



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Minutes of April 2019 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on April 24-26, 2019, in Washington, DC, and Arlington, VA. Portions of this meeting concerned organizational and other pre-decisional and deliberative matters and were 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
- 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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April 24, 2019

Business Meeting

The Commission convened at the Peikoff Alumni House at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, shortly after 0815 ET until approximately 0830 ET. Ten Commissioners were present; Mr. Allard arrived at the conclusion of the business meeting. The Chairman moved to close this and other business meetings to occur on April 24-26, 2019, because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated. A motion was made and seconded, and all Commissioners present agreed.

Chairman Heck moved to approve minutes from the March 2019 Commission meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the March 2019 minutes with minor clarifications and technical edits.

Chairman Heck and Mr. Abernathy reviewed the agenda for the April meeting. Jeff McNichols, Deputy Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement, briefed the Commission on the panelists for the day's two public hearings and hearing preparations undertaken by staff. Erin Schneider, Public Affairs Officer, provided an update on expected press coverage and RSVPs for the public hearings. Mr. Lekas provided an update on the Selective Service System (SSS) litigation pending in Texas.

Public Hearing: Future Mobilization Needs of the Nation

From 0900 to 1200 ET, Commissioners held a public hearing titled Future Mobilization Needs of the Nation. Panelists included the Honorable James Stewart, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Department of Defense; Rear Admiral John Polowczyk, Vice Director for Logistics, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Ms. Loren DeJonge Schulman, Deputy Director of Studies and the Leon E. Panetta Senior Fellow, the Center for a NAmerican Security; Major General Peter Byrne, Mobilization Assistant to the Commander, U.S. Northern Command; and Ms. Elsa Kania, Adjunct Senior Fellow with the Technology and National Security Program, Center for a New American Security. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission's Facebook and YouTube pages.

Public Hearing: How to Meet Potential National Mobilization Needs

From 1300 to 1600 ET, Commissioners held a public hearing titled Answering the Call: How to Meet Potential National Mobilization Needs. Panelists included the Honorable Donald Benton, Director of Selective Service, U.S. Selective Service System; Major General John Evans, Representative of the 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; and Dr. Bernie Rostker, Senior Fellow, RAND Corporation. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission's Facebook and YouTube pages.

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Business Meeting

From 1620 to 1650 ET, the Commission reconvened for a business meeting.

Government Affairs and Public Engagement Update

The first portion of the business meeting consisted of an update and discussion on engagement and outreach activity led by Ms. Lowry. All Commissioners except for Vice Chair Gearan were present for this discussion.

Ms. Lowry addressed upcoming public hearings. She noted that 19 of 20 panelists had confirmed attendance for the May public hearings. She explained that staff is in the process of vetting and inviting panelists for the June public hearings.

Ms. Lowry then addressed her team's congressional outreach strategy. She pointed Commissioners to a document identifying Commissioner and staff outreach efforts to committees of jurisdiction and individual members of Congress.

Next, Ms. Lowry discussed a communications plan, aided by a handout. She divided the communications plan into several phases.

- *January to July 2019:* Solicit feedback from organizations, including substantive statements for the record from different groups as well as written testimony from panelists; aim for media coverage by at least one major outlet per hearing.
- *August to December 2019:* Develop a coalition to support the Commission's recommendations, with goals of carrying the Commission's work forward and generating buzz; seek input from "trusted advisors" about how decisions may be received by Congress and the public.
- *October to March 2020:* Mobilize stakeholders for the final report release.
- *March to June 2020:* Create political pressure on Congress and the President to move forward with Commission recommendations.
- *May to July 2010:* Facilitate handoff of Commission proposals to others who can continue the effort to realize those recommendations.

Ms. Lowry noted staff's ongoing work with a dozen television outlets and twenty-six print or online outlets, ongoing social media efforts, and continued engagement with federal departments of agencies. She highlighted indicators of success to include an increase in media coverage on service issues and press mentions of the Commission in related coverage of 2020 candidates' national service platforms and the pending SSS lawsuits.

Thereafter, Commissioners provided input on the engagement and communications strategies. Dr. Davidson inquired about the priority audiences in Congress, in the Administration, and among influencers that Ms. Lowry and her team are targeting. She also asked about members of Congress who are sympathetic to issues in the Commission's mandate. Ms. Lowry and Mr. McNichols described their current approach to Congress, focusing first on key committees. They plan, as well, to engage potential champions and detractors and relevant caucuses. Ms.

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Lowry said she would provide further detail on these efforts and forward-looking strategy at the Commission's June meeting. She encouraged Commissioners to provide names of staff or members whom they know.

