



**NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

**Minutes of November 2018 Commission Meeting**

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on November 14-16, 2018, at the Commission's offices in Arlington, VA. The meeting concerned organizational and other pre-decisional and deliberative matters and was closed to the public pursuant to Public Law 114-328, section 554(b)(3). The Commissioners agreed to make a separate version of these minutes available to the public.

**Attendance**

Commissioners present:

- Mr. Edward Allard
- Mr. Steve Barney
- The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson (11/14 by phone)
- The Honorable Mark Gearan
- The Honorable Avril Haines
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck
- Ms. Jeanette James
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada

Staff present:

- Kent Abernathy, Executive Director
- Paul Lekas, General Counsel
- Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis
- Keri Lowry, Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement
- Peter Morgan, Director of Operations
- Other Commission staff

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*November 14, 2018*

**Business Meeting**

The Commission convened at approximately 0830 ET for a business meeting. All Commissioners were present except for Dr. Davidson and Mr. Allard. The Chairman moved to close this and other business meetings to occur on November 14-16 because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated. A motion was made and seconded, and all Commissioners present agreed.

*Approval of Minutes*

Chairman Heck then moved to approve minutes from the October 2018 Commission meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the October 2018 minutes with minor technical edits.

*Chairman's Remarks*

Chairman Heck briefed the Commission on the external engagement calendar for 2019. He circulated a schedule with Commissioner assignments for each event. He explained that staff would look to finalize these engagements four-to-six weeks ahead of time and noted that any event in which the Commission does not have a speaking role would be removed from the engagement calendar. Chairman Heck requested that Commissioners reach out directly to him rather than to staff with any issues relating to the schedule.

*Executive Director Remarks*

Mr. Abernathy provided a high-level overview of the Commission's roadmap, noting that the Commission has 70 days until release of the interim report and 480 days until release of the final report.

Mr. Abernathy then reviewed the agenda for the November meeting.

**Interim Report Discussion**

The Commission devoted the remainder of its morning session to a discussion of the draft interim report. Dr. Davidson and Mr. Allard joined the discussion part way through this session, with Dr. Davidson participating by phone.

Commissioners received a copy of the draft at the October meeting and subsequently provided input to staff. Chairman Heck explained that at his direction, staff had revised the draft to incorporate minor and non-controversial input from Commissioners, leaving more substantive and/or controversial input for Commissioners to deliberate in person.

The following reflects Commissioner deliberation on the more substantive and thematic issues and is not intended to account comprehensively for all input discussed during this session.

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*Objective, Message, and Tone*

Commissioners began by discussing the objective of the interim report. Chairman Heck offered that the report would serve as a formal opportunity to introduce the Commission, summarize what the Commission has accomplished in the past year, present a series of policy options without endorsement of any recommendations, and encourage the public to take notice of the issues the Commission may consider.

Commissioners agreed with this general approach. They offered various suggestions to improve the way the draft conveys these goals. They also recommended that the interim report avoid language that would sound conclusory as to either findings or policy recommendations. Ms. Haines recommended that the report make clear its purpose either early in the introduction or in the Chairman's letter. She and Chairman Heck agreed to work together on developing a Chairman's letter that would address this point.

The discussion then turned to the overall message and tone of the interim report.

Vice Chair Gearan recommended that the Commission take an optimistic approach to the report. He recommended the Commission convey that, like Alexis de Tocqueville, as Commissioners traveled the nation, they observed democracy in America, and saw the amazing things people are doing across the nation. He suggested the Commission convey, as something of a call-to-action, that despite many positive indicators, service work remains significantly underfunded by the United States. He summed up this approach as making optimistic observations coupled with a tough critique.

Several Commissioners responded to Vice Chair Gearan's suggestion. Mr. Barney agreed with the approach and felt it would lead naturally to the Commission using its final report to convey what the Commission proposes to do. Ms. James expressed ambivalence about whether a high-level assessment of "democracy in America" belonged in the interim report versus the final report. She recommended that the Commission stay focused on its responsibilities in the interim report and leave a broader statement about what it has learned for the final report. Mr. Kilgannon endorsed Vice Chair Gearan's recommendation to highlight the positive in the interim report. He cautioned against adopting a scolding tone in the report given the tremendous amount of good being done.

Based on this input, Vice Chair Gearan suggested leaving "flourishes" for the final report while touching on the "democracy in America" concept in the interim report, noting that democratic values are fundamental to the Commission's charge and many issues before the Commission, including service, the Selective Service System, and civic education. Mr. Allard concurred. He highlighted de Tocqueville's observations on volunteerism in America, focusing on the observation that Americans would go out of their way to help their neighbors. Mr. Allard views that sense of responsibility as laying the groundwork for the military draft.

