the U.S. Constitution and form of government.

- E. Any private, parochial, or denominational schools not subject to the standards or frameworks of the SEA shall prescribe courses of study in civic education for the schools under their control and supervision similar to those required for the public schools.

### SECTION 4. CIVIC EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOLS.

- A. *Elementary School.* Elementary schools shall include in their third, fourth, and/or fifth grade curricula a program on democracy in which students engage in a participatory manner in learning about all branches of government.
- B. *Middle School.* As a prerequisite to graduating from the eighth grade, each pupil shall, in addition to other course requirements, successfully complete at least one semester of civic education coursework in accordance with the standards or framework adopted by the SEA. A standardized end-of-course assessment in civic education shall be administered and shall be required to receive course credit.
- C. *High School.* As a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil shall, in addition to other course requirements, successfully complete at least one year of civic education coursework in accordance with the standards or framework adopted by the SEA. Civic education coursework may be divided into two semesters and include an experiential component. At the completion of a full year of civic education coursework, each pupil shall successfully pass an assessment designed to measure high-order skills and apply knowledge developed during formal instruction.

### SECTION 5. SERVICE LEARNING AND APPLIED-CIVICS PROJECTS.

- A. The SEA shall encourage school districts to initiate, adopt, expand, and institutionalize service-learning programs, activities, and policies in kindergarten through grade 12. “Service learning” refers to a student-centered, research-based teaching and learning strategy that engages students in meaningful service activities in their communities. Service-learning activities are directly tied to academic curricula, to standards, and to course, district, or State assessments in any academic subject.
- B. Each public school serving students in the eighth grade and each public high school shall ensure that each student complete at least one (1) student-led applied civics project. Applied-civics projects shall be consistent with the history and social science curriculum standards or frameworks adopted by the SEA and shall include structured, in-class learning time. Applied-civics projects may be individual, small group, or classwide, and they shall be designed to promote a student’s ability to: (i) analyze complex issues; (ii) consider differing points of view; (iii) reason, make logical arguments, and support claims using valid evidence; (iv) engage in civil discourse with those who hold opposing positions; and (v) demonstrate an understanding of the connections between Federal, State, and local policies, including issues that may affect the student’s school or community.

### SECTION 6. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT.

- A. The SEA shall provide professional development opportunities for educators on the history and social science framework, and, subject to sufficient resources in the Civic Education Fund established under this Act, create tools aligned with the standards or framework developed by the SEA to support districts in the implementation process. Additional support and outreach may include

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statewide and regional trainings, and meetings or conferences, including opportunities for districts and stakeholders to assess and share evidence-based best practices in support of civic education and provide feedback and recommendations to the SEA.

- B. The SEA shall support the development of a group of individuals trained in the standards, frameworks, and curriculum adopted by the State in civic education and service learning who may provide training to teachers around the State. Development of this group of civic education and service-learning trainers may be funded by private funds contributed to the Civic Education Fund established by this Act.

### SECTION 7. RECOGNITION PROGRAMS.

- A. The SEA, as guided by the Director, shall establish a State Civics Challenge and shall establish guidelines for implementation. The challenge shall be available to all eighth-grade students to showcase student-led civics projects that promote and demonstrate an understanding of civic engagement, citizenship, and community service. The SEA may partner with a college, university, museum, library, or other similar nonprofit entity for the establishment of the State Civics Challenge.
- B. The SEA, as guided by the Director, shall establish a State Seal of Civic Engagement designation for high school students who have demonstrated excellence in civic education and civic participation. In developing criteria for the State Seal of Civic Engagement, the SEA shall consult with a diverse group of credentialed, current classroom teachers who teach civic education and service learning in secondary schools. The SEA shall also consider including criteria based on each of the following: successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular

activities, and any other related requirements as it deems appropriate.

- C. The SEA, as guided by the Director, shall establish a nonmonetary State Civics All-Star award for schools and teachers that have performed exceptionally in civic education and civic participation. The SEA shall develop criteria for the State Civics All-Star program.

### SECTION 8. HOME SCHOOLING.

- A. The SEA shall make supplementary materials available for use in a home school environment.
- B. To receive a high school diploma, all home-schooled pupils shall be required to pass an assessment in civic education as described in Section 4(C) and shall complete a student-led applied civics project as described in Section 5(B).

### SECTION 9. CIVIC EDUCATION FUND.

- A. There shall be established a separate fund to be known as the Civic Education Fund. The Fund shall have a dedicated administrator (the Fund Administrator). The Fund shall be credited with: (i) revenue from appropriations or other money authorized by State or local governments, (ii) interest earned on such revenues, and (iii) funds from public and private sources such as gifts, grants, and donations to further civic and history education and professional development. Amounts credited to the Fund shall not be subject to further appropriation, and any money remaining in the Fund at the end of a fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund of the State.
- B. Amounts credited to the Fund may focus on underserved communities across the State, including those school districts with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students, and may be expended, without further appropriation, by the Fund Administrator for the following purposes: (i) to assist with the implementation of civic education and service

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learning in the State, including professional development training; (ii) for the development of the history and social science curriculum framework, including civic education; (iii) for collaboration with institutions of higher education and other stakeholder organizations; and (iv) to establish a competitive evaluation of student-led applied-civics projects.

- C. Amounts received from private sources shall be approved by the Fund Administrator and subject to review before being deposited in the Fund to ensure that pledged funds are not accompanied by conditions, explicit or implicit, on the implementation of civic education programming that may be detrimental to the neutral and rigorous teaching of civics or unduly influence the direction of civic education policy. The review shall be made publicly available.
- D. Contributions to the Civic Education Fund by private sources shall be subject to tax credits or charitable deductions in a manner and amount to be determined by the State legislature.
- E. The Fund Administrator shall submit a report on an annual basis to the State legislature regarding the Civic Education Fund's activity. The report shall include, but not be limited to: (i) the source and amount of funds received; (ii) the amounts distributed and the purpose of expenditures from the Fund, including but not limited to funds expended to assist school districts in meeting the requirements of this Act; (iii) any grants provided to institutions of higher education and other stakeholder organizations; and (iv) anticipated revenue and expenditure projections for the next year.

### SECTION 10. STATE LEGISLATIVE YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL.

- A. The State Legislative Youth Advisory Council is established to examine issues of importance to youth, including but not limited to education, employment strategies, youth participation in State and municipal government, safe environments for youth, substance abuse, emotional and physical health, foster care, poverty, homelessness, criminal justice, and youth access to services on a statewide and municipal basis.
- B. The Council shall consist of students ages 14 to 18 who are enrolled in a public high school. Members shall represent the demographic diversity of the State and shall include participants from rural and urban areas. The size of the Council and the manner of selecting members shall be determined by the State legislature.
- C. Members of the Council shall be selected for two-year terms and shall select a chair and other leadership from their members. Members shall meet at least 3 and no more than 6 times each year.
- D. The Council shall have the following duties: (i) advising the legislature on proposed and pending legislation, including State budget expenditure and policy matters relating to youth; (ii) advising the standing committees of the legislature and study commissions, committees, and task forces regarding issues relating to youth; (iii) conducting periodic seminars for its members regarding leadership, government, and the legislature; and (iv) reporting annually by December 1 to the State legislature on its activities.

# APPENDIX D:

## The Commission’s Mission and Method

Congress charged the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service to (1) “conduct a review of the military selective service system process” and (2) “consider methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service in order to address national security and other public service needs of the Nation.”<sup>1</sup> Meeting the research and policy development needs for this broad mandate required an equally broad research plan. The Commission’s approach to its mandate included three primary components: public outreach, policy option development, and analysis of policy proposals.

### Public Outreach

The Commission implemented a robust outreach plan to seek as much input as possible from a wide spectrum of the American public. Appendix E contains a full list of the organizations and individuals consulted; Appendix F lists organizations and individuals who presented at public meetings and forums, testified at public hearings, or submitted a statement for the record.

Beginning in February 2018, the Commission traveled across the Nation to learn firsthand about Americans’ views on and experience with service. Many of the individuals who met with the Commission represent groups of Americans with interests in particular service areas; others participate in, lead, or study activities included in the Commission’s mandate. These stakeholders came from a broad range of groups, including Federal, State, local, and Tribal government agencies; the military services; trade associations; nonprofits; national service organizations;

for-profit businesses; activists; interest groups; labor unions; military and veterans service organizations; religious organizations; and institutions of higher education. By engaging with such groups across all levels, the Commission gained insights and input that were used to identify challenges, opportunities, and policy options for its deliberations.

Pursuant to its authorizing legislation, the Commission also held meetings—focused on policy recommendations under consideration—that were open to and inclusive of the public. These public meetings enabled the Commission to hear the sincerely held beliefs of Americans on service. During its first year, the Commission held a total of 11 public meetings and forums. In addition, its authorizing legislation required the Commission to solicit comments from the general public via the Federal Register and the Commission’s website. The Commission accepted public comments from January 2018 through December 2019 by email, on its website, and by postal mail.

### Policy Option Development

The Commission conducted a comprehensive literature review of publicly available secondary sources, including academic materials, Federal reports and datasets, policy memoranda from key stakeholder associations, Federal legislation and policies, and State legislation. In addition, it reviewed select materials available for official government use. As part of its review, the Commission compared the programs and experiences of other countries that recently implemented, have long maintained, or recently ceased conscription or universal national service. The Commission also examined existing polling data and leveraged the survey efforts of the Department of Defense’s Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies (JAMRS) and the Harvard Kennedy School of Government’s Institute of Politics.

1 National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, Pub. L. No. 114-328, §§ 551–557, 130 Stat. 2130 (2016), as amended by the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, Pub. L. No. 115-232, § 594, 132 Stat. 1636 (2018).



## APPENDIX D: The Commission's Mission and Method

Concurrent with the literature review, the Commission conducted historical analysis, public stakeholder group discussions, interviews, statistical analyses of available datasets, and alternative analyses of select policy and program models. This research enabled the Commission to identify and develop a wide range of potential policy options. The Commission then determined and further refined policy priorities for military, national, and public service as well as the Selective Service System.

### Analysis of Policy Proposals

Following the release of its Interim Report in January 2019, the Commission hosted 14 public hearings to receive feedback from expert panelists and interested stakeholders. Panelists at each hearing were asked to respond to a staff memorandum, which contained policy options under consideration by the Commission. Ten of the hearings were held in Washington, DC; four were held in College Station, TX, and Hyde Park, NY. Additional individuals with expertise or experience submitted statements for the record to offer feedback on the ideas put forth in the staff memoranda, insights on how to operationalize policy options, or proposals of alternative options for the Commission to consider.

The Commission used the information obtained through public hearings and follow-on stakeholder engagements, together with thorough policy and legal analyses regarding the feasibility of various options under consideration, to further develop and refine those options. After extensive deliberations on each policy alternative, the Commission adopted those recommendations supported by a supermajority of at least eight Commissioners. Although some recommendations did not have unanimous support, the recommendations presented in this report represent the consensus view of the Commission.

