

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Legislative Affairs

Series/Staff Member: Subject Files

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 17133

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Corporation for National Service

Stack:

S

Row:

26

Section:

3

Shelf:

5

Position:

1

Corporation for National Service

Approps issuer

- ① Cap on nat'l non profit
- ② Nat'l Civ. Conty Corps ~~est~~ - 3 years
level funded.
also lift cap
- ③ more \$ for program admin

MEMORANDUM

To: Larry Stein, Janet Murguia
Office of Legislative Affairs, The White House

From: Gene Sofer, Mark Isaac
Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs,
Corporation for National Service

Date: December 9, 1998

Re: Major Legislation Affecting the Corporation in 1999

Thank you for this opportunity to apprise you of major legislation affecting the Corporation for National Service in 1999.

Reauthorization Legislation

As you know, the Corporation has been operating without an authorization since September 1996. Being reauthorized is a major goal of ours. During the 105th Congress, a bipartisan reauthorization measure was introduced in the House and gathered 61 cosponsors, but we were not able to gain agreement on a bipartisan bill in the Senate. This failure stemmed in part from the reluctance of some Committee members to move forward with a reauthorization of "the President's pet program" during an election year and in part from concerns expressed by groups representing our senior programs -- Foster Grandparents, RSVP, and Senior Companions -- and some public employee unions about some of the specific proposals contained in the bill.

In anticipation of introducing a reauthorization bill in the 106th Congress, we have consulted with key Senators, including Senator Kennedy and Senator Jeffords, and House members, including Rep. Andrews, Roemer, and Shays. They have developed, with our help, a streamlined measure designed to be as noncontroversial as possible. In fact, it is virtually a straightforward renewal of existing programs.

Senator Kennedy's office intends to introduce this new reauthorization bill with bipartisan support at the beginning of the next session and to seek quick action on the bill by the Labor and Human Resources Committee in order to get ahead of the impending reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The Corporation has also consulted with OMB about this approach. There is a consensus emerging that passing a reauthorization measure transcends any of the specific provisions of the bill we propose to drop. Therefore, we have agreed to assist the Hill in

pushing this streamlined bill forward. Because of the composition of the House Education and Workforce Committee, we continue to believe that any successful effort to move reauthorization legislation in the 106th Congress will probably involve action in the Senate first, and attaching the Senate-passed legislation to a must-pass vehicle in the House.

We will keep you fully apprised of developments related to this new reauthorization proposal, and we would appreciate help during this process. In the past, Jeff Forbes served as our point of contact. Since Jeff has left, we would appreciate it if you would designate a new point person with whom we could work on a regular basis.

Issues Likely to be Raised in Relation to the Corporation

We anticipate that other issues about the Corporation may also be raised in the coming year. Most of these issues will be raised by Senator Grassley, who has taken a strong role in oversight of the Corporation, or Representative Hoekstra, who is chair of the relevant House oversight subcommittee. Both of these offices have made clear that they will be stepping up charges and accusations leveled against the Corporation in the coming months. They have made a series of major requests for information and have asked GAO to conduct a detailed investigation of the Corporation's costs, management, personnel, and benefits. In addition, because the Republican leadership is taking the Teamsters investigation out of the hands of Rep. Hoekstra, he will have more time to devote to criticizing the Corporation. The Corporation is preparing vigorously to refute these criticisms. The key issues that we expect to be prominent in the near future are:

- **Auditability** – The Corporation has made strong progress toward full auditability, but still has some more work to do in order to achieve a clean audit. Congressional critics will charge that the progress is not sufficient.
- **Staffing and Personnel** – Congressional critics are increasingly claiming that the Corporation is a bloated bureaucracy. These charges have no merit. In fact, the infrastructure for AmeriCorps is very lean. While it is true that the Corporation inherited a larger administrative structure from the old ACTION agency, we have administered a much larger budget and workload in recent years with little growth in personnel. Also, there is no appetite on the Hill for eliminating the dual delivery system in the States, in which AmeriCorps funds are administered by governor-appointed State Commissions and AmeriCorps*VISTA and Senior Corps programs are administered by separate state program offices.
- **Cost-per-Member** – AmeriCorps' critics have long distorted the federal costs of AmeriCorps members, claiming that it is \$27,000. This misinformation continues to be circulated despite a successful agreement with Senator Grassley to reduce the Corporation's average cost-per-member from \$18,000 several years ago to \$16,000 this year and \$15,000 next year. The Corporation is ahead of schedule in meeting these goals.