Regarding individual Commissioner engagements planned for the summer months, Chairman Heck informed the Commission that any event not confirmed at least two weeks beforehand would be removed from the calendar, while other events would proceed.

Dr. Davidson sought additional information on the press outlets that staff has targeted and media figures who have indicated interest in the Commission. Ms. Schneider provided an overview of staff efforts, noting regular coverage by Greg Korte of *USA Today* and various defense and military publications. She noted the difficulty thus far of attracting sustained interest from other major television and print media. Ms. James suggested contacting Jennifer Griffin on Fox News, who covers the military beat.

Mr. Khazei asked for an update on efforts to obtain statements for the record from individuals and organizations. Ms. Lowry explained that staff had reached out to organizations and individuals to provide statements in connection with each hearing and had provided sample text for Commissioners to use in their own reach out activity. Chairman Heck requested that Commissioners reach out to their contacts and then inform Ms. Lowry's team once a request has been sent.

Chairman Heck explained that while staff has sought to cast as wide a net as possible, at this point many outlets simply lack enough interest in the Commission and its issues. He noted the challenges associated with building interest among people of influence, citing the fourteen-month effort to arrange a meeting with GEN Stanley McChrystal as an example. He encouraged Commissioners to engage their contacts.

Public Hearing Debrief

From 1650 to 1815 ET, the Commission deliberated about the day's public hearings on mobilization needs. All Commissioners participated in the meeting.

Mr. Barney began by noting that the Department of Defense (DoD) did not provide the Commission with answers to questions the Commission has requested several times.

Vice Chair Wada raised the issue of critical skills. She recommended reaching out to Admiral Polowczyk, who indicated in testimony that the Navy has a list of needed skillsets. Jud Crane, Research Lead for Selective Service, agreed to follow up and noted that staff would be launching an effort to obtain written answers to outstanding questions. Chairman Heck explained that DoD's list of critical skillsets includes three areas: medical, aviation, and cyber. DoD is further ahead in identifying the specialties needed in the medical area, including the variety of billets that wartime would require. He noted that Congress included relevant legislation for medical specialties in the FY2017 National Defense Authorization Act.

Mr. Barney spoke to ensuring the availability of critical skills in industry and raised the Defense Production Act (DPA) as an area worth exploring. Building in testimony from Dr. Rostker, he

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wondered if the DPA would allow the government to prioritize contracts and contractors outside of the traditional defense contractor base to ramp up critical skill capacity in a time of need. Mr. Lekas felt that the DPA would not provide sufficient reach and said the legal team would look into this. Ms. Skelly's understanding is that the DPA traditionally has focused on things rather than people and she recommended talking with a contact of hers at the Professional Services Association regarding this topic.

Mr. Barney wondered whether the DPA would provide DoD with the authority to seek assistance from companies with international business who may not feel inclined to give their talent to support a DoD mission, noting the current dispute at Google involving Project Maven. He believes that the Project Maven situation presents a concern for the nation. He contrasted that situation with the posture of the airline carriers that partner with the federal government on a range of initiatives in exchange for incentives the federal government provides to them. Relatedly, one panelist spoke about the Civil Reserve Air Fleet and wondered if that model could be extended to other areas involving critical skills, such as the development of a Civilian Cyber Reserve. Dr. Davidson clarified that the Civil Reserve Air Fleet is a business partnership rather than an incentive. She wondered if this line of thinking would blur the lines between inspiring people to serve versus compelling them to serve and asked if the Commission would want to explore engaging with industry to compel people to serve in a time a need. This approach, she noted, would lead to a very different conversation than the Commission's vision statement of an America in which everyone is "inspired and eager to serve."

Ms. Haines indicated that she understood that the National Security Agency (NSA) was looking for ways to address the challenge of losing mid-level and senior employees with cyber skills who were taking jobs in the private sector, and that a proposed option she had heard about, which she thought the NSA might support, was a scenario in which such employees would be offered the opportunity to retain some proportion of their retirement benefits, in exchange for agreeing that they could be called back in the event the NSA required their skill set to address a specific threat. She recommended that the Commission explore such options and find out whether any such proposals were being discussed on the Hill. Dr. Rough noted that the Commission is reviewing proposals focused on marshalling cyber experts for government civilian service.

Vice Chair Wada, returning to Mr. Barney's discussion of the DPA, felt that the government could use contract vehicles to obtain needed services, and recommended identifying situations in which it is critical to bring individuals into government service rather than relying on contracting processes.

Chairman Heck noted the constitutional issues that compelling service would raise as opposed to compelling a company to provide products in exchange for payment. His sense is that a private company could not compel a person to serve the government.