### The Path Forward

The Commission's Final Report, *Inspired to Serve*, includes 49 overarching recommendations, along with background and key findings to provide context for each recommendation. A separate volume contains legislative proposals for those recommendations that would require new laws or changes to existing laws. By statute,

the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service will cease operations on September 18, 2020. At that time, all programmatic records of the Commission will be transferred to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), where interested members of the public or organizations can request copies of documents in accordance with NARA procedures.

# APPENDIX E:

## Organizations and Individuals Consulted

The Commission would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for the input and ideas they shared in meetings with Commission members and staff. The expertise and insights provided were an invaluable resource for the Commission.

### ORGANIZATIONS

9/11 Day  
9to5, National Association of Working Women  
AECOM  
Aerospace Industries Association  
After-School All-Stars  
Air Force Association  
Air Force Sergeants Association  
ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge  
All-Volunteer Force Forum  
Alpha Zeta  
American Association for the Advancement of Science  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
American Bar Association  
American Bar Association, Standing Committee on Law & National Security  
American Enterprise Institute  
American Federation of Government Employees  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Institute of Architects  
American Legion  
American Legislative Exchange Council  
American Medical Response, Nashua, New Hampshire  
American Military Partner Association, now the Modern Military Association of America  
American Red Cross  
The American Road  
American Society for Public Administration  
American Student Government Association  
America's Service Commissions  
AmeriCorps Alumni Association  
AmeriCorps Cape Cod  
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
Antelope Valley Partners for Health  
Antioch Community Church, Waco, Texas  
The Archer Center, the University of Texas System  
Arizona State University  
Arizona State University, McCain Institute  
Arizona State University, Public Service Academy  
Arkansas Service Commission—EngageAR  
Arvest  
The Aspen Institute  
Association of American Colleges and Universities  
Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs  
Association of Military Colleges and Schools of the United States  
Association of the United States Army  
Association of the United States Navy  
Atlantic Beach Police Department, Florida  
Austin Chamber of Commerce, Austin, Texas  
The BASE  
Baylor University  
Biden Foundation  
Big Shoulders Fund  
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation  
Bipartisan Policy Center  
Blue Crane  
Blue Star Families  
BMNT Partners  
Boston Bruins Foundation  
Boy Scouts of America  
Boys & Girls Club of America  
Brookings Institution  
Building Healthy Military Families  
Burson, Cohn & Wolfe

## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

California School Personnel Commissioners Association	Cities of Service	Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
California State University	Citizen Advocacy Center	Congressional Research Service
California Volunteers	Citizen Schools	Conservation Legacy
Camp Liberty, Extreme Military Challenge!	City of Boston, Massachusetts	Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago
Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools	City of Cranfills Gap, Texas	Corporation for National and Community Service
Campus Compact	City of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania	Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps
Carnegie Mellon University, Public Policy and International Affairs Program	City of Jacksonville, Florida	Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps State and National
Carry The Load	City of Memphis, Tennessee	Corporation for National and Community Service, AmeriCorps VISTA
Catholic Charities USA	City of Nashua, New Hampshire	Corporation for National and Community Service, Senior Corps
Catholic Women's Forum	City of Vinton, Iowa	The Corps Network
Cato Institute	City Year	Council on Foundations
Cedar Rapids AMP, Cedar Rapids, Iowa	City Year New York	Courage to Resist
Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, Cedar Rapids, Iowa	Civic Nation	Craig High School, Janesville, Wisconsin
Center for a New American Security	CivXNow! Coalition	Cranfills Gap Volunteer Fire Department, Cranfills Gap, Texas
Center for Civic Education	Cleveland Avenue Foundation for Education, Chicago, Illinois	Crestview Church of Christ, Waco, Texas
Center for Military Readiness	Clifton Chamber of Commerce, Clifton, Texas	Deloitte
Center for Strategic and International Studies	Clinton Foundation	Denver Federal Center
Center on Conscience and War	CLS Strategies	Denver Public Schools
Central Intelligence Agency, Talent Center of Excellence	The Coca-Cola Company	Do Good Institute, University of Maryland
Central Pennsylvania Food Bank	CODEPINK	East Los Angeles College
Changeist	Coding It Forward	Edelman
The Chicago Council on Global Affairs	College Board	EduCare Foundation
Chicago Public Schools, Illinois	College for Social Innovation	Education Commission of the States
Chief Human Capital Officers Council	College Possible	Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate
Christian Aid Ministries, Conservative Anabaptist Service Program	Colorado National Guard	Electric Supply Center
Church Health	Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office	Embassy of Colombia
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Colorado Youth Corps Association	Embassy of Estonia
Circle of Service Foundation	Commission on the National Defense Strategy for the United States	
	Common Impact	
	Commonwealth Corps	
	Community Foundation of Greater Memphis	
	Community High School, Chicago, Illinois	
	Congregational Health Network	

## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

Embassy of Nigeria	Google	Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America
Embassy of Norway	Grandslam Performance Associates, LLC	Islamic Center of Waco, Waco, Texas
eMentor	Greater Englewood Community Development Corporation	J. B. Hunt Transport, Inc.
Emmaus, Inc.	Greater Memphis Chamber of Commerce, Memphis, Tennessee	Jacksonville Beach Police Department, Jacksonville, Florida
Encore.org	Greater Waco Chamber of Commerce, Waco, Texas	Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce, Jacksonville, Florida
Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States	Greencorps Chicago	Jacksonville Citizen Planning Advisory Committee
Everyday Democracy	Habitat for Humanity	John F. Kennedy Library Foundation
Federal Chief Information Officer Council, Workforce Committee	Hampton Roads Rotary Club, Hampton Roads, Virginia	Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies
Federal Executive Boards	Harbor Homes, Inc., Nashua, New Hampshire	Johnson County, Iowa
The Federal Judicial Center	Harrisburg Area Community College	The Joint Commission
Federal Managers Association	Hawaii Chamber of Commerce	The Jones Center (Jones Trust)
Federal-Postal Coalition	Heard Capital, LLC	Joseph Stilwell Military Academy of Leadership, Jacksonville, Florida
FedEx	Helping Services for Youth & Families	JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Feeding America	The Heritage Foundation	JROTC Programs, Fort Worth, Texas
Fellowship for Reconciliation	Hero Missions	Jumpstart
First Baptist Church West, West, Texas	Home Base Iowa	KĀKOU, Honolulu, Hawaii
First Data Corporation	The Home for Little Wanderers	Kansas City Federal Executive Board
First Spanish Assembly of God, Waco, Texas	Homeboy Industries	Keystone Hall
Fleet Reserve Association	Homefront Rising	Kids That Do Good
Florida National Guard	Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program	Kiwanis Club of Coralville, Coralville, Iowa
FoodCorps Massachusetts	Homestead Heritage, Waco, Texas	Knoxville–Knox County Community Action Committee
Friends Committee on National Legislation	Hoover Institution	Koreatown Youth and Community Center
Friends of the Forest Preserves	The HYM Investment Group, LLC	Kupu, Honolulu, Hawaii
FXTaylor Associates	IBM	Lakewood Christian Church, Waco, Texas
Garfield County, Colorado	iCivics, Inc.	Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Memphis, Tennessee
General Federation of Women's Clubs	Independent Sector	Lead for America
Generation Citizen	Institute for Defense Analyses	Leave No Veteran Behind
George H. W. Bush Presidential Library Foundation	Iowa Army National Guard	LGBT Victory Fund
George W. Bush Institute	Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce	LinkedIn
George Washington University	Iowa Department of Inspections & Appeals, Food and Consumer Safety Bureau	Lions Club, Vinton, Iowa
Girls, Inc.		
Give2Get		
Golden		



## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

Living Hope Outreach— Hope House, Hamilton, Texas	National Academy of Public Administration	New Politics
LMI	National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association	New York Commission for National & Community Service
Local Initiatives Support Corporation	National Association of Counties	North High School, Denver, Colorado
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce	National Association of Foster Grandparents Program Directors	NorthWest Arkansas Community College
Lou Frey Institute, University of Central Florida	National Association of Government Employees	Notre Dame Mission Volunteers
The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, Commission on Theology and Church Relations	National Association of RSVP Directors	Obama Foundation
Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation	National Association of Student Personnel	OneStar Foundation
MannaProject International	National Center for Families Learning	Opportunity Youth United
Marine Corps League	National Civic League	The Osa Foundation
Mass Mentoring Partnership	National Conference of State Legislatures	Our Community Salutes
Massachusetts Competitive Partnership	National Conference on Citizenship	OutServe-SLDN
Massachusetts Promise Fellowship	National Council for Social Studies	Pacific Resource Partnership
Massachusetts Service Alliance	National Council of Social Security Management Associations	Paralyzed Veterans of America
McLean Bible Church, McLean, Virginia	National Council on Disability	Parent Encouragement Program
Microsoft	National Council on Teacher Quality	Parker High School, Janesville, Wisconsin
Mikva Challenge	National Governors Association	Partnership for Public Service
Mile High Youth Corps	National Guard Association of the United States	Partnership for Successful Living
Military Child Education Coalition	National League of Cities	The Patriotic Movement
The Military Coalition	National Legal Aid and Defender Association	Peace Corps
Military Family Advisory Network	National Military Family Association	Pennsylvania National Guard
Military Officers Association of America	National Peace Corps Association	Philadelphia National Service Task Force
Military Order of the Purple Heart	National Research Center for College and University Admissions	Pilot Club of Iowa City, Iowa
Military Spouse Employment Council	National Senior Corps Association	Points of Light
Ministério da Economia, Brasil	National Treasury Employees Union	Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative
Ministry of Defence, Republic of Latvia	National Veterans Memorial and Museum	Professional Services Council
The Mission Continues	National Women's Law Center	Propper Daley
Mission Waco, Mission World	National Youth Leadership Council	Public Allies
Montage Health Foundation	NBCUniversal	Putnam Investments
Montana Governor's Office of Community Service	Neptune Beach Police Department, Neptune Beach, Florida	PwC

## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

Report for America	Social Capital Inc.	Temple Adas Shalom, The Harford Jewish Center, Havre de Grace, Maryland
Reserve Officers Association	Sociedad Latina	Temple Rodef Sholom, Waco, Texas
Resisters.info	SOS America (Service Over Self)	Tenacity, Boston, Massachusetts
Revive Recovery Center	South Knoxville Elementary School, Knoxville, Tennessee	Tennessee Air National Guard
RiceHadleyGates, LLC	Southern Trinity Groundwater Conservation District, Waco, Texas	Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Memphis
Richard Nixon Foundation	Southwest Tennessee Community College	Texas A&M University, Bush School for Government and Public Service
Robert R. McCormick Foundation	Square One Foundation	Texas A&M University, Division of Student Affairs
The Roberta Wohlstetter Forum on National Security	Standing Rock Tribal Veterans Service Office	Texas A&M University, Texas Hunger Initiative
Robinson Foundation	Starbucks	Texas Baptist Men
Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Steamboat Springs, Colorado	State of Colorado	Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center
Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute	State of Colorado, Commission of Indian Affairs	Thrive Chicago
Rotary Club of Hampton Roads, Virginia	State of Colorado, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs	Truth in Recruitment
RSVP of the Capital Region, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania	State of Hawaii, Department of Education, Office of Curriculum and Instructional Design	Tufts University, the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)
The Rumsfeld Foundation	State of Illinois	U.S. Agency for International Development
RV Disaster Corps, Waco, Texas	State of Pennsylvania, Department of Labor and Industry	U.S. Air Force Academy
Salesforce	State of North Dakota, Department of Commerce	U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service
The Salvation Army	State of Texas, Department of Family and Protective Services	U.S. Army, Office of the Command Sergeant Major of the Army
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce	State of Texas, Department of Transportation	U.S. Army Cadet Command
Seattle CityClub, Seattle, Washington	Student Veterans of America	U.S. Army III Corps, Fort Hood, Texas
Seattle Works, Seattle, Washington	Suffolk Construction, Boston, Massachusetts	U.S. Army Marketing and Research Group
Selective Service System	Suffolk University, Institute for Public Service	U.S. Army Recruiting and Retention College
Senior Executives Association	Summit Institute	U.S. Army Recruiting Command
Serve Colorado—Governor’s Commission on Community Service	The Sunrise Optimist Club of Iowa City, Iowa	U.S. Army Reserve Counter Terrorism Unit
Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service	Team Red, White & Blue	U.S. Army ROTC
Serve Washington	Team Rubicon	U.S. Army Soldier for Life
Service Academies Global Summit	Teamwork Englewood	U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command
Service Women’s Action Network	TED	
Service Year Alliance		
ServiceMaster		
Shelby County Government, Shelby County, Tennessee		

## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

U.S. Army War College,  
Center for Strategic Landpower

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Foundation

U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Coast Guard Recruiting  
Command

U.S. Conference of Mayors

U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
Farm Service Agency

U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
U.S. Forest Service

U.S. Department of Commerce,  
National Oceanic and  
Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce,  
Office of the Chief Human  
Capital Officer

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Defense Advisory Committee on  
Women in the Services

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Defense Civilian Personnel  
Advisory Service

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Defense Digital Service

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Defense Health Agency

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Joint Advertising, Market  
Research and Studies (JAMRS)

U.S. Department of Defense, Joint  
Artificial Intelligence Center

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Joint Chiefs of Staff

U.S. Department of Defense,  
National Defense University,  
Center for Applied Strategic  
Learning

U.S. Department of Defense,  
National Security Agency

U.S. Department of Defense,  
National Security Innovation  
Network

U.S. Department of Defense, Office  
of Cost Assessment and Program  
Evaluation (CAPE)

U.S. Department of Defense, Office  
of the Assistant Secretary of  
Defense for Special Operations  
and Low-Intensity Conflict

U.S. Department of Defense, Office  
of the Assistant to the Secretary of  
Defense for Public Affairs

U.S. Department of Defense, Office  
of the General Counsel

U.S. Department of Defense, Office  
of the Secretary of Defense

U.S. Department of Defense, Office  
of the Under Secretary of Defense  
for Personnel and Readiness

U.S. Department of Defense,  
Reserve Forces Policy Board

U.S. Department of Defense, U.S.  
Cyber Command

U.S. Department of Education

U.S. Department of Energy

U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services, Centers for  
Disease Control and Prevention

U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services, Office of the  
Chief Human Capital Officer

U.S. Department of Health and  
Human Services, U.S. Public  
Health Service Commissioned  
Corps

U.S. Department of Homeland  
Security, Federal Emergency  
Management Agency

U.S. Department of Homeland  
Security, Office of the Chief  
Human Capital Officer

U.S. Department of Justice

U.S. Department of Labor

U.S. Department of Labor,  
Employment & Training  
Administration, Department  
of Labor

U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans'  
Employment & Training Services

U.S. Department of State

U.S. Department of State, Virtual  
Student Federal Service (VSFS)

U.S. Department of the Air Force

U.S. Department of the Army

U.S. Department of the Interior,  
Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Department of the Interior,  
Office of the Chief Human  
Capital Officer

U.S. Department of the Navy

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,  
Office of Policy and Interagency  
Collaboration

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs,  
Veterans Health Administration

U.S. Environmental Protection  
Agency

U.S. Executive Office of the  
President, National Security  
Council

U.S. Executive Office of the  
President, Office of Management  
and Budget

U.S. Executive Office of the  
President, U.S. Digital Service

U.S. General Services Administration

U.S. Geological Survey

U.S. Global Leadership Coalition

U.S. Government Accountability  
Office

U.S. Marine Corps Recruit Depot,  
San Diego, California

U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting  
Command

U.S. Military Entrance Processing  
Station, Boston, Massachusetts

U.S. Naval Academy

U.S. Naval War College

U.S. Navy, Naval Station Mayport,  
Fleet and Family Support Center

U.S. Navy, Office of the Chief of  
Naval Operations

## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

U.S. Navy, USS *Independence*  
(LCS-2)  
U.S. Navy Recruiting Command  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
U.S. Office of Personnel  
Management, Executives in  
Residence program  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
U.S. Social Security Administration  
USA Truck, Inc.  
UnidosUS  
Uniform Law Commission  
The United State of Women  
United Tribes Technical College,  
Bismarck, North Dakota  
United Way of Greater Los Angeles,  
California  
United Way of Northeast Florida  
United Way of Waco–McLennan  
County, Texas  
United Way Worldwide  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa,  
Service Learning Program  
University of Memphis  
University of Memphis, the  
Benjamin L. Hooks Institute  
for Social Change  
University of Virginia,  
Frank Batten School of  
Leadership and Public Policy  
UPS Foundation  
Urban Partnership Bank  
Veterans for American Ideals  
Veteran Compass LLC  
Veterans for Peace  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Veterans Village of  
San Diego, California  
Victory Fund  
Vietnam Veterans of America  
Vital Village Network

Voices for National Service  
The Volcker Alliance  
Volunteer Iowa  
Volunteer New Hampshire  
Volunteer Tennessee  
Walmart Foundation  
Walmart Labs  
Walmart Stores, Inc.  
War Resisters League  
Welcoming Light  
Western Governors University  
With Honor Action  
Woodcraft Rangers  
Wounded Warrior Project  
Year Up  
YMCA  
YMCA, Armed Services  
Young Government Leaders  
Young Invincibles  
Young Professionals Connection,  
Des Moines, Iowa  
Young Professionals in Foreign Policy  
Youth Guidance  
Youth Service America  
YouthBuild USA, Inc.  
YouthLead

### INDIVIDUALS

Ms. Susan Abravanel, Susan  
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LeBow College of Business  
Dr. Andrew Bacevich, Professor  
Emeritus of International  
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University  
The Honorable James Baker,  
Director, Institute for National  
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Syracuse University College of  
Law  
Mr. Gil Barndollar, Military Fellow-  
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University of America  
Mr. Bill Basl, former AmeriCorps  
Director, Corporation for National  
and Community Service  
Rear Admiral Paul Becker, USN  
(Retired), former Director for  
Intelligence, Joint Staff  
Major General Matthew Beevers,  
Assistant Adjutant General,  
California Army National Guard  
Dr. Clive Belfield, Professor of  
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University of New York  
Dr. Richard Betts, Director of the  
International Security Policy  
Program, School of International  
and Public Affairs, Columbia  
University  
Dr. Jessica Blankshain, Assistant  
Professor of National Security  
Affairs, U.S. Naval War College  
Mr. Bill Braniff, Director, National  
Consortium for the Study of  
Terrorism and Responses to  
Terrorism  
Ms. Jessica Bulman-Pozen, Professor  
of Law, Columbia Law School



## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

- Ms. Nicole Camarillo, Executive Director, Talent Acquisition and Management Strategy, U.S. Army Cyber Command
- Mr. Phil Carter, Director, Personnel & Resources Program within the Homeland Security Operational Analysis Center, Department of Homeland Security's Federally Funded Research and Development Center, RAND Corporation
- Ms. Amy Cohen, former Director, Learn and Serve America, Corporation for National and Community Service
- Mr. Gene Corbin, Assistant Dean of Student Life for Public Service, Harvard University
- Mr. Ernest DiVittorio, National Security Fellow, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
- Ms. Jennifer Easterly, former Senior Director for Counterterrorism, National Security Council
- Ms. Jude Eden, U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran and freelance writer
- Mr. Paul Erickson, Program Director for Arts, Humanities & Culture and American Institutions, Society & the Public Good at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- Major Nate Finney, USA, Creator and Founding Member, The Strategy Bridge
- Mr. Robert Foust, Vietnam War conscript and co-author of the forthcoming book *Last Draftees*
- Mr. David Gergen, Professor of Public Service and Director of the Center for Public Leadership, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
- Dr. Gerald Gipp, former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Education, U.S. Department of Education
- Lieutenant Colonel Jim Golby, Defense Policy Advisor, United States Mission to NATO, U.S. Army
- Mr. Joshua Gotbaum, Guest Scholar, The Brookings Institution
- The Honorable Lee Hamilton, former U.S. Representative, Vice Chairman, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States
- Dr. Sharon Hamilton, Director, Liaison and Military Operations, Institute for Leadership and Strategic Studies, University of North Georgia
- Mr. Ken Harbaugh, former Executive Director, ServiceNation
- Ms. Doris Hausser, former Senior Policy Advisor to the Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
- Dr. Bert Huggins, Chief of Research, Army Cadet Command, U.S. Army
- Ms. Kristy Kamarck, Specialist in Military Manpower, Congressional Research Service
- Mr. John Kamensky, Senior Fellow, IBM Center for Business of Government
- Ms. Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Chair and Director, Harvard University Advanced Leadership Initiative, Harvard Business School, Harvard University
- Dr. Mara Karlin, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy and Force Development
- Ms. Katherine Kidder, Political Scientist, RAND Corporation
- Dr. Meredith Kleykamp, Associate Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Center for Research on Military Organization, University of Maryland
- Dr. Leslie Lenkowsky, former Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service
- Dr. Jennifer Lerner, Thornton F. Bradshaw Professor of Public Policy, Decision Science, and Management, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
- Dr. Peter Levine, Associate Dean, Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship & Public Affairs, Tufts University
- The Honorable Jacob Lew, former White House Chief of Staff and former Director of the Office of Management and Budget
- Mr. Josh Lospinoso, author, *War on the Rocks*
- Mr. Patrick Malone, Executive in Residence Department of Public Administration and Policy, American University
- Mr. Jay Mangone, former Director, Franklin Project
- Dr. Max Marguiles, Assistant Professor, International Affairs, United States Military Academy
- Mr. Chris Marvin, President, Marvin Strategies
- General Stanley A. McChrystal, USA (Retired), and Chairman of the Service Year Alliance
- The Honorable Robert McDonald, former Secretary, U.S. Veterans Affairs
- Mr. Willie McTear, Vietnam War conscript and co-author of the forthcoming book *Last Draftees*
- Ms. Shelley Metzenbaum, former President, Volcker Alliance
- Mr. Jon Michaels, Professor, University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law
- Ms. Emily Miller, Special Operations Command, U.S. Army Special Operations Command
- Mr. Tim Miller, Board Member, Peace and Service Committee for the Beachy Amish Mennonites