Chairman Heck endorsed the consensus that the report convey optimism and avoid a scolding tone. He noted that the report would also include a series of vignettes and other call-out boxes

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that would help in this regard by highlighting programs engaged in important service initiatives around the country.

Ms. Haines and Mr. Khazei endorsed the approach laid out by Vice Chair Gearan and developed by others. Mr. Khazei recommended that the interim report hint at what could become a theme of the Commission's final report: many people across the nation are doing great things for their communities and the country, but their work remains disconnected and not sufficiently resourced, and the nation needs a fundamentally new approach to capture and nourish the latent energy and build on the civic spirit that de Tocqueville encountered in 1834. Ms. James supported using the interim report to convey what the Commission has learned and heard and hint at the types of recommendations the Commission is considering. Ms. James advised that the Commission should use the upcoming public hearings as an opportunity to reach out to the American people and seek their assistance in figuring out the direction the country should take and crafting recommendations.

Mr. Barney recommended presenting certain ideas as "propositions" to be debated, developed based on the Commission's experience to date. He suggested these propositions could serve as a basis for the substantive discussions in the public hearings and could encourage interest in the Commission's work. Ms. Haines supported laying out specific proposals so long as the Commission avoids endorsing them. Overall, she recommended conveying more general than specific propositions, such as an expectation of universal service rather than stating that individuals should serve for a year after high school.

Mr. Barney clarified his view, expressing that the interim report must provoke people to care enough about it particularly if the Commission hopes to break through in the media. He is concerned that if the Commission does not provide something for people to latch onto that will hold their attention, the Commission will not get their attention during the next round. Chairman Heck agreed and said that was the intent of the last section in the draft report. He said that as the Commission conducts hearings, it will tee up specific questions for each panel of experts to address.

As a closing point, Dr. Davidson recommended that the report explain why service is good instead of just assuming it. She emphasized the role of service in creating a vibrant civil society, strengthening our democracy, and engaging people in civil society.

*International Approaches to Mandatory Service*

Commissioners discussed what approach the interim report should take in addressing other nations' mandatory service programs. Commissioners noted that during their travels they heard many people refer to the Israeli mandatory service program and those of other nations. Commissioners agreed that the interim report should mention these programs and state that the Commission is examining the degree to which they may be relevant to the United States experience. They also agreed that the report's discussion of mandatory service should not lead with a focus on other nations' models, in part to avoid a suggestion that the Commission could recommend mandatory service based on other nations' experiences without due regard to the uniqueness, scale, and complexity that such a program would require in the United States.

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Commissioners decided against including a call-out box that would highlight countries that had implemented mandatory service programs.

*Addressing what the Commission has Heard*

Commissioners discussed how best to convey the scope of its effort to reach out to the country and hear from Americans about service and other issues within the Commission mandate. They agreed that including a map in the interim report would not accurately convey the scope of the Commission's outreach. They also agreed to include an appendix to the report identifying organizations and possibly individuals with whom the Commission has met.

Commissioners also discussed how best to convey the information developed over the past year. They agreed that the interim report should avoid any suggestion of conclusions, and recommended that this portion of the report focus on what the Commission has heard rather than what it has found.

Commissioners agreed that the report's discussion of the Selective Service System should address conscientious objectors and draft resisters.

**Panel on Service Higher Education**

From approximately 1230-1345 ET, the Commission held a discussion with a panel of experts on service and higher education. Attending were representatives from ALL IN Campus Democratic Challenge, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Association of American Colleges and Universities, Campus Compact, and the Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education. An account of this discussion is set forth in a separate memorandum for the record (MFR).

**Legal and Ethics Briefing**

The Commission reconvened at approximately 1400 ET for a legal and ethics briefing. All Commissioners attended except for Dr. Davidson and Ms. Haines.

Rachel Rikleen, Deputy General Counsel, began with a presentation on the Commission's anti-harassment policy. After distributing a copy of the Commission's policy, Ms. Rikleen explained that the program went into effect in May 2018. She noted that Commissioners received initial training in December 2017 focused on the No FEAR Act. Currently, each employee is trained on anti-harassment within 30-days of onboarding. The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) maintains a tracking chart of all trainings. She noted that OGC would provide refresher training at an upcoming staff meeting.

Ms. Rikleen explained that the policy proscribes harassment by anyone affiliated with the Commission, including Commissioners, staff, those who have a business relationship, contractors, interns, and guests. Ms. Rikleen discussed the responsibilities of Commissioners as leaders of the organizations and identified those individuals on the Commission or in staff who have key leadership and accountability roles in responding to and dealing with allegations of harassment. Among these are the Chairman and the Vice Chairs. Ms. Rikleen explained that in the event of a report of harassment, OGC will initiate and oversee an investigation.