Mr. Crane noted for the Commission that staff had connected with individuals at the Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy (the Eisenhower School) to discuss government efforts to compel the industrial base. From that meeting, it became clear that a major issue is whether the necessary skills even exist. As a general matter, companies do not

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have excess capacity because of the length of time it takes to train an individual to perform services on, for example, an assembly line. DoD issued a report in September 2018, [available here](#), that recommended developing an internship program to generate excess support.

Mr. Barney, joined by Ms. Haines, recommended taking the “parking lot” approach to this topic: identifying it in the report as an important issue to consider, particularly given the Commission’s mandate to explore critical skill development, without making it the subject of the Commission’s recommendations.

Dr. Davidson, returning to the public hearings, identified themes that the panelists, overall, either agreed with or did not refute. Among these, she mentioned the uncertainty of whether a draft would be needed; the value of the SSS as a deterrent; and a view that the homeland should no longer be viewed as a sanctuary. On the value of the SSS as a deterrent, she suggested asking an expert in U.S. competitors, such as Ms. Kania, to consider the specific issue. Given the many people who view going to war as something happening outside of the United States, she felt it important to highlight the possibility that war could happen in the homeland.

Ms. James felt that the panelists did not express a consensus on the need for or value of critical skills draft. She also wondered why people continue to look at the never-used Health Care Personnel Delivery System as a model for developing a targeted draft for other skill areas. Additionally, she questioned whether DoD would have the ability to incorporate drafted individuals into their ranks.

Dr. Davidson expressed an additional concern about a skills-based draft. She noted that some young people spoke to her after the hearing and said that this type of program could create perverse incentives that, she felt, could exacerbate socio-economic issues.

Ms. Haines saw utility in identifying and pushing agencies and departments to identify critical skillsets needed, reviewing that list on a regular basis, and updating it over time. She felt it important to plan for needs ahead of time rather than waiting until an emergency to design an appropriate system. She supported exploring the concept of a skill-focused reserve corps that includes training and a plan to be ready in the event of an emergency. She also supported finding ways to build up critical skillsets in government. Similarly, Chairman Heck recommended further review of the Maryland National Guard’s skill-force model, discussed in testimony by MG Singh. He wondered about creating a national civilian defense force comprised of a cadre of volunteers with critical skills, who receive some training and, by virtue of their role, are engaged. Ms. James noted that Ms. Kania proposed an idea like this in her testimony, involving a group of individuals with critical skills who would volunteer first when needed. Ms. James suggested that it could be structured to include both groups as well as individuals.

Mr. Allard addressed testimony from Dr. Rostker about registering individuals in a post-mobilization scenario in less than one year. He questioned whether this would be feasible given the difficulty of placing individuals into appropriate military occupational specialties (MOSs). Mr. Barney applied this reasoning to the current SSS, noting that, notwithstanding Mr. Benton’s

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view that the SSS could perform any task if given sufficient funds, a successful system requires quality information on the front end (“junk in, junk out”).

Ms. Skelly recommended an interagency lead for critical skills or education, housed in the National Security Council staff or at the Department of Homeland Security, who would have a statutory requirement to identify critical skills and review and update the list each year. Mr. Barney suggested that information could even be provided to guidance counselors to encourage students to develop those skills.

Mr. Kilgannon felt the panelists agreed on the need to identify critical skills and encourage or compel those possessing critical skillsets to serve in the future. He wondered, however, about the value in generating a list now that would be outdated in the future and whether it would be possible to create a mechanism for identifying critical skillsets that would be adaptive to change.

Chairman Heck thought it would be possible to create such a mechanism but that it would have to be skills agnostic. This view was echoed by other Commissioners later in the conversation.

Ms. Haines explained that in her experience, the military and the intelligence community were capable of identifying certain needed skillsets for recruiting purposes in the short term, at least, and she would support an effort to drive agencies and departments to identify the skillsets needed and to communicate those needs. She would also support creating a mechanism, such as a reserve corps, that could not only serve to help prepare people with certain existing skillsets that may be needed in a national emergency to “hit the ground running” in the event they are called into service, but also might serve to introduce those individuals to the military and civilian service.

Vice Chair Wada distinguished between the SSS function of supplying personnel in a “break the glass” scenario and filling shortages in critical skillsets which presents more of a recruiting problem. Ms. Haines agreed and noted that both issues are squarely in the Commission’s mandate.