## APPENDIX E: Organizations and Individuals Consulted

- Mr. Jeff Neal, Chair of the Board of Directors, National Academy of Public Administration
- Ms. Christine Neff, Teacher, Stuarts Draft Middle School
- Dr. Malcolm Oliver, Assistant Professor and Director of Master of Public Policy and Administration Program, California Lutheran University
- Mr. John Palguta, former Vice President for Policy, Partnership for Public Service
- Dean Elizabeth Rindskopf Parker, former General Counsel, National Security Agency and Central Intelligence Agency
- Ms. Eloise Pasachoff, Professor, Georgetown Law School
- Dr. James Perry, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Chancellor's Professor Emeritus, School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University
- Mr. John Pless, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, Concordia Theological Seminary
- Mr. Michael Rebell, Professor of Practice in Law and Educational Policy, Teachers College, Columbia University
- Ms. Camille Roberts, Founder, CC Career Services
- Mr. Keith Rogers, Vietnam War conscript and co-author of the forthcoming book *Last Draftees*
- Dr. Paul Rorem, Benjamin B. Warfield Professor of Medieval Church History, Princeton Theological Seminary
- Dr. Bernard Rostker, former Senior Fellow, RAND Corporation
- Dr. Amy Rutenberg, Assistant Professor of History and Co-Coordinator of Social Studies Education Program, Iowa State University
- Major General Robert Scales, USA (Retired), former Commandant of the Army War College
- Dr. David Segal, Distinguished Scholar-Teacher, Professor of Sociology, and Director of the Center for Research on Military Organization, University of Maryland
- Mr. Louis Seidman, Carmack Waterhouse Professor of Constitutional Law, Georgetown Law School
- General Eric Shinseki, USA (Retired), former Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Dr. Chris Shoemaker, Vice President for Strategy, CEVA
- Ms. Gayle Smith, former Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development
- Mr. Dan Solomon, Managing Director, Litton
- Dean Alan D. Solomont, Dean of the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life, Tufts University
- Mr. Ilya Somin, Professor of Law, George Mason University
- Mr. Kirk Souder, Founder and Creative Lead, enso
- Ms. Ashley Spillane, Fellow, Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
- Ms. Susan Stroud, former Director, Learn and Serve America, Corporation for National and Community Service
- Mr. David Swanson, Executive Director, WorldBeyondWar.org
- Ms. Caroline Tess, former Senior Director, Legislative Affairs, National Security Council
- Dean Sheila Thimba, Dean for Administration, Harvard College
- Dr. Jim Thompson, Associate Professor, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago
- Mr. Drew Train, Co-Founder and President, OBERLAND
- Mr. Raj Vinnakota, President, Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation
- Mr. John Della Volpe, Director of Polling, Institute of Politics, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
- General Carl Vuono, USA (Retired), former Chief of Staff, U.S. Army
- Mr. Steve Willborn, Chair, Legislative Committee, Uniform Law Commission
- Dr. Erez Yoeli, Research Scientist, Applied Cooperation Team, MIT Sloan School of Management

*The organizations and individuals listed here met with the Commission from October 2017 through December 2019. The individuals listed met with the Commission in their personal capacity. Their titles and organizations are provided for identification purposes only; the views they expressed did not necessarily reflect the views of those organizations.*

# APPENDIX F: Panelists, Speakers, and Statements Received

The 14 public hearings hosted in 2019 provided an opportunity for the Commission to learn from policy experts and relevant stakeholders on key topics within our mandate. The Commission thanks the following 68 panelists who provided written testimony and oral remarks at its public hearings. Their perspectives and expertise added tremendous value to these important conversations.

## **Universal Service Hearing: Inspiring Universal Service Across America | February 21, 2019 | American University, Washington College of Law, Washington, DC**

Mr. Tom Chabolla, President, Jesuit Volunteer Corps

Dr. Robert Grimm, Director, Do Good Institute, University of Maryland School of Public Policy

Ms. Lisa Mascolo, Managing Director, IBM Global Business Services – Federal\*

Ms. Teresa Walch, National Vice President of Training and Quality Improvement, Boys & Girls Clubs of America

\* *Jeff West, Corporate Responsibility Leader, IBM Corporation, delivered the testimony on behalf of Lisa Mascolo*

## **Universal Service Hearing: Should Service Be Mandatory? | February 21, 2019 | American University, Washington College of Law, Washington, DC**

Mr. Doug Bandow, Senior Fellow, Cato Institute

Dr. William Galston, Ezra K. Zilkha Chair and Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

Mr. Ted Hollander, author, *Step Forward America! A Case for a National Service Program*

Ms. Lucy Steigerwald, author, *Stop Suggesting Mandatory National Service as a Fix for America's Problems*

## **National Service Hearing: Improving Current National Service Policies and Processes | March 28, 2019 | The Bush School of Government and Public Service – Texas A&M University, College Station, TX**

Ms. Michelle Brooks, Chief of Staff, Peace Corps

Mr. Chris Bugbee, Chief Operating Officer, OneStar Foundation

Ms. AnnMaura Connolly, President, Voices of National Service, and Executive Vice President, City Year, Inc.

Mr. Pierre Nguyen, Disaster Response Programs Manager, Texas Conservation Corps of American YouthWorks

The Honorable Barbara Stewart, Chief Executive Officer, Corporation for National and Community Service

## **National Service Hearing: Creating More National Service Opportunities | March 28, 2019 | The Bush School of Government and Public Service – Texas A&M University, College Station, TX**

Ms. Kaira Esgate, Chief Executive Officer, America's Service Commissions

Mr. Brian Larkin, Program Officer, Flint Michigan Area, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

Natalye Paquin, Esq., President and Chief Executive Officer, Points of Light

Ms. Shirley Sagawa, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Service Year Alliance

Mr. Jaime Ernesto Uzeta, Chief Executive Officer, Public Allies

## **Selective Service Hearing: Future Mobilization Needs of the Nation | April 24, 2019 | Gallaudet University, Washington, DC**

The Honorable James Stewart, Assistant Secretary of Defense of Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Department of Defense

Rear Admiral John Polowczyk, U.S. Navy, Vice Director of Logistics, Joint Chiefs of Staff

Ms. Loren DeJonge Schulman, Deputy Director of Studies and the Leon E. Panetta Senior Fellow, Center for a New American Security

## APPENDIX F: Panelists, Speakers, and Statements Received

Major General Peter Byrne, Colorado Air National Guard, Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, U.S. Northern Command

Ms. Elsa Kania, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Technology and National Security Program, Center for a New American Security

**Selective Service Hearing: How to Meet Potential National Mobilization Needs | April 24, 2019 | Gallaudet University, Washington, DC**

The Honorable Donald Benton, Director of Selective Service, U.S. Selective Service System

Major General John Evans, U.S. Army, Representative, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command

Major General Linda Singh, Adjutant General of Maryland, Maryland National Guard

Dr. Jacquelyn Schneider, Assistant Professor, U.S. Naval War College

Dr. Bernard Rostker, former Senior Fellow, RAND Corporation

**Selective Service Hearing: Should Registration Be Expanded to All Americans? — Arguments Against Expansion | April 25, 2019 | Gallaudet University, Washington, DC**

Dr. Mark Coppenger, Professor of Christian Philosophy and Ethics, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Ms. Jude Eden, U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran and freelance writer

Mr. Edward Hasbrouck, editor and publisher, Resisters.info

Ms. Ashley McGuire, author, *Sex Scandal: The Drive to Abolish Male and Female*

Ms. Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation

**Selective Service Hearing: Should Registration Be Expanded to All Americans? — Arguments for Expansion | April 25, 2019 | Gallaudet University, Washington, DC**

Lieutenant General Flora Darpino, USA (Retired), former Judge Advocate General of the United States Army

Dr. Jason Dempsey, Adjunct Senior Fellow, Military, Veterans, and Society Program at the Center for a New American Security, and Senior Advisor, Columbia University Center for Veteran Transition and Integration

Professor Jill Hasday, Distinguished McKnight University Professor, Centennial Professor in Law, University of Minnesota Law School

Major General Bengt Svensson, Defense Attaché, Embassy of Sweden

Ms. Katey van Dam, U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran currently working in venture capital

**Public Service Hearing: Improving Basic Hiring Processes | May 15, 2019 | Partnership for Public Service, Washington, DC**

Ms. Melissa Bryant, Chief Policy Officer, Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

Ms. Kimberly Holden, Deputy Associate Director, Employee Services, Talent Acquisition and Workforce Shaping, U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Mr. Brett Hunt, Executive Director, Public Service Academy, Arizona State University

Ms. Jacqueline Simon, Public Policy Director, American Federation of Government Employees

Mr. Max Stier, President and Chief Executive Officer, Partnership for Public Service

**Public Service Hearing: Critical Skills and Benefits | May 15, 2019 | Partnership for Public Service, Washington, DC**

Ms. Terry Gerton, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Academy of Public Administration

Mr. Eddie Hartwig, Deputy Administrator, U.S. Digital Service

Mr. Travis Hoadley, Senior Advisor, Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Ms. Jessica Klement, Staff Vice President, Advocacy, National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Dr. Elizabeth Kolmstetter, Director of Talent Strategy and Engagement, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**Military Service Hearing: Creating New Pipelines to Service and Fostering Critical Skills | May 16, 2019 | Partnership for Public Service, Washington, DC**

Ms. Nicole Camarillo, Executive Director, Talent Acquisition and Management Strategy, U.S. Army Cyber Command

Dr. David Chu, President, Institute for Defense Analyses

Dr. Sharon Hamilton, Director, Liaison and Military Operations, Institute for Leadership and Strategic Studies, University of North Georgia



## APPENDIX F: Panelists, Speakers, and Statements Received

Ms. Katherine Kidder, Political Scientist, RAND Corporation

Mr. Raj Shah, Co-Founder, Arceo.ai

**Military Service Hearing: Increasing Awareness Among Young Americans and Lessening the Civil-Military Divide | May 16, 2019 | Partnership for Public Service, Washington, DC**

Mr. C. J. Chivers, U.S. Marine Corps veteran, journalist, *The New York Times*

Dr. Lindsay Cohn, Professor, U.S. Naval War College

Mr. Ernie Gonzales, former Director, Youth Outreach Programs and Senior Policy and Program Analyst, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense

Dr. Kathleen Hicks, Senior Vice President, Henry A. Kissinger Chair, and Director of the International Security Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies

Mr. Anthony Kurta, Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense

**Creating an Expectation of Service Hearing: Civic Education and Service in Schools | June 20, 2019 | Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Hyde Park, NY**

Mr. Derek Black, Professor of Law, University of South Carolina Law School

Ms. Annie Hsiao, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Discretionary Grants and Support Services, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education

Dr. Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, Director, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), Tufts University

Ms. Ananya Singh, Youth Advisory Council Mentor, National Youth Leadership Council

Mr. Alhassan Susso, 2019 New York State Teacher of the Year, International Community High School

**Creating an Expectation of Service Hearing: An Infrastructure to Serve America | June 20, 2019 | Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Hyde Park, NY**

Brigadier General Derin Durham, U.S. Air Force Reserve, Deputy Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service

Dr. Ben Ho, Professor of Economics, Vassar College

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman, Founder and former Chief Executive Officer, YouthBuild USA

Mr. Drew Train, Co-Founder and President, OBERLAND

Mr. Dakota Wood, Senior Research Fellow, Center for National Defense, Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy, The Heritage Foundation

**W**e thank the following organizations and individuals for providing input to the Commission by submitting a statement for the record. The expertise and insights provided were an invaluable resource for the Commission.