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Ms. Rikleem asked Commissioners to review the anti-harassment policy and raise any questions or concerns to OGC. She also conveyed to Commissioners that many among the staff view them as role models and asked that they be thoughtful about their interaction with staff.

Ms. Rikleem also noted that Chantel Ramsey is serving as the Commission's Equal Employment Opportunity director and will receive formal training from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

In addition, Ms. Rikleem explained that OGC recently issued guidance to staff about complying with the Rehabilitation Act, which requires measures to ensure accessibility for public events, websites, and other interactions with the public. Staff will ensure the upcoming public hearings comply with the Rehabilitation Act and stands ready to make accommodations for any specific requests it receives.

Ms. Rikleem then briefed Commissioners on OGC's approach with respect to legislative drafting. She explained how OGC plans to translate policy recommendations into legislative proposals and reviewed the questions that OGC will need to answer in order to develop precise legislative proposals. Mr. Lekas noted that OGC would look to bring on a legislative drafter in the spring of 2019 to assist with this effort.

Commissioners with experience in Congress provided recommendations. Ms. James and Mr. Barney emphasized the importance of providing Congressional staff with legislative language and Mr. Barney suggested that the annual National Defense Authorization Act would be a natural place to include Commission recommendations.

In addition to the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, Chairman Heck recommended developing strong ties with committees that have jurisdiction over the Departments of Education and Labor because the Commission will likely make recommendations in those areas.

**Work Group Deliberations**

From approximately 1445-1730 ET, Commissioners met in Work Groups to deliberate issues concerning the matters within the scope of their respective Work Groups. Accounts of these sessions are set forth in internal MFRs.

*November 15, 2018*

**Interim Report Discussion**

The Commission reconvened at 0800ET on November 15, 2018 to continue its discussion of the draft interim report. All Commissioners were physically present for this session. As with the account of the November 14 discussion on the draft interim report, the following reflects Commissioner deliberation on the more substantive and thematic issues and is not intended to account comprehensively for all input discussed during this session.

*Section on Military Service*

Commissioners agreed to avoid statements and headings that could be perceived as too judgmental. In this vein, they agreed to title the section on military service “Military service: a responsibility borne by few” instead of “‘Thank you for your service’ is not enough.” They also agreed to focus in this section on facts and demographics rather than judgment calls and phrases evoking a level of judgment. They agreed to avoid using the phrase “all recruited” to describe what is often called the “all volunteer force” and, with respect to issues related to military service eligibility, they agreed to highlight what the Commission has heard from Americans and recruiters—such as the increasing commonplace of tattoos—without drawing conclusions.

*Section on National Service*

Commissioners agreed to avoid using the term “G.I. Bill” in connection with proposals that the Commission has heard that would provide certain benefits to individuals who engage in national service. While those proposals bear similarities to the G.I. Bill, making that comparison would prove distracting and incorrectly imply that the Commission intends to equate national service with military service.

*Section on Public Service*

Commissioners agreed that the section on public service should convey the importance of work undertaken by public servants. The section should also mention that the Commission has heard from government workers that negative public perceptions of them have effects on morale and may discourage younger Americans from pursuing careers in government.

*Veterans’ Preference*

Commissioners deliberated whether to address veterans’ preference in the interim report. They noted sensitivity around this issue and expressed concern that raising it in the interim report could challenge the Commission’s ability, going forward, to work constructively with military and veterans service organizations. Nevertheless, because the Commission heard repeated mention of veterans’ preference as an issue worthy of consideration in the public service space, Commissioner’s recommended noting “inflexible hiring preferences” as one of several issues raised by civil servants and others regarding the federal hiring process.

Chairman Heck recommended that the Commission convene a panel on veterans’ preference during the public hearing scheduled for May 2019.

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*Section on Registering Women with Selective Service*

Commissioners discussed how to formulate the interim report section on whether women should register with the Selective Service System without suggesting that the Commission had reached a decision on this issue. Commissioners generally expressed concern about indicating a direction before the Commission has moved further in its conversation with the public. Commissioners noted that the Commissioner's ultimate recommendation on this issue could prove the most contentious individual recommendation the Commission will make.

Commissioners expressed interest in being provocative while also encouraging honest debate with the public around women and Selective Service. Commissioners agreed the report should state clearly the positions that people have expressed to the Commission on both sides of the issue, moving the bulk of that discussion into the portion of the report addressing what the Commission has heard rather than the portion addressing what the Commission is considering. Commissioners also endorsed making a direct plea to the public to provide arguments on both sides of the issue. They felt this approach would help to facilitate a robust discussion with the public on women and Selective Service.

