

**Boulder Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends  
1825 Upland Street  
Boulder, Colorado**

8 April 2018

Commission on Military, National and Public Service  
2530 Crystal Drive, Suite 1000, Room 1029  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Commissioners:

The Boulder, Colorado Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) Meeting thanks the Commission for the opportunity to provide its testimony regarding the matters of military and other public service. Our testimony is grounded in our belief that war is wrong, and that violence is not the way to obtain personal, national or international peace and security among peoples and nations.

We do instead believe in the peaceful prevention of violence and war. We seek to build peace and security through pursuing and sharing developments in health, sustainable environment, equality practices, and non-discrimination among all peoples, regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, or national origin. Security and peace is a condition that can only be achieved and must be shared between all parties, not something imposed by military force and the use of violence. Security is achieved when all parties can share in not being threatened by the other...it is a condition that lies between all parties.

To the matters of the Selective Service (draft) and Military Service of the United States:

1. We find that the current law requiring all males of draft age to register for military service should be eliminated.
2. We also find that the proposal that females should be included in the registration for military service should likewise not occur.
3. There should be no associated denials or limitations of public service opportunities and benefits (such as access to health care, education, admission or financial aid to attend universities, drivers' licenses, and any other social service benefits) based upon state, local or national requirements of mandatory registration for military service.
4. If the Selective Service registration and draft laws are not eliminated, a clear and easy process should be established for registrants and active duty or reserves to declare that they conscientiously object to military service. This personal declaration of conscientious objection should not be tied to a particular religious belief or membership in a religious organization. The only requirement should be a personal moral conscience that violence against others is wrong.

Overall, we find that the extreme militarization of the United States is destructive, creates enemies, and is counter-productive to the goal of world peace. Violence creates more violence. We strongly support major reductions in both military funding and aggressive international policies. Acknowledging that our nation has been in a state of perpetual war for more than half a century, we advocate for sharing peaceful technologies, promoting international programs of equality in education and economic opportunities, access to public health, clean water, air and safe foods, and environmental protection and preservation. Excessive US militarization also seriously drains our resources for developing equal opportunities for health, well being, and peace, within our own nation, by misdirecting assets away from much needed domestic programs for community resilience and opportunity.

Regarding Non-Military Public Service-

We firmly believe in service to others and to the natural world in which we all live. Our lives must be about service and sharing to make us whole. There are many ways to engage in such service to others, both in our personal lives and actions, and in our vocations, be they in the public/governmental sector, or in private business or non-profit activities. All such activities must always be conducted in non-violent fashion; that is the key to being consistent with respect for life, non-violence, and peace. These must always be the foundational criteria for public service.

Again we thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to Commission. We look forward to possible opportunities to provide oral testimony at listening sessions in our area.

Sincerely and in Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stan Grotegut", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stan Grotegut

Clerk of Meeting