### ORGANIZATIONS

Joint Statement by Partnership for Public Service and the Volcker Alliance

All-Volunteer Force Forum

American Bar Association

Joint Statement by Anabaptist Churches, including Beachy Amish Mennonites, The Brethren Church, Brethren in Christ U.S., Bruderhof, Church of the Brethren, Conservative Mennonite Conference, Evana Network, LMC (Lancaster Mennonite Conference), Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Mission Network, Old Order Amish Church, and Old Order Mennonites

Aspen Cybersecurity Group, The Aspen Institute

Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools

Campus Compact

Center for Civic Education

Center for Military Readiness

Center for Strategic and International Studies, Defending Democratic Institutions Project

Center on Conscience & War

CODEPINK

Coding It Forward

## APPENDIX F: Panelists, Speakers, and Statements Received

The Corps Network  
The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood  
Courage to Resist  
Faith-based Organizations – National Council of Churches,  
Church of the Brethren Office of Peacebuilding and  
Policy, Mennonite Central Committee U.S., National  
Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, Center on Conscience  
& War  
Girl Security  
Golden  
Hope for America  
iCivics, Inc.  
International Peace Research Association  
The Military Law Task Force of the National Lawyers Guild  
National Academy of Public Administration  
National Association of Foster Grandparent Program  
Directors  
National Association of RSVP Directors  
National Coalition to Protect Student Privacy  
National Council on Teacher Quality  
National Treasury Employees Union  
NoDraft.org  
Opportunity Youth United  
Palm Center  
Resisters.info  
SOS America (Service Over Self)  
Stennis Center for Public Service  
Truth in Recruitment  
U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches  
United Way Worldwide  
The War Resisters League  
World BEYOND War  
Young Invincibles  
YouthBuild USA, Inc.  
Youth Service America

### INDIVIDUALS\*\*

Joint statement by  
General Stanley A. McChrystal, USA (Retired), and  
Chairman of the Service Year Alliance;  
The Honorable Robert M. Gates, Co-Chair of the Serve  
America Together campaign and former Secretary of  
Defense to President Barack Obama and President George  
W. Bush;  
The Honorable Condoleezza Rice, member of the Serve  
America Together campaign and former Secretary of State  
and National Security Advisor to President George W.  
Bush;  
Mr. Stephen J. Hadley, Chairman of the U.S. Peace Institute  
and former National Security Advisor and Deputy  
National Security Advisor to President George W. Bush;  
and  
Mr. John M. Bridgeland, Vice Chairman of the Service  
Year Alliance and former Director of the White House  
Domestic Policy Council and Director of the USA  
Freedom Corps under President George W. Bush  
Joint statement by  
Mr. Robert Foust, Mr. Willie McTear, and Mr. Keith  
Rogers, private citizens, Vietnam War conscripts, and  
authors of the forthcoming book *Last Draftees*  
Dr. Nora Bensahel, Distinguished Scholar in Residence,  
School of International Service, American University  
Ms. Rebecca Burgess, Research Fellow and Program  
Manager, Program on American Citizenship, American  
Enterprise Institute  
Ms. Amy Cohen, former Director, Learn and Serve America,  
Corporation for National and Community Service  
The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio, U.S. Representative from  
Oregon  
Major General Dennis Laich, USA (Retired), Executive  
Director, All-Volunteer Force Forum  
Mr. Nik Marda, Civic Digital Fellow and Stanford  
University student  
Mr. Ted McConnell, Executive Director, Campaign for the  
Civic Mission of Schools  
Ms. Martha Minow, 300th Anniversary University Professor,  
Harvard University  
The Honorable Gwen Moore, U.S. Representative from  
Wisconsin  
The Honorable Bill Nelson, former U.S. Senator from  
Florida  
Mr. David L. Nelson, U.S. Marine Corps veteran  
The Honorable Leon Panetta, former Secretary of Defense  
Ms. Meroe Park, former Senior Official, Central Intelligence  
Agency

## APPENDIX F: Panelists, Speakers, and Statements Received

Mr. Bob Reeg, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Peace Through Action

Dr. Amy Rutenberg, Assistant Professor of History and Co-Coordinator of Social Studies Education Program, Iowa State University

Dr. Isabel V. Sawhill, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution

Dr. Kori Schake, Deputy Director General, International Institute for Strategic Studies

Mr. Joel Spangenberg, District of Columbia Local Board Member, Selective Service System

*\*\*Statements for the record submitted by individuals do not reflect the official views of the organization listed. Their title and organization are given for purposes of identification only.*

In 2018, the Commission hosted public meetings and forums in Harrisburg, PA; Denver, CO; Boston, MA; Nashua, NH; Jacksonville, FL; Vinton, IA; Chicago, IL; Waco, TX; Memphis, TN; and Los Angeles, CA. We thank the residents of these communities who joined us, voiced their thoughts, and showed us what service means to them. We would also like to thank the following individuals who served as speakers, special guests, and moderators during our public meetings, public forums, and other events, including the launch of the Commission and the release of the Interim Report.

Ms. Michelle Barth, Northeast Regional Director, Office of U.S. Senator Bill Nelson

Dr. Robert Behn, Senior Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard University, John F. Kennedy School of Government

Mr. Luis Benitez, Director of the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office

The Honorable Brian Birdwell, Texas State Senator

Mr. Earl Bowman, Air National Guard veteran, Volunteer Firefighter, AmeriCorps Alum, and Delaware State Parks Employee

Dr. Rachael Cobb, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Government, Suffolk University

The Honorable Mike Coffman, former U.S. Representative from Colorado

Mr. Harrison Conyers, Military Affairs and Veterans Services Supervisor, City of Jacksonville

Ms. Elizabeth Darling, President and Chief Executive Officer, OneStar Foundation

The Honorable Jim Donchess, Mayor of the City of Nashua

Mr. Jimmy Dorrell, Founder and President, Mission Waco, Mission World

Ms. Leah Eggers, Program Manager of Youth Workforce Development, Youth Guidance; AmeriCorps Alum; and Returned Peace Corps Volunteer

Mr. Fred Eidson, Executive Director, Colorado Federal Executive Board

Ms. Monique Ellington, Chicago Director, Service Year Alliance

Mr. Mario Fedelin, Chief Executive Officer, Changeist

Mr. Bill Filipic, Jacksonville City Coordinator, Team Rubicon

Ms. Tiffany Franck, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader

Mr. Ike Griffith, Special Assistant to the Mayor and Director of the Memphis Office of Youth Services

Ms. Andrea Hill, Director, Volunteer Memphis Within Leadership Memphis

Ms. Susan Hollenkamp, Iowa Director, AmeriCorps 4-H Outreach

Dr. Marc Holzer, Distinguished Professor, Institute for Public Service, Suffolk University

Mr. Mace Huffman, Program Manager, Home Base Iowa

Pastor Sean Jones, Youth Pastor, Antioch Community Church

Mr. Matthew Keels, Veterans Affairs Representative, California State University, Los Angeles

Mr. Cristina Lemos, Recruitment Coordinator, Los Angeles Conservation Corps

Mr. Eduardo Martinez, President of the UPS Foundation, UPS Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer

Ms. Jennifer McCormack, Nashua Public Library Director

Ms. Daphne R. McFerren, Executive Director, the Benjamin L. Hooks Institute for Social Change at the University of Memphis

Ms. Ruthie Moore, Contributor, WVON 1690AM

## APPENDIX F: Panelists, Speakers, and Statements Received

Ms. Vanessa Moore, 2017 Recipient of the Colorado Governor's Service Award and AmeriCorps VISTA Leader

Mr. W. Gerard "Jerry" Oleksiak, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry

Mr. Andrew Perlman, Dean, Suffolk University Law School

The Honorable Jack Reed, U.S. Senator from Rhode Island

Lieutenant General Laura Richardson, Deputy Commanding General of U.S. Army Forces Command

Ms. Shirley Sagawa, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Service Year Alliance

The Honorable Evelyn Sanguinetti, former Lieutenant Governor of Illinois

Mr. Scott Segerstrom, Executive Director, Colorado Youth Corps Association

Ms. Leila Chavez Soliman, Returned Peace Corps Volunteer

Mr. George Sparks, President & CEO, Denver Museum of Nature and Science

Mr. Tyler Stegall, Project Coordinator, Human Resources Divisions, City of Memphis

Dr. John J. "Ski" Sygielski, President, Harrisburg Area Community College, Central Pennsylvania's Community College

Ambassador Francis X. Taylor, President of FXTaylor Associates, LLC

Mr. Tom Temin, Anchor of *The Federal Drive*, Federal News Network

The Honorable John Watson, former Mayor of Vinton, Iowa; U.S. Marine Corps veteran; and Postmaster General

Ms. Abigail Weitkamp, Navy veteran and nursing student, Harrisburg Area Community College

Mr. Matt Wilhelm, AmeriCorps Alum and Director of Old Sol Alliance, Inc.