Looking to the final report, Vice Chair Gearan recommended that the Commission consider ways to diffuse some of the attention that this topic would produce to ensure that it does not drown out the Commission's other recommendations.

Dr. Rough addressed questions about public opinion polls on women and Selective Service. She noted that there is a significant amount of polling data on the question and recalled a staff primer compiling the results of those polls.

Several Commissioners spoke to the purpose of Selective Service registration and the perception that a draft would be used solely for "combat replacement" purposes. Chairman Heck explained that the public hearing on the Selective Service System would provide an opportunity for the Commission to provide clarity on this topic.

**Meeting with Elaine Donnelly**

From approximately 1100-1200 ET, the Commission held a discussion with Elaine Donnelly from the Center for Military Readiness. An account of this discussion is set forth in a separate MFR.

**Briefings by Work Group Chairs**

From approximately 1200-1500 ET, the Commission met in closed session to hear briefings by the chairs of the three Commission work groups: Vice Chair Gearan, Chair of the Propensity to Service Work Group (P2S); Vice Chair Wada, Chair of the Selective Service System Work Group (SSS work group); and Ms. Haines, Chair of the Ends, Ways, and Means Work Group (EWM).

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*P2S Briefing*

Vice Chair Gearan provided an overview of P2S's approach, progress, and next steps. As part of his presentation, he noted that the challenges facing the different kinds of service—military, public, and national—are different, so the policies to address them will be different as well. He explained that it is not always about increasing the number of people applying for positions or ensuring that the quality of applicants is strong.

Vice Chair Gearan explained that for each topic, P2S spent a month on literature review and then spent a month on policy recommendations. This approach allowed P2S to identify areas prime for intervention and appreciate the ways that propensity can be improved through collaboration across the different kinds of services. In the initial review of the policy options, a goal was to scope the recommendations appropriately. P2S has sought to stay out of the weeds and keep its ambitions high. For example, P2S may propose improvements to marketing efforts, but will not endeavor to create an actual marketing campaign. At the same time, P2S will consider significant recommendations to encourage an expectation of service. As a result, there is a balance between having ambitious proposals and policy options that are smaller changes which are iterative and build to something.

Vice Chair Gearan reviewed some of the policy options, which were outlined in a handout distributed to Commissioners. Mr. Kilgannon asked about the target age range for P2S recommendations and whether any of the recommendations would address the private sector. Vice Chair Gearan explained that P2S is looking at everything. Mr. Khazei also noted that the propensity work dovetails with EWM, with awareness through civics and service learning programs as critical elements. Mr. Barney highlighted that some of the proposals look at how to get private sectors to recognize the value of service, such as a certificate of completion or credentialing along the way. Mr. Khazei emphasized that employers and entertainment can play a big role. Vice Chair Gearan stated that interagency collaboration is also a big tool, a cost-neutral way to address some of this.

Vice Chair Gearan then set out the next steps for P2S. P2S is reviewing policy options and will bring a subset of them to the full Commission for discussion in March and May, after the hearings related to those topics. P2S will share some policy options for ratification, because they are less controversial. P2S will raise for debate the more controversial policy options, including those that may require large scale investment or have major structural changes (such as hiring preference changes). Chairman Heck asked for clarity on how the public hearing panelists will be involved in addressing the policy options. Dr. Rough explained that staff memos will lay out some policy options to enable panelists to respond. The day after each hearing will include deliberation sessions for Commissioners to address topics raised in the hearing.

Mr. Khazei asked when the full Commission would hold a discussion on an entirely revamped and more integrated system, and whether that new system would be presented publicly before the final report to get feedback. He expressed concern that if the Commission continues to review more discrete options through work groups into May, then it will run out of time. He outlined certain qualities he envisions in a revamped system, including civic education and other service learning opportunities that start at a young age and improved benefits for people in national service. He envisions a state of affairs in which every young American thinks of service options

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when they turn 18, people think critically of working in all three service areas, and all three areas of service are connected so it is easy for one who has been rejected from the military, for example, to pursue work in another service stream.

Ms. James cautioned against too-early discussion of an integrated system. In particular, she would prefer that the Commission hold a robust discussion on Selective Service before it is connected to something else. Chairman Heck echoed this concern. He believes the Commission needs to resolve its recommendations first and then look to stitch together different recommendations for the final report. Ms. Haines, with Mr. Khazei agreeing, recommended that the Commission hold a discussion what a revamped system might look like in January.