- **Needle Exchange and Condom Distribution** – Congressional critics recently received “information” from unspecified outside organizations claiming that the Corporation is involved in transportation of individuals to and from abortion clinics, needle exchange programs, and condom distribution. Because of the devolution of authority in AmeriCorps, in which most of the funds are sent to Governor-appointed State Commissions, which in turn place members in local non-profits, it is impossible for the Corporation to track the precise duties of every AmeriCorps member. Nevertheless, the Corporation conducted a review of these allegations and made clear to Senator Grassley’s office that there is no instance of a grant primarily devoted to any of these purposes.

Moreover, this review revealed no instance of transportation provided to abortion clinics. However, the review did reveal: 1) two AmeriCorps members in one program who are peripherally and infrequently involved in needle exchange as part of a program providing health care to the homeless; and 125 AmeriCorps members in 12 programs who are peripherally and infrequently involved in condom distribution, primarily as part of HIV/AIDS prevention work. Although the Corporation is not in any way legally restricted from supporting these activities, and the activities are negligible in scope, this information may be distorted and publicized by either Members of Congress or outside groups bent on tarnishing our image.

Appropriations

The Corporation has fared well in overall dollar amounts in the Appropriations process. However, several “micro” issues of crucial importance to our future remain unsolved from the past year. For example, in order to put to rest concerns about the Corporation’s auditability and financial management, the Corporation needs additional program administration funding to improve its financial and management systems. We are unable to transfer or reprogram funds for these purposes because of statutory constraints on our various funding streams. These caps should be lifted so that we may have the flexibility to respond to pressing needs that develop during each program year. Although much-appreciated intervention by Martha Foley resulted in a transfer of \$1.5 million from other accounts to our program administration account, this amount is not sufficient to solve the outstanding problems.

In addition, the Corporation soon may face a decision to close one of the five AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) campuses unless additional appropriations are made available for this excellent residential AmeriCorps program. Further, in order to manage the Corporation effectively, the current Congressionally-imposed caps on the amount of grants devoted to national nonprofits (limiting grants to \$40 million instead of about \$80 million) should be eliminated.

The Corporation believes these problems can only be solved if the White House is more consistently aware of our appropriations efforts and the importance of these “micro”

needs. As indicated earlier, we would welcome the opportunity to work more regularly with a Legislative Affairs staffer so that these pressing needs can be satisfied once and for all.

Visibility

The Legislative Affairs office should be aware that senior staff of the Corporation met recently at the request of the White House with representatives of the Chief of Staff's office, the Domestic Policy Council, the Communications office, and the First Lady's office to discuss the goal of increasing the visibility of AmeriCorps in the coming year. As a result of this meeting, the Corporation has prepared and forwarded a plan to the White House for high-visibility events involving the President, First Lady, Vice President, and Cabinet members.

Once again, we are very appreciative of the opportunity to make you aware of the major issues facing the Corporation, and we look forward to working closely with you in the year ahead. Please contact either one of us with any questions you may have.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE: A CALL TO SERVICE

February 10, 1999

"Our ethic of citizen service is coming back. AmeriCorps is more than a momentary solution to our problems -- it embodies the basic American ethic that every citizen has the duty to give back to our communities and to each other."

President Bill Clinton
February 10, 1999

Today, at the University of Maryland, College Park, President Clinton will call on Congress to expand the yearly participation level in AmeriCorps to 100,000 members by 2002. The President will also kick off AmeriCorps' largest national recruitment campaign ever to challenge young people to provide service to their communities.