Dr. Davidson explained that the Commission’s job is *uncertainty* by which she meant that the Commission does not have to identify the skillsets needed but should identify a flexible system or process capable of identifying critical skillsets going forward. She noted a discrepancy among military planners with respect to developing war plans and force structure planning, relying on forces identified a decade or more in the past, and looking only a few years into the future to assess impending needs. Mr. Khazei agreed, pointing to written testimony suggesting that the Commission could add value in making connections between its public service mandate and critical skills. Both he and Dr. Davidson emphasized the need to fix problems with the hiring system, and Ms. Haines added retention as well as flexibility in returning to service (for example, through non-competitive eligibility) to the mix.

Mr. Kilgannon highlighted Ms. Schulman’s testimony recommending that the first step should be to fix the SSS’ ability to serve its specific purpose before moving towards bigger efforts. Mr. Kilgannon also appreciated testimony reflecting a sense that the SSS and the effort of trying to get people to serve is depressing and it would be better to develop a stronger sense of patriotism

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and duty. Dr. Davidson likened this to how people step up in the event of emergencies and wondered about a system capable of absorbing those volunteers, and making the first call out to those volunteers, to be ready in the event of an emergency – especially if the homeland is not a sanctuary.

Chairman Heck related the conversation back to civic engagement and programs such as JROTC that teach young people about their civic responsibilities and instill a sense of patriotism. He felt that the testimony did not support the view that the SSS itself is or has been a deterrent to potential U.S. adversaries but rather that the ability of the United States to mobilize its people is. Leading from this, the question is how to achieve mobilization in the future and convey that posture to adversaries today. An answer to this question does not lead invariably to the current SSS. Ms. Skelly referenced Ms. Kania's discussion of drilling exercises as a way to demonstrate resolve. Chairman Heck noted the Commission's discussion of issuing a call for volunteers as the first step in a mobilization effort. Dr. Davidson noted that the nation would prepare the environment over time by investing in civic education. She also expressed an interest in finding a way to educate the general populace about the reality of national security risks to the homeland.

Mr. Barney described the Maryland Defense Force approach as a model for building a base of talent. He also likened it to the model in Jacksonville, FL, to build disaster response capacity.

Mr. Khazei referred back to Mr. Kilgannon's point about the negativity surrounding the SSS and felt it would be great to make the experience more positive or even a rite of passage.

Vice Chair Wada noted the Commission's apparent view that a draft mechanism is necessary and asked Commissioners for views on whether the process should occur pre- or post-mobilization.

Before addressing this point, Ms. James asked for information on the drills that Mr. Benton said the SSS has been conducting in the past year or so. Mr. Crane explained that the SSS had briefed Commission staff on three exercises. First, the SSS drew numbers from the "popcorn" machines and matched those numbers to names in the database. Second, the SSS constituted a state office in one state, as a sample, and surged personnel that would be needed in the event of a draft. Third, the SSS began to identify memoranda of understanding that would be required to launch a formal alternative service program. Mr. Crane noted that it is not clear that the SSS has explored ways to ensure that data remains accurate over time even if it accurate when entered into the database. Mr. Allard noted MG Singh's suggestion to use social security numbers as a way to ensure accurate information on the individuals.

Some Commissioners expressed concern about the effects of moving to a post-mobilization registration scenario. Mr. Kilgannon wondered how the government would keep the public informed about the potential of a future draft. Ms. Haines added that in her experience, if an agency suspends operations, it takes a while to reconstitute effectiveness. Ms. Skelly also worried about having the infrastructure in place to respond to a future draft need.

Chairman Heck asked Commissioners for their views on a separate system like the Serve America model the Commission has explored. This system could, in theory, facilitate a post-

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mobilization registration by deriving social security numbers for a relevant demographic cohort from the Social Security Administration. Mr. Allard suggested cross-referencing that information against tax returns to identify job skills. Chairman Heck feels the current SSS budget could be used for a better present purpose, such as providing information about opportunities in all streams of service, while also serving as a mechanism to fulfill a mobilization function if needed in the future. He noted that Mr. Benton testified that the SSS could carry out additional tasks so long as it has sufficient resources.

Dr. Rough asked the Commission for reactions on whether the secondary registration processes such as using state motor vehicles registration are worth keeping or reviewing. Mr. Allard said he completely disagreed with Mr. Benton about state drivers' license legislation. He said only a handful of states have laws that are gender neutral and it will be a challenging process to change those laws if registration is required of all Americans. Many of those laws, he noted, have been in place for a long time and any changes to them could yield entirely different results.

Mr. Crane provided background on drivers' license legislation. He explained that thirty-one states have legislation and it has developed mostly on a state-by-state basis. There was a big push to implement legislation in 2002 as compliance rates were declining. Although model legislation was developed in 2007, the model code provisions have not been adopted in most states.