Vice Chair Wada recommended that if the Commission intends to consider a “revamped” system, it should share that proposal with the public and receive public reaction. Chairman Heck explained that the recommendations discussed at the hearings should be forward leaning and so people get opportunities to weigh in throughout. He also noted that EWM will be considering different proposals to revamp the system. Dr. Rough also clarified that the last hearing is about “creating an expectation of service” and could present an opportunity to discuss significant proposals alongside potential reforms related to civic education.

### *SSS Work Group Briefing*

Vice Chair Wada then provided an overview of P2S’s approach, progress, and next steps.

Vice Chair Wada began the selective service brief by identifying five core findings on which the SSS work group reached consensus: (1) the United States must retain a compulsory manpower mechanism to hedge against unanticipated personnel requirements; (2) a draft mechanism should only be used during an emergency; (3) pre-mobilization registration remains most appropriate; (4) disbanding the Selective Service System and relying on other information sources (e.g., the Social Security Administration) would present tradeoffs and would likely reduce compliance and transparency; and (5) the primary purpose of the Selective Service System is to preserve the lethality of the Armed Services by ensuring adequate personnel end strength of sufficient standards with the requisite capabilities to meet national military needs.

Vice Chair Wada then explained the potential scope of mobilization missions. The work group had explored and deliberated different approaches before reaching consensus that the Selective Service System should be used primarily to fulfill military purposes. The work group also endorsed possible use of the database in the future to make a targeted ask for volunteers to respond during non-military emergencies.

Vice Chair Wada then addressed the work group’s views on the primary policies that Commissioners recommend considering as they develop recommendations for modernizing the Selective Service System. The work group agreed that a modernized system must be fair and equitable and effectively protect the individuals whom society deems exempt from the obligation of mandatory military service. The work group also identified other priorities for a modernized system, which they ranked in the following order: transparency, high compliance, lethality, efficiency, solemnity, and flexibility.

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Dr. Davidson asked for an example of how the Selective Service System could be made sufficiently flexible to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. Vice Chair Wada responded that flexibility might be demonstrated with the ability to induct specific critical skills. She explained that the work group--and full commission--would need to evaluate the priorities she listed against the trade-offs each present. For instance, a system that emphasizes transparency may decrease flexibility and compliance. Ms. James added that maintaining a fair and equitable process was not negotiable and that extends to maintaining current protections for conscientious objectors and others who require it.

Chairman Heck asked if there was any consideration of including a check box during registration for individuals to indicate, in the event of a national emergency, they would be willing to volunteer. Vice Chair Wada responded the work group discussions had not gotten there yet, but reiterated the need to consider tradeoffs. Dr. Davidson commented that Chairman Heck's point inverts the work group's recommendation for a call for volunteers, and enables mandatory registration to facilitate the call for volunteers. Ms. Skelly stated that the work group discussed a potential call for volunteers in two parts—the first being a general call issued by the President and the second being a more targeted ask using the Selective Service System database. Ms. James added that one advantage of calling for volunteers as an interim step was that it may mitigate the need for a draft or at least make it more politically feasible. Mr. Allard commented that commissioners might be able to incentivize volunteerism at this point by allowing for individuals to choose their MOS; whereas in a future draft they would not be allowed to do so. Mr. Barney noted that really stressing that a call for volunteers is the first step in a larger process could create a widespread understanding of how the system works and increase the deterrent aspect—signaling both to foreign and domestic audiences that a draft may be coming. Dr. Davidson added that Guard and Reserve components would be exhausted first, then a call for volunteers, and finally a draft—so the draft can truly be marketed as a step of last resort.

Chairman Heck asked how the work group intended to create flexibility and identify critical skills when most 18 to 25 year olds have no discernable professional skills. Vice Chair Wada responded acquiring critical skills was a separate discussion, but the work group considered several options, including potentially expanding the age range of those who must register to cover mid-and late-career folks. Chairman Heck raised the concern that such an approach would be administratively burdensome and was potentially not functionally feasible. Ms. Skelly noted that expanding the registrant age range required more time and burden on the front end, but if the database was properly maintained it could potentially provide more accurate, useful, and faster results during a time of crisis. Mr. Allard suggested it might still not be cost-effective.

Vice Chair Wada continued discussing the four ways in which the military could gain critical skills: induct; grow; contract; or access. The work group will continue to focus on the best ways to induct skills. Mr. Barney commented that there is overlap on this topic between the SSS work group and P2S, and he believed for both groups it is most important to identify a suitable process rather than pinpointing specific skills. Ms. James agreed and noted that critical skills change over time. She also noted that there are some skills with too small of a pool of certified individuals, and it may be more financially feasible to contract for them. Vice Chair Wada added that certain skills are less easily identified, even within broader categories like cyber.