Giving More Americans A Chance To Serve Their Community. When he came into office in 1993, President Clinton outlined a vision for a national service program that linked responsibility to opportunity by allowing young people to serve our nation while earning funds for a college education. The result of that vision is AmeriCorps, which is bringing people of different racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds together to solve community problems and improve the lives of Americans. In the four years since its launch, over 100,000 AmeriCorps members have risen to the challenge. They have tutored children in school and after-school, organized block watches and book drives, renovated housing for low-income families, and recruited people in the neighborhood to volunteer alongside them. The President seeks to build on this success by creating more opportunities for Americans to serve through AmeriCorps. The President's fiscal year 2000 budget request includes:

- \$533 million for AmeriCorps, an increase of \$106 million over last year. This new funding will enable AmeriCorps to expand to nearly 70,000 members in 2000 and 100,000 members each year by 2002. This expansion also will allow high school students to join AmeriCorps -- by serving part-time during the school year and full-time during the summer.

The Largest Recruitment Drive Ever To Get Americans Involved In Service. President Clinton is announcing the launch of the AmeriCorps Call To Service campaign, the largest-ever national recruitment drive for AmeriCorps. The President is challenging all Americans, especially young people, to get involved in service. The Call to Service campaign will:

- Provide young people with information on how they can serve in AmeriCorps to help strengthen local communities;
- Include a new television public service announcement produced by MTV, print advertisements, campus visits, and other local recruitment efforts.

Building On A Record Of Success. In just four years, over 100,000 young people have joined AmeriCorps to serve more than 4,000 communities. AmeriCorps provides needed human resources to schools, churches, community groups, and non-profit organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, Big Brother/Big Sister, and the American Red Cross. Since

1994, AmeriCorps members:

- Have served 32 million people;
- Mobilized nearly 2 million volunteers;
- Taught, tutored or mentored more than 2 million children;
- Organized after-school programs for more than a half million at-risk youth;
- Helped more than 200,000 senior citizens live independently; and
- Built or rehabilitated more than 25,000 homes.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:
EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR NATIONAL SERVICE**

Today, at the University of Maryland, College Park, President Clinton will call on Congress to expand the yearly participation level in AmeriCorps to 100,000 members by 2002. He also kicked off AmeriCorps' largest national recruitment campaign to challenge young people to provide service to their communities.

EXPANDING AMERICORPS TO GIVE MORE AMERICANS A CHANCE TO SERVE.

When he came into office in 1993, President Clinton outlined a vision for a national service program that linked responsibility to opportunity by allowing young people to serve our nation while earning funds for a college education. The result of that vision is AmeriCorps, which is bringing people of different racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds together to solve community problems and improve the lives of Americans. In the four years since its launch, over 100,000 AmeriCorps members have risen to the challenge. They have tutored children in school and after school, organized block watches and book drives, renovated housing for low-income families, and recruited people in the neighborhood to volunteer alongside them.

The President seeks to build on this success by creating more opportunities for Americans to serve through AmeriCorps. The President's FY 2000 budget request includes \$533 million for AmeriCorps, an increase of \$106 million over last year. This new funding will enable AmeriCorps to expand to nearly 70,000 members in 2000 and 100,000 members each year by 2002. This expansion also will allow high school students to join AmeriCorps -- by serving part-time during the school year and full-time during the summer.

A CALL TO SERVICE CAMPAIGN. President Clinton announced the launch of the AmeriCorps Call To Service campaign, the largest-ever national recruitment drive for AmeriCorps. The President challenged all Americans, especially young people, to get involved in service. The Call to Service campaign will provide young people with information on how they can serve in AmeriCorps to help strengthen local communities. The campaign includes a new television public service announcement produced by MTV, print advertisements, campus visits, and other local recruitment efforts.

A PROVEN RECORD OF SUCCESS. In just four years, over 100,000 young people have joined AmeriCorps to serve more than 4,000 communities. AmeriCorps provides needed human resources to schools, churches, community groups, and nonprofit organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, Big Brother/Big Sister, and the American Red Cross. A recent evaluation confirms that AmeriCorps strengthens communities in many ways: building leadership, citizenship, and other

important skills; and making community organizations more effective. Since 1994, AmeriCorps members have served more than 32 million people, mobilized nearly 2 million volunteers, taught, tutored or mentored more than 2 million children, organized after-school programs for more than a half million at-risk youth, helped more than 200,000 senior citizens live independently, and built or rehabilitated more than 25,000 homes. After a year of full-time service, AmeriCorps members receive education awards to help finance college or pay back student loans.