Mr. Eli Williamson, Co-Founder/Board President, Leave No Veteran Behind

Ms. Kristina Wong, Pentagon and National Security Correspondent, Breitbart

Brigadier General David E. Wood, Director of the Joint Staff, Headquarters for the Pennsylvania National Guard

Mr. Jeffrey Elliott Wood Jr., 2018 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medal Finalist and Supervisory Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation



# APPENDIX G: About the Commissioners

## **The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck, Chairman**



Dr. Heck served three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2011 to 2017, representing the 3rd District of Nevada. During that time, he was a member of the Armed Services Committee, where he chaired the subcommittee on Military Personnel; the Permanent Select Committee on Intelli-

gence, where he chaired the subcommittee on Technical & Tactical Intelligence; and the Committee on Education and the Workforce. From 2004 to 2008, Dr. Heck served in the Nevada State Senate, where he was Vice Chair of the Transportation and Homeland Security Committee, and a member of the Commerce & Labor, Natural Resources, and Human Resources & Education committees. A graduate of the Pennsylvania State University with a degree in health education, he received his medical degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine; he completed his Emergency Medicine Residency at Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Board-certified in emergency medicine, he is a fellow of both the American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians and the American College of Emergency Physicians. He was the Operational Medical Director for the Southern Nevada Health District in Las Vegas, Nevada, and served as the Medical Director for the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Dr. Heck was the founder and President of Specialized Medical Operations, Inc., a corporation dedicated to providing cutting-edge emergency response training, consulting, and operational support to law enforcement, emergency services, military special operations, and

business and industry. From 1998 to 2003, Dr. Heck was the Medical Director of the Casualty Care Research Center of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences in Bethesda, Maryland. An active member of the United States Army Reserve, Dr. Heck holds the rank of Brigadier General and is currently assigned as the Commanding General, 807th Medical Command. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College with a master's in strategic studies. Dr. Heck currently serves as President of RedRock Government Relations, where he oversees a team that provides insightful and innovative strategic guidance to help clients achieve their public policy goals.

## **The Honorable Mark Gearan, Vice Chair for National and Public Service**



Mr. Gearan's career has included leadership roles in public service and higher education. Mr. Gearan is currently the Director of the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Previously, he served as President of Hobart and William Smith Colleges for 18 years. In government he has served as the Director of the Peace Corps, White House Director of Communications, and Deputy Chief of Staff. Mr. Gearan has been engaged in national and international service organizations, including as Chair of the Corporation for National and Community Service and board member for Points of Light, Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and the Leadership Council for the Franklin Project. In higher education, he has served as Chair of the Annapolis Group, Chair of Campus Compact, and Chair of the Talloires Network, as well as board member of the National Association of Independent Colleges and the New York State Council of Independent Colleges. He earned his bachelor's degree in

government *cum laude* from Harvard University and his law degree from Georgetown University. He is the recipient of 13 honorary degrees.

### **The Honorable Debra Wada, Vice Chair for Military Service**



Ms. Wada currently serves as CEO of Senshi Ame Advisors LLC, a government consulting firm that provides strategic advice to corporations and organizations seeking to engage with Congress and the Department of Defense. From 2014 to 2017, Ms. Wada served as the Assistant Secretary of Man-

power and Reserve Affairs for the United States Army. As Assistant Secretary, she led the effective and efficient management of Army military and civilian personnel, training, and readiness policies for over 1.2 million soldiers and Army civilians. She also oversaw morale, welfare, and recreation programs, including health care, that supported over 2 million Army families. Prior to her appointment by President Obama, Ms. Wada spent over 25 years in Congress, including more than a decade of experience on the House Armed Services Committee, where she served as Deputy Staff Director, Lead Military Personnel Staff, and professional staff member. As Deputy Staff Director, she developed and executed the national security objectives of the Committee and directed the day-to-day operations and overall management of 74 professional and administrative personnel. As Lead Staff and professional staff member, Ms. Wada had responsibility for military personnel programs and policies. She graduated from Drake University with a bachelor's degree in economics and political science.

### **Mr. Edward Allard, III**



Mr. Allard served in the Obama Administration as the Deputy Director/Chief Operating Officer of the Selective Service System from 2010 to 2017. He had primary managerial responsibilities for every aspect of the Selective Service System, including

managing the budget, expanding young men's registration, improving employee recruitment and involvement, and working closely with Congress. He created and chaired many managerial and behavioral improvement projects to ensure effective and efficient agency mission accomplishment. He served in the Clinton Administration as the Energy Department's Director of the Office of Performance Excellence and as the Advisor to the Secretary of Defense. He served 10 years in the Marines, resigning as a Captain in 1973. For 25 years, Mr. Allard was the President/CEO of Allard & Associates, a management and performance improvement consulting firm, and provided consultations to Fortune 500 and other nonprofit and government organizations, nationally and internationally. He served 16 years in nonprofits: as President of the Roybal Foundation to provide scholarships to health care students practicing in low-income communities; as Vice President of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce; and as an executive with United Way Worldwide, locally and nationally. In 1984, Mr. Allard earned a master's of business administration from the University of Miami.

### **Mr. Steven Barney**



Mr. Barney served as the General Counsel to the Committee on Armed Services in the U.S. Senate, supporting 26 elected U.S. Senators making up the full committee and six subcommittees to plan, develop, draft, and ensure congressional passage of the annual National Defense Authorization

Act. He was the lead professional staff member responsible for defense personnel programs, including support for the active force of over 1.3 million service members. Mr. Barney also served for over 22 years in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the U.S. Navy, leading military and civilian legal professionals and staff at sea and ashore. During that service, he worked as the Inspector General of the Naval Legal Service Command, and he was the Fleet Judge Advocate for the U.S. Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk and the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Japan. He retired in the grade of Captain in 2013. He received his law degree from Suffolk University Law

## APPENDIX G: About the Commissioners

School, his bachelor's degree from Saint Michael's College, and his master's from the U.S. Naval War College.

### **The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson**



Dr. Davidson is the president of Metropolitan State University of Denver, Colorado's third-largest public university. Prior to her appointment in 2017, Davidson served as the 32nd Undersecretary of the U.S. Navy. Her appointment as Navy "under" followed nearly 30 years of academic, civilian,

and military service. She has taught national security policy and political science at Georgetown University, George Mason University, and Davidson College, and was a senior fellow for defense policy at the Council on Foreign Relations, where she is a lifetime member. She began her career as an Air Force officer and cargo pilot, and was the first woman to fly the branch's tactical C-130. Davidson's various honors include "HillVets Top 100 Most Influential Veterans," University of South Carolina Distinguished Alumna, Secretary of the Navy Medal for Distinguished Public Service, Secretary of Defense Medal for Outstanding Public Service, Girl Scouts of Colorado 2018 "Woman of Distinction" and the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce 2019 "Top 25 Most Powerful Women in Business."

### **The Honorable Avril Haines**



Ms. Haines is the Deputy Director of Columbia World Projects at Columbia University, a Senior Fellow at the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, a Nonresident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and a principal at WestExec Advisors.

During the Obama Administration, Ms. Haines served as Assistant to the President and Principal Deputy National Security Advisor. She also served as the Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and Legal Advisor to the National Security Council. Ms. Haines received her bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Chicago, received a

law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, and founded and ran a bookstore café for five years while engaged in community service in Baltimore. She serves on a number of boards and advisory groups, including the Nuclear Threat Initiative's Bio Advisory Group, the Board of Trustees for the Vodafone Foundation, and the Refugees International Advisory Council.

### **Ms. Jeanette James**



Ms. James retired in April 2017 after 13 years of service on the House Armed Services Committee culminating as the Lead Staff Member on the Military Personnel Subcommittee. During her time on the Committee, she focused on the Defense Health Program and the Military Health System, the

integration of women into previously closed military occupational specialties, family programs, sexual assault and sexual harassment, Arlington National Cemetery, and Wounded Warrior programs. Prior to her joining the Committee, Ms. James served 31 years in the Army as a Nurse Corps officer, with assignments ranging from clinical nursing to executive leadership. Ms. James is a graduate of several military and health care leadership development programs, including the Army Management Staff College, the Interagency Institute for Federal Health Care Executives, and the Army War College, where she earned a master's in strategic studies. She received a bachelor's degree in nursing from Syracuse University in 1975 and earned a master's in nursing administration from New York University in 1986.

### **Mr. Alan Khazei**



Mr. Khazei is a social entrepreneur and service movement leader who has pioneered ways to empower people to make a difference. Mr. Khazei is the co-founder and former CEO of City Year, which unites young adults, ages 17 to 24, from all backgrounds, for an intensive year of full-time

community service, mentoring, tutoring, and educating



children. City Year served as the model for President Clinton's AmeriCorps program. He is also the founder of Be The Change, Inc., which developed three campaigns: Opportunity Nation, to promote social mobility and expand opportunity; Got Your 6, to empower post-9/11 veterans to lead a resurgence of community; and Service Year Alliance, to promote a year of national service as a civic rite of passage. Mr. Khazei is also the founder of Democracy Entrepreneurs, which nurtures the exciting new movement of democracy entrepreneurship focused on building a more inclusive, participatory, and just democracy. Mr. Khazei is the author of *Big Citizenship: How Pragmatic Idealism Can Bring Out the Best in America*. Mr. Khazei is married to Vanessa Kirsch, also a social entrepreneur, who co-founded Public Allies and is the founder and CEO of New Profit, Inc. They have two children and live in Brookline, Massachusetts.

### Mr. Thomas Kilgannon



Mr. Kilgannon is the President of Freedom Alliance, a charitable organization that honors and supports America's Armed Forces and advocates for a strong national defense. Under his leadership, the organization helps service members and military families overcome the wounds of war by providing recreational rehabilitation, all-terrain wheelchairs, marriage retreats, and mortgage-free homes to injured veterans. Mr. Kilgannon has directed Freedom Alliance to award millions of dollars in college scholarships to the sons and daughters of America's fallen and wounded military heroes. He also created the Service to America Award, which pays tribute to individuals who give their time and talent in the service of others. He began his career as a Deputy Press Secretary for Pat Buchanan's 1992 presidential campaign and later worked in the U.S. House of Representatives as a top aide to Congressman Mark Neumann of Wisconsin. Mr. Kilgannon is a graduate of New York University, a columnist, and the author of *Diplomatic Divorce: Why America Should End Its Love Affair with the United Nations*.

### Ms. Shawn Skelly



Ms. Skelly served in the Obama Administration as the Director of the Office of the Executive Secretariat at the U.S. Department of Transportation, after serving as Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics at the Department of Defense, as coordinator of the Department's Warfighter Senior Integration Group. In that role, she was responsible for facilitating the Department's response to the most urgent and unique support requirements of Combatant Commanders, including the Counter Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant Campaign and operations in Afghanistan. Ms. Skelly served on active duty in the U.S. Navy for 20 years as a Naval Flight Officer, retiring with the rank of Commander. Prior to joining the Obama Administration in 2013, she spent five years in industry with ITT Exelis. Ms. Skelly received a bachelor's degree in history from the University of South Carolina and a master's degree in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College.



# APPENDIX H: Commission Staff

**T**he Commission is pleased to acknowledge the individuals who made this report possible. The passion and dedication of the staff was critical to the successful completion of the Commission's work. Further, the staff have served as a source of inspiration as the Commission examined the many ways individuals serve through military, national, and public service across the country and around the world.