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*EWM Briefing*

Next, Ms. Haines provided an overview of EWM’s approach, progress, and next steps.

Ms. Haines began by reviewing the needs of the nation identified by the work group, which are based on CNCS priorities. She also mentioned that the group is reviewing the impacts of service and would review options for civic education tomorrow.

The focus of the presentation was on five “Serve America” registration models, which the group had previously developed and explored. In creating these models, the group considered factors including the following:

- Should it be one registration system for both military and other service or separate systems? If separate, how should information be shared, if at all, between the systems?
- Should it be mandatory or non-mandatory registration?
- Should it be run at the federal or state level?

The five models, laid out in more detail in a slide deck that accompanied Ms. Haines’ briefing, are briefly described below. Each includes a draft contingency mechanism and a system designed to facilitate individuals’ connections with military, national, and public service (MNPS) opportunities.

- Yellow (“Integrated”) – one system used to serve both functions. It would be mandatory for certain individuals, but voluntary for others. Organizations could pull information from this system.
- Green (“Linked”) – two registration systems run independently but linked. The draft contingency mechanism is mandatory for some. The other is interactive and voluntary. Information could be shared between the systems.
- Orange (“State-Based”) – states develop their own systems for MNPS opportunities.
- Brown (“Separate”) – two systems that run independently, like in the Green model, but they are not linked and information is not shared between them.
- Purple (“Basic”) – the Selective Service System, with potential modifications as recommended by the SSS work group, but individuals may click a link to obtain further information about MNPS opportunities that are not in a single database.

Ms. Haines explained that the first two of these options – Yellow and Green – received the most votes among EWM and were the overall work group preferences.

Mr. Allard asked about how a modified draft mechanism would fit into these registration models. Ms. Haines and Ms. Skelly explained that any of the models should function regardless of the changes recommended by the SSS work group. Mr. Allard raised the idea of providing women the option of joining the drafting mechanism, but not requiring it. He suggested that many women may not qualify, so making it voluntary would soften the calls against the mandatory conscription of women. In essence, he explained, registration would be their choice.

Mr. Allard spoke in favor of the Green model, because it would allow older Americans to register voluntarily. Chairman Heck noted that the Yellow model has that option as well. Mr.

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Allard raised a concern of whether the Yellow model would increase the chances that older Americans would be drafted because it is a shared database. Ms. Haines explained that the databases could be set up to avoid those problems.

Mr. Barney asked whether these models are closer to the “moonshot” that Mr. Khazei had conceived. Mr. Khazei thought they were. He believed that a new registration system would be key to revamping the overall system. He noted that currently, most people who register for Selective Service have no idea what they’re doing. Mr. Khazei supports preparing students as early as middle school so they will be in a position to make a real decision about service by the time they turn 18. The new system should make Selective Service registration a more conscious, deliberate decision to answer the call to serve the country.

Vice Chair Gearan noted that setting the moonshot up requires a narrative, which will be the work of the Commission’s final report. Mr. Barney and Vice Chair Gearan then discussed whether the idea would involve a systemic change or a cultural shift. Chairman Heck recommended considering this matter through the lens of the Commission’s “3As” framework: Awareness, Aspiration, and Access. He views civic education as creating the awareness, service opportunities to create the aspiration, and an integrated registration system to provide the access.

During this discussion, Commissioners debated whether systematic change would be the sum of many recommendations or discussed as an organizing principle. Chairman Heck was among those who viewed systemic change as the sum of many recommendations. Mr. Khazei was among those who viewed systematic change as an organizing principle and in some way distinct from the sum of many recommendations.

Ms. Haines asked Commissioners for their views of the two leading models. Chairman Heck indicated preference for the Yellow and Green models. He did not believe the Orange model would work. Mr. Barney asked for further clarification on the differences between the Yellow and Green models. Ms. Haines and Mr. Lekas clarified that primary difference is that the Yellow model contemplates a single, integrated website that individuals visit and a single database to support that website. Chairman Heck supported the idea of automatically sharing information from registrants with other service agencies. He cautioned that the public may prefer to have data for draft contingency purposes maintained in a distinct database from data for service registration. Ms. Skelly endorsed the latter view, noting that the security of the draft contingency data should be paramount and that the system will need to persist even if the other database should fail.

Based on the foregoing, Chairman Heck suggested exploring a revision of the Yellow model, with one entrance point, but separate databases. Mr. Lekas clarified that under the modified option, if he is a young man, he registers at the website but the information goes to two separate databases, one for purposes of a mandatory draft mechanism and another for MNPS opportunities. Ms. Haines named this revised model “Yellow Prime.”

Mr. Kilgannon expressed concern about young people subject to mandatory registration who have no intrinsic desire to serve. Automatic sharing of their information with other types of service organizations would infringe on their personal liberty. Ms. Haines agreed that this could

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raise a personal liberty concern and suggested that the system could provide individuals with options as to sharing information with service organizations.

Mr. Allard asked about what would happen to those required to register when they age out of the draft mechanism pool. Ms. Haines explained that if they chose to share their information with other agencies, then they would remain in the voluntary database. Mr. Allard expressed that he likes that people who are mandated to register, also know they have another option to do voluntary service.

Ms. James explained that she remains unsure about her stance on the Green model but has concerns about the Yellow model. She believes that if the nation tells youth they may have to fight and die for the country, then it should be a solemn occasion when they register. Something is weakened about that experience when the same website tells them about opportunities in other areas, and, as she explained, she does not think that military service should be conflated with national service. Mr. Kilgannon concurred with Ms. James. He also expressed hesitation about the complexity of the proposals and suggested they may prove difficult to explain to the broader public. He believes that communication would be more complicated with one system that tries to accommodate both mandatory and voluntary registration goals and would have only a few moments to explain those goals to an audience of young people. Including the solemnity of registering for a draft mechanism in that discussion and distinguishing it from other kinds of service will prove extremely difficult.

Ms. Skelly agreed about the importance of solemnity and supported a more ceremonial registration for Selective Service. She noted, however, that such solemnity and ceremony does not exist today and does not believe that developing those features would be precluded by pursuing either of the two models under consideration.

Dr. Davidson indicated an important reason for a registration system along the lines the Commission has been discussing is to reach the many people who want to serve their country but are not eligible for military service. She believes putting military, national, and public opportunities together in a system reaches that group, and the Commission can be clear about the importance of “protecting our democracy.” That message does not occur, she explained, when people register for Selective Service indirectly through either the federal student loan process or state departments of motor vehicles. Chairman Heck agreed, cautioning against ascribing a level of solemnity to the current Selective Service process that currently does not exist.

Ms. James agreed that the current level of solemnity is not sufficient and thinks the issue should be highlighted in the Commission’s recommendations. The issue for her is still having one database/portal. The option of having a separate database that is independent of Selective Service and military service is much better. She believes there needs to be two entry points and two databases and an option to share information between them. Vice Chair Gearan asked whether it would add to the solemnity if it were tied to voter registration. Ms. James did not agree with this suggestion since not every person is compelled to vote.

Mr. Barney argued that a good system design could help address these concerns by making sure that each person, whether conscript or volunteer, receives the information most appropriate to

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them when they come to the system. He also agreed with others in support of a more solemn experience than the current Selective Service registration system offers, one that would make registration a thoughtful process that involves recognizing one could ultimately put their life on the line for the nation. Ms. James agreed that design could help. She cautioned against a single website, however, concerned about conflating Selective Service registration with other forms of service. Mr. Kilgannon expressed concern about a website that might create confusion about which obligations are mandatory versus which are voluntary. He thinks it is important to make sure that people know why they are supposed to go to the website to register in the first place. He initially supported a state-based model because he believes that states would be better equipped to tap into existing attitudes of giving back to one's community.

Ms. Skelly questioned whether an online experience could generate the level of meaningful interaction that Commissioners may desire. She also explained that as the Commission considers large-scale proposals, to include registration systems, it should keep in mind the time gap between recommendation and implementation. As an example, she cited Florida's Sandra Day O'Connor bill, which took seven years to implement. This period of time provides an opportunity to educate people.

Ms. Haines concluded by noting that the working group will move forward with the Green and Yellow Prime models.

**Panel with Foreign Government Attachés**

Thereafter, Commissioners traveled to the Norwegian Embassy to convene a panel discussion with attachés from Norway, Nigeria, Estonia, and Colombia. The discussion focused on the mandatory service programs those nations have adopted. An account of this conversation is set forth in a separate MFR.

**November 16, 2018**

**Work Group Deliberation**

At approximately 0800 ET, Commissioners Davidson, Haines, James, Khazei, Kilgannon, and Skelly held a meeting of the Ends, Ways, and Means Work Group. An account of this sessions is set forth in an internal MFR.

**Interim Report Discussion**

The Commission reconvened at 0900ET on November 16, 2018 to continue its discussion of the draft interim report. All Commissioners were physically present for this session. As with the account of the November 14-15 discussions on the draft interim report, the following reflects Commissioner deliberation on the more substantive and thematic issues and is not intended to account comprehensively for all input discussed during this session.

Commissioners began by addressing the way in which to present recommendations that the Commission has heard and may consider. They turned attention to the report's draft conclusion and recommended that it send a clear message that encompasses the Commission's intention with the interim report and its work overall.