## **Government Affairs and External Relations**

Mr. Sandy Scott, Director of Government Affairs and External Relations  
Mr. Jeffrey McNichols, Deputy Director of Government Affairs and External Relations  
Ms. Cristina Flores, Public Affairs Officer  
Ms. Morgan Levey, External Relations Manager  
Ms. Katie McSheffrey, Government Affairs Officer  
Ms. Mary Reding, Associate Director of External Relations  
Ms. Erin Schneider, Public Affairs Officer  
Ms. Keri Lowry, Director of Government Affairs and External Relations (Former)

## **Office of the General Counsel**

Mr. Paul Lekas, General Counsel  
Ms. Rachel Rikleen, Deputy General Counsel  
Ms. Eleanor Magers Vuono, Senior Legal Counsel  
Ms. Isvari Mohan Maranwe, Attorney Advisor  
Mr. Sam Moss, Attorney Advisor  
Ms. Sandra Strokoff, Senior Legislative Counsel

## **Operations**

Mr. Peter Morgan, Director of Operations  
Ms. Yolanda M. Hands, Deputy Director of Operations  
Lieutenant Colonel Mark Austin, U.S. Army (Detailee)  
Ms. Jamie Hammon, Budget Analyst  
Mr. Bradley Miller, Senior IT Specialist (Contractor)  
Ms. Ashley Shrader, Office Administrator  
Ms. Sarah Thompson, Operations Analyst  
Ms. Chantel Whiting, Chief Records Manager  
Mr. Gregory Brinsfield, Director of Operations (Former)

## **Research, Analysis, and Writing**

Dr. Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis  
Ms. Annie Rorem, Deputy Director of Research and Analysis  
Mr. Judson Crane, Associate Director of Research and Analysis – National Mobilization  
Mr. Brian Collins, Team Lead – Public Service  
Mr. John J. Lira, Team Lead – National Service  
Ms. Amy Schafer, Team Lead – Military Service  
Mr. Mark Enriquez, Policy Analyst  
Mr. Timothy Joslyn, Policy Analyst  
Mr. Omer Kaufman, Policy Analyst  
Mr. Colin Neafsey, Policy Analyst  
Ms. Tara Razjouyan, Policy Analyst  
Ms. Kareen Sanchez, Policy Analyst  
Mr. Andrew Swick, Policy Analyst  
Dr. Alice Falk, Editor (Contractor)  
Ms. Laurel Prucha Moran, Graphic Designer (Contractor)

## **Executive Director**

Mr. Kent Abernathy (Former)

## **Interns**

We offer our sincere thanks to Brittany Abuhoff, Aanjali Anderson, Thomas Bailey, Danielle Beirman, Joseph Byrum, Todd Corbin, Lauren Gagliardone, Zachary Ham, Alex Kilander, Jamie Layne, Robert Lee, Joshua Margulies, Janani Mohan, Anna Polise, Dania Revollo, Gabriella Ruff, Rachel Smart, Alex Weiskopft, Olivia Worley, and Olivia Zalecki.

# APPENDIX I:

## Authorizing Legislation and Presidential Guidance

*The Commission's authorizing legislation is Subtitle F of Title V of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Pub. L. 114-328), as amended by section 594 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Pub. L. 115-232).*

### **Subtitle F—National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service**

#### **SEC. 551. PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of this subtitle is to establish the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service to—

- (1) conduct a review of the military selective service process (commonly referred to as “the draft”); and
- (2) consider methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service in order to address national security and other public service needs of the Nation.

(b) **SCOPE OF REVIEW.**—In order to provide the fullest understanding of the matters required under the review under subsection (a), the Commission shall consider—

- (1) the need for a military selective service process, including the continuing need for a mechanism to draft large numbers of replacement combat troops;
- (2) means by which to foster a greater attitude and ethos of service among United States youth, including an increased propensity for military service;
- (3) the feasibility and advisability of modifying the military selective service process in order to obtain for military, national, and public service individuals with skills (such as medical, dental, and nursing skills, language skills, cyber skills, and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) skills) for which the Nation has a critical need, without regard to age or sex; and
- (4) the feasibility and advisability of including in the military selective service process, as so modified, an eligibility or entitlement for the receipt of one or more Federal benefits (such as educational benefits, subsidized or secured student loans, grants or hiring preferences) specified by the Commission for purposes of the review.

(c) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this subtitle:

- (1) The term “military service” means active service (as that term is defined in subsection (d)(3) of section 101 of title 10, United States Code) or active status (as that term is defined in subsection (d)(4) of such section) in one of the uniformed services (as that term is defined in subsection (a)(5) of such section).

## APPENDIX I: Authorizing Legislation and Presidential Guidance

(2) The term “public service” means civilian employment in Federal, State, Tribal, or local government in a field in which the Nation and the public have critical needs.

(3) The term “national service” means civilian participation in any non-governmental capacity, including with private for-profit organizations and non-profit organizations (including with appropriate faith-based organizations), that pursues and enhances the common good and meets the needs of communities, the States, or the Nation in sectors related to security, health, care for the elderly, and other areas considered appropriate by the Commission for purposes of this subtitle.

(4) The term “establishment date” means September 19, 2017.

### **SEC. 552. PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PURPOSE AND UTILITY OF REGISTRATION SYSTEM UNDER MILITARY SELECTIVE SERVICE ACT.**

(a) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—To assist the Commission in carrying out its duties under this subtitle, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) submit, not later than July 1, 2017, to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives and to the Commission a report on the current and future need for a centralized registration system under the Military Selective Service Act (50 U.S.C. 3801 et seq.); and

(2) provide a briefing on the results of the report.

(b) **ELEMENTS OF REPORT.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A detailed analysis of the current benefits derived, both directly and indirectly, from the Military Selective Service System, including—

(A) the extent to which mandatory registration benefits military recruiting;

(B) the extent to which a national registration capability serves as a deterrent to potential enemies of the United States; and

(C) the extent to which expanding registration to include women would impact these benefits.

(2) An analysis of the functions currently performed by the Selective Service System that would be assumed by the Department of Defense in the absence of a national registration capability.

(3) An analysis of the systems, manpower, and facilities that would be needed by the Department to physically mobilize inductees in the absence of the Selective Service System.

(4) An analysis of the feasibility and utility of eliminating the current focus on mass mobilization of primarily combat troops in favor of a system that focuses on mobilization of all military occupational specialties, and the extent to which such a change would impact the need for both male and female inductees.

(5) A detailed analysis of the Department’s personnel needs in the event of an emergency requiring mass mobilization, including—

(A) a detailed timeline, along with the factors considered in arriving at this timeline, of when the Department would require—

(i) the first inductees to report for service;

## APPENDIX I: Authorizing Legislation and Presidential Guidance

- (ii) the first 100,000 inductees to report for service; and
- (iii) the first medical personnel to report for service; and
- (B) an analysis of any additional critical skills that would be needed in the event of a national emergency, and a timeline for when the Department would require the first inductees to report for service.
- (6) A list of the assumptions used by the Department when conducting its analysis in preparing the report.
- (c) **COMPTRROLLER GENERAL REVIEW.**—Not later than December 1, 2017, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives and to the Commission a review of the procedures used by the Department of Defense in evaluating selective service requirements.

### **SEC. 553. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established in the executive branch an independent commission to be known as the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (in this subtitle referred to as the “Commission”). The Commission shall be considered an independent establishment of the Federal Government as defined by section 104 of title 5, United States Code, and a temporary organization under section 3161 of such title.

(b) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.**—The Commission shall be composed of 11 members appointed as follows:

- (A) The President shall appoint three members.
- (B) The Majority Leader of the Senate shall appoint one member.
- (C) The Minority Leader of the Senate shall appoint one member.
- (D) The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member.
- (E) The Minority Leader of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member.
- (F) The Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate shall appoint one member.
- (G) The ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate shall appoint one member.
- (H) The Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member.
- (I) The ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member.

(2) **DEADLINE FOR APPOINTMENT.**—Members shall be appointed to the Commission under paragraph (1) not later than 90 days after the Commission establishment date.

(3) **EFFECT OF LACK OF APPOINTMENT BY APPOINTMENT DATE.**—If one or more appointments under subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1) is not made by the appointment date specified in paragraph (2), the authority to make such appointment or appointments shall expire, and the number



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of members of the Commission shall be reduced by the number equal to the number of appointments so not made. If an appointment under subparagraph (B), (C), (D), (E), (F), (G), (H), or (I) of paragraph (1) is not made by the appointment date specified in paragraph (2), the authority to make an appointment under such subparagraph shall expire, and the number of members of the Commission shall be reduced by the number equal to the number otherwise appointable under such subparagraph.

(c) CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.—The Commission shall elect a Chair and Vice Chair from among its members.

(d) TERMS.—Members shall be appointed for the life of the Commission. A vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

(e) STATUS AS FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—Notwithstanding the requirements of section 2105 of title 5, United States Code, including the required supervision under subsection (a)(3) of such section, the members of the Commission shall be deemed to be Federal employees.

(f) PAY FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each member, other than the Chair, of the Commission shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay payable for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which the member is engaged in the actual performance of duties vested in the Commission.

(2) CHAIR.—The Chair of the Commission shall be paid at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay payable for level III of the Executive Schedule under section 5314, of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which the member is engaged in the actual performance of duties vested in the Commission.

(g) USE OF GOVERNMENT INFORMATION.—The Commission may secure directly from any department or agency of the Federal Government such information as the Commission considers necessary to carry out its duties. Upon such request of the chair of the Commission, the head of such department or agency shall furnish such information to the Commission.

(h) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as departments and agencies of the United States.

(i) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services, goods, and property from non-Federal entities for the purposes of aiding and facilitating the work of the Commission. The authority in this subsection does not extend to gifts of money.

(j) PERSONAL SERVICES.—

(1) AUTHORITY TO PROCURE.—The Commission may—

(A) procure the services of experts or consultants (or of organizations of experts or consultants) in accordance with the provisions of section 3109 of title 5, United States Code; and

(B) pay in connection with such services travel expenses of individuals, including transportation and per diem in lieu of subsistence, while such individuals are traveling from their homes or places of business to duty stations.

(2) LIMITATION.—The total number of experts or consultants procured pursuant to paragraph (1) may not exceed five experts or consultants.

(3) MAXIMUM DAILY PAY RATES.—The daily rate paid an expert or consultant procured pursuant to paragraph (1) may not exceed the daily rate paid a person occupying a position at level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

(k) FUNDING.—Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated by this Act for fiscal year 2017 for the Department of Defense, up to \$15,000,000 shall be made available to the Commission to carry out its duties under this subtitle. Funds made available to the Commission under the preceding sentence shall remain available until expended.

#### **SEC. 554. COMMISSION HEARINGS AND MEETINGS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall conduct hearings on the recommendations it is taking under consideration. Any such hearing, except a hearing in which classified information is to be considered, shall be open to the public. Any hearing open to the public shall be announced on a Federal website at least 14 days in advance. For all hearings open to the public, the Commission shall release an agenda and a listing of materials relevant to the topics to be discussed. The Commission is authorized and encouraged to hold hearings and meetings in various locations throughout the country to provide maximum opportunity for public comment and participation in the Commission's execution of its duties.

(b) MEETINGS.—

(1) INITIAL MEETING.—The Commission shall hold its initial meeting not later than 30 days after the date as of which all members have been appointed.

(2) SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS.—After its initial meeting, the Commission shall meet upon the call of the chair or a majority of its members.

(3) PUBLIC MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the Commission shall be held in public unless any member objects or classified information is to be considered.

(c) QUORUM.—Six members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hearings or meetings.

(d) PUBLIC COMMENTS.—

(1) SOLICITATION.—The Commission shall seek written comments from the general public and interested parties on matters of the Commission's review under this subtitle. Comments shall be requested through a solicitation in the Federal Register and announcement on the Internet website of the Commission.

(2) PERIOD FOR SUBMITTAL.—The period for the submittal of comments pursuant to the solicitation under paragraph (1) shall end not earlier than 30 days after the date of the solicitation and shall end on or before the date on which recommendations are transmitted to the Commission under section 555(d).

(3) USE BY COMMISSION.—The Commission shall consider the comments submitted under this subsection when developing its recommendations.

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(e) **SPACE FOR USE OF COMMISSION.**—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of General Services, in consultation with the Secretary, shall identify and make available suitable excess space within the Federal space inventory to house the operations of the Commission. If the Administrator is not able to make such suitable excess space available within such 90-day period, the Commission may lease space to the extent the funds are available.

(f) **CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.**—The Commission may acquire administrative supplies and equipment for Commission use to the extent funds are available.

### **SEC. 555. PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURE FOR COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS.**

(a) **CONTEXT OF COMMISSION REVIEW.**—The Commission shall—

- (1) conduct a review of the military selective service process; and
- (2) consider methods to increase participation in military, national, and public service opportunities to address national security and other public service needs of the Nation.

(b) **DEVELOPMENT OF COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS.**—The Commission shall develop recommendations on the matters subject to its review under subsection (a) that are consistent with the principles established by the President under subsection (c).

(c) **PRESIDENTIAL PRINCIPLES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than three months after the Commission establishment date, the President shall establish and transmit to the Commission and Congress principles for reform of the military selective service process, including means by which to best acquire for the Nation skills necessary to meet the military, national, and public service requirements of the Nation in connection with that process.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The principles required under this subsection shall address the following:

(A) Whether, in light of the current and predicted global security environment and the changing nature of warfare, there continues to be a continuous or potential need for a military selective service process designed to produce large numbers of combat members of the Armed Forces, and if so, whether such a system should include mandatory registration by all citizens and residents, regardless of sex.

(B) The need, and how best to meet the need, of the Nation, the military, the Federal civilian sector, and the private sector (including the non-profit sector) for individuals possessing critical skills and abilities, and how best to employ individuals possessing those skills and abilities for military, national, or public service.

(C) How to foster within the Nation, particularly among United States youth, an increased sense of service and civic responsibility in order to enhance the acquisition by the Nation of critically needed skills through education and training, and how best to acquire those skills for military, national, or public service.

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(D) How to increase a propensity among United States youth for service in the military, or alternatively in national or public service, including how to increase the pool of qualified applicants for military service.

(E) The need in Government, including the military, and in the civilian sector to increase interest, education, and employment in certain critical fields, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), national security, cyber, linguistics and foreign language, education, health care, and the medical professions.

(F) How military, national, and public service may be incentivized, including through educational benefits, grants, federally-insured loans, Federal or State hiring preferences, or other mechanisms that the President considers appropriate.

(G) Any other matters the President considers appropriate for purposes of this subtitle.

(d) **CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than seven months after the Commission establishment date, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Labor, and such other Government officials, and such experts, as the President shall designate for purposes of this subsection shall jointly transmit to the Commission and Congress recommendations for the reform of the military selective service process and military, national, and public service in connection with that process.

(e) **COMMISSION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**—

(1) **REPORT.**—Not later than 30 months after the Commission establishment date, the Commission shall transmit to the President and Congress a report containing the findings and conclusions of the Commission, together with the recommendations of the Commission regarding the matters reviewed by the Commission pursuant to this subtitle. The Commission shall include in the report legislative language and recommendations for administrative action to implement the recommendations of the Commission. The findings and conclusions in the report shall be based on the review and analysis by the Commission of the recommendations made under subsection (d).

(2) **REQUIREMENT FOR APPROVAL.**—The recommendations of the Commission must be approved by at least five members of the Commission before the recommendations may be transmitted to the President and Congress under paragraph (1).

(3) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**—The Commission shall publish a copy of the report required by paragraph (1) on an Internet website available to the public on the same date on which it transmits that report to the President and Congress under that paragraph.

(4) **PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT.**—For purposes of developing its recommendations, the information collection of the Commission may be treated as a pilot project under section 3505(a) of title 44, United States Code. In addition, the Commission shall not be subject to the requirements of section 3506(c)(2)(A) of such title.



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(f) **JUDICIAL REVIEW PRECLUDED.**—Actions under this section of the President, the officials specified or designated under subsection (d), and the Commission shall not be subject to judicial review.

### **SEC. 556. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND STAFF.**

(a) **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.**—The Commission shall appoint and fix the rate of basic pay for an Executive Director in accordance with section 3161 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) **STAFF.**—Subject to subsections (c) and (d), the Executive Director, with the approval of the Commission, may appoint and fix the rate of basic pay for additional personnel as staff of the Commission in accordance with section 3161 of title 5, United States Code.

(c) **LIMITATIONS ON STAFF.**—

(1) **NUMBER OF DETAILEES FROM EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS.**—Not more than one-third of the personnel employed by or detailed to the Commission may be on detail from the Department of Defense and other executive branch departments.

(2) **PRIOR DUTIES WITHIN EXECUTIVE BRANCH.**—A person may not be detailed from the Department of Defense or other executive branch department to the Commission if, in the year before the detail is to begin, that person participated personally and substantially in any matter concerning the preparation of recommendations for the military selective service process and military and public service in connection with that process.

(d) **LIMITATIONS ON PERFORMANCE REVIEWS.**—No member of the uniformed services, and no officer or employee of the Department of Defense or other executive branch department (other than a member of the uniformed services or officer or employee who is detailed to the Commission), may—

(1) prepare any report concerning the effectiveness, fitness, or efficiency of the performance of the staff of the Commission or any person detailed to that staff;

(2) review the preparation of such a report (other than for administrative accuracy); or

(3) approve or disapprove such a report.

### **SEC. 557. TERMINATION OF COMMISSION.**

Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, the Commission shall terminate not later than 36 months after the Commission establishment date.

**THE WHITE HOUSE**

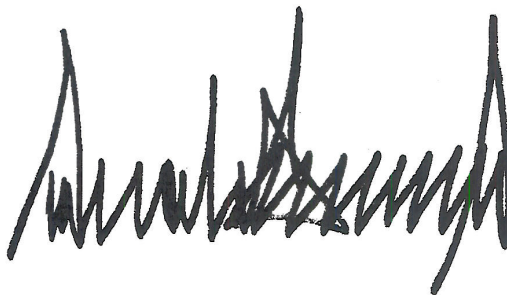
WASHINGTON

April 3, 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL,  
AND PUBLIC SERVICE

SUBJECT: Principles for Reforming the Military Selective  
Service Process

I am forwarding to you the attached 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be Donald Trump's signature, located at the bottom center of the page.

### **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.



# APPENDIX J:

## List of Terms

<b>ASP</b>	Alternative Service Program	<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>ASU</b>	Arizona State University	<b>FERS</b>	Federal Employees Retirement System
<b>ASVAB</b>	Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery	<b>FFSC</b>	Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center
<b>ASVAB CEP</b>	Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Career Exploration Program	<b>FGP</b>	Foster Grandparent Program
<b>C3</b>	College, Career, and Civic Life	<b>FRED</b>	Federal Reserve Economic Data
<b>CEO</b>	chief executive officer	<b>FTE</b>	full-time equivalent
<b>CFR</b>	Code of Federal Regulations	<b>FY</b>	fiscal year
<b>CHCO</b>	chief human capital officer	<b>GAO</b>	Government Accountability Office
<b>CIO</b>	chief information officer	<b>GED</b>	General Education Development
<b>CLDP</b>	Cyber Leader Development Program	<b>GS</b>	General Schedule
<b>CNCS</b>	Corporation for National and Community Service	<b>HR</b>	human resources
<b>CRS</b>	Congressional Research Service	<b>IAA</b>	interagency agreement
<b>DC</b>	District of Columbia	<b>IHE</b>	institution of higher education
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Homeland Security	<b>IRR</b>	Individual Ready Reserve
<b>DoD</b>	Department of Defense	<b>IT</b>	information technology
<b>DOL</b>	Department of Labor	<b>JAMRS</b>	Joint Advertising, Market Research and Studies
<b>DVSA</b>	Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973	<b>JROTC</b>	Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps
<b>EOP</b>	Executive Office of the President	<b>LEA</b>	local educational agency
<b>ESEA</b>	Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965	<b>LGBTQ</b>	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer
<b>FAFSA</b>	Free Application for Federal Student Aid	<b>LLC</b>	limited liability company
		<b>MCOTEA</b>	Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity
		<b>MHYC</b>	Mile High Youth Corps

<b>MSSA</b>	Military Selective Service Act of 1948	<b>OUSD (P&amp;R)</b>	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
<b>NAEP</b>	National Assessment of Educational Progress	<b>PMF</b>	Presidential Management Fellows
<b>NAPA</b>	National Academy of Public Administration	<b>Pub L.</b>	Public Law
<b>NARA</b>	National Archives and Records Administration	<b>QDR</b>	Quadrennial Defense Review
<b>NASA</b>	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	<b>ROTC</b>	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
<b>NCC</b>	noncompetitive conversion	<b>RPCV</b>	Returned Peace Corps Volunteer
<b>NCCC</b>	National Civilian Community Corps	<b>RSVP</b>	Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
<b>NCE</b>	noncompetitive eligibility	<b>SEA</b>	State educational agency
<b>NCES</b>	National Center for Education Statistics	<b>SES</b>	Senior Executive Service
<b>NCSA</b>	National and Community Service Act of 1990	<b>SPR</b>	strategic portfolio review
<b>NDAA</b>	National Defense Authorization Act	<b>SSS</b>	Selective Service System
<b>NDS</b>	National Defense Strategy	<b>STEM</b>	science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
<b>NGSC</b>	Next Generation Service Corps	<b>TA</b>	tuition assistance
<b>NSA</b>	National Security Agency	<b>TAH</b>	Teaching American History
<b>NSC</b>	National Security Council	<b>TAP</b>	Transition Assistance Program
<b>OMB</b>	Office of Management and Budget	<b>TSP</b>	Thrift Savings Plan
<b>OPA</b>	Office of People Analytics	<b>U.S.C.</b>	U.S. Code
<b>OPM</b>	Office of Personnel Management	<b>VA</b>	Department of Veterans Affairs
		<b>VISTA</b>	Volunteers in Service to America
		<b>VRA</b>	Veterans Recruitment Appointment

# APPENDIX K:

## Endnotes

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