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Commissioners then held a discussion about graphics, vignettes, and other call-out boxes that would be included in the interim report.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Chairman Heck explained that staff would revise the interim report based on Commissioner feedback. Commissioners would then receive the revised draft and have three days to return any critical comments.

### **Executive Session**

From approximately 1100-1205 ET, Commissioners held an executive session outside the presence of staff.

### **Update on Government Affairs and Public Engagement**

From approximately 1215-1300, the Commission received a briefing from the Commission's Government Affairs and Public Engagement staff. All Commissioners except for Vice Chair Gearan were present.

#### *Interim Report Release Event*

Ms. Lowry introduced Morgan Levey to discuss the interim report release event. Ms. Levey explained that the goal of the main event and wrap-around meetings would be to use the interim report to ignite a national conversation. She said the target audience would be members of the policy community and the theme would generally focus on civic culture, with a more refined theme to be developed. She summarized the wrap-around meetings to include meetings with government agencies, Congress, and stakeholders along with a traditional and digital media pitch. Ms. Levey encouraged Commissioners to provide suggestions on people or organizations that Commissioners or staff should meet with to help amplify and disseminate the interim report.

Ms. Levey identified the metrics for a successful launch event as including at least one high-level guest speaker, coverage in national and local media, engaged stakeholders, and at least 75 people in attendance.

Ms. Levey then discussed the current plan for the launch event itself. The event would occur in the morning at a location with strong name recognition. Staff identified criteria to select guest speakers, including alignment to the Commission's mission, strong social media following or connection to an organization with a strong social media following, notability or newsworthiness in their particular field, and diversity.

The event is scheduled for the morning of January 23 at the Newseum Broadcast Studio.

Ms. Lowry said she would follow up early next week with a message to Commissioners to seek their recommendations for speakers and audience invitations. Commissioners thereafter raised several suggestions for Ms. Lowry and her team to consider.

#### *Government Affairs*

Jeff McNichols then provided Commissioners with an update of government affairs efforts. He began by focusing on the government affairs timeline for the interim report launch. Noting that

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January presented one of the least favorable periods for engaging Congress, he identified key members of Congress and key committees that Commissioners should engage around the interim report launch. Mr. McNichols briefed the Commission on committees that staff has already engaged and outlined a prioritized plan of committee and member engagement going forward. Detail of this plan is set forth in a slide presentation that Mr. McNichols delivered to the Commission. Ms. Haines recommended that staff include the Senate and House Foreign Relations Committees in the outreach plan and Mr. McNichols agreed to make that change.

Mr. McNichols then addressed the Commission's outreach efforts among the Executive Branch. He explained that staff had convened a broad interagency group which had met several times thus far. The group would convene on January 22, the day before the interim report launch.

Commissioners and Mr. McNicholas discussed approaches for sharing advance copies of the interim report that would minimize potential leakage.

*Public Hearings*

Mary Reding briefed the Commission on the status of planning for the five public hearings planned for 2019. She explained the Commission would hold three hearings in Washington, D.C., one at the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library, and one at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library. Ms. Reding then reviewed the themes for each hearing. The February hearing will ask "Should all Americans be required to serve?" and pursue this theme through panels on mandatory service and inspiring the next generation. The March hearing will focus on national service, the April hearing on Selective Service, and the May hearing on public and military service. In June, the Commission hearing will look at creating an expectation of service. Ms. Reding requested Commissioner assistance in developing ideas for hearing panelists.

*Public Affairs*

Cristina Flores and Erin Schneider provided Commissioners with an update on public affairs activities. They provided an overview of social media efforts, noting that Twitter currently receives the best traffic. They then turned to the Commission website and explained that the website is undergoing significant development and that additional changes would be made leading to the interim report launch in January.

Ms. Flores informed the Commission that in the past week staff had begun to publish blog posts on Medium that are designed to educate the public, develop awareness, and help make the Commission relatable to pop culture. She requested any and all ideas from Commissioners on topics for future blog posts.

Ms. Flores told the Commissioners that staff would begin circulating news clips to Commissioners on a weekly basis to ensure they are aware of developments on issues within the Commission's mandate.

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Relatedly, Ms. Flores informed Commissioners that staff had identified two individuals to serve as public relations consultants. Those individuals would provide Commissioners with media training at the December meeting.

**Work Group Deliberations**

From approximately 1300-1500, Commissioners met in Work Groups to deliberate issues concerning the matters within the scope of their respective Work Groups. Accounts of these sessions are set forth in internal MFRs.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

Adopted by the Commission on December 12, 2018