Dr. Rough closed the discussion by briefing the Commission on two red team products developed by staff. One considers a screening process, used in Norway, whereby individuals indicate whether they would be willing to serve if needed. The other considers a model that involves suspending registration and implementing a post-mobilization registration system. Dr. Rough also briefed the Commission on the concept of moral mobilization; she noted that several panelists spoke about national resolve or will and the staff red team product provides background on that concept.

April 25, 2019

Business Meeting

The Commission convened at the Peikoff Alumni House at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, at 0815 ET for a business meeting that concluded at 0830 ET. All Commissioners were present. The Chairman introduced Jeff McNichols, Deputy Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement, to brief the Commission on the day's two hearings. Mr. McNichols described the structure of the hearings and provided an overview of the panelists' background. He answered questions from Commissioners about panelists, their organizations, and their testimony. Dr. Rough set out the research objectives of the two hearings.

Public Hearing: Should Registration be Expanded to All Americans? Arguments against Expansion

From 0900 to 1200 ET, Commissioners held a public hearing titled Should Registration be Expanded to All Americans? Arguments Against Expansion. Panelists included Dr. Mark Coppenger, Professor of Christian Philosophy and Ethics, Southern Baptist Theological

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Seminary; Ms. Jude Eden, U.S. Marine Corps Iraq veteran and freelance journalist; Mr. Edward Hasbrouck, Editor and publisher, Resister.info; Ms. Ashley McGuire, Senior Fellow, the Catholic Association; and Ms. Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission's Facebook and YouTube pages.

Public Hearing: Should Registration be Expanded to All Americans? Arguments for Expansion

From 1300 to 1600 ET, Commissioners held a public hearing titled Should Registration be Expanded to All Americans? Arguments for Expansion. Panelists included Lieutenant General Flora Darpino, retired U.S. Army, former Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Army; Dr. Jason Dempsey, Senior Advisor at the Columbia University School of Professional Studies; Professor Jill Hasday, Distinguished McKnight University Professor & Centennial Professor in Law, University of Minnesota; Major General Bengt Svensson, Defense Attache, Embassy of Sweden; and Ms. Katey van Dam, U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission's Facebook and YouTube pages.

April 26, 2019

Legal Update

The Commission reconvened at 0700 ET at its offices in Arlington, VA. All Commissioners were present.

Mr. Lekas and Rachel Rikleem, Deputy General Counsel, provided a briefing on the Anti-Lobbying Act and Hatch Act restrictions on Commission official activities. A handout and slide deck were shared at the briefing.

Mr. Lekas explained how the statutory requirements of the Anti-Lobbying Act and appropriation riders prohibit Federal employees from asking members of the public to contact their elected officials to either support or to oppose pending legislation, as well as from providing administrative support to outside organizations in their lobbying efforts. Ms. Rikleem reviewed the prohibitions on partisan political activities of employees under the Hatch Act. Finally, Mr. Lekas outlined how the lobbying and political activity restrictions may limit the engagement activities of the Commission in the next year and a half. He also drew a distinction between what can be done in one's personal capacity and what official actions can be taken by Commissioners or staff.

Commissioners raised questions about how to respond when requested by candidates for information about the Commission, including whether a briefing for all candidates can be offered. Chairman Heck noted that speaking with campaigns needs to be part of the larger discussion of how the Commission engages with different groups both before and after the final report is released. Mr. Lekas and Ms. Rikleem encouraged Commissioners to reach out with questions and for advice on particular situations.

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General McChrystal Discussion

From 0730 to 0800 ET, the Commissioners had a discussion with General Stanley McChrystal (Ret.) about his efforts to promote national service and to seek his expert advice on issues within the Commission's mandate. All Commissioners were present for this discussion.

Chairman Heck began the discussion by asking GEN McChrystal for any recommendations he might have for the Commission.

GEN McChrystal explained that he did not learn about national service until leaving the military. He believes the importance of national service is self-evident and that fostering national service is imperative to America. Noting that he has not found anyone who disagrees with the importance of national service, he expressed concern about the limited action taken to realize the potential of national service. He mentioned that he finds broad agreement in the view that the country would be better off if citizens were to invest their time and energy towards the country and that a goal should be to create a culture of service. People often point out that this goal will be both hard and expensive. To GEN McChrystal, we live in hard times and need involved and engaged citizens; social decay will occur if they do not believe in the promise of America.

Creating an engaged citizenship presents a challenge, he noted. Most of us became citizens by virtue of being born in the United States. Over time, he explained, we receive minor training in how to be an engaged citizen and undertake a few obligations, such as paying taxes. GEN McChrystal views service experience as a way to promote civic engagement because people who serve invariably walk away with a different view of their fellow citizens and their society. The value is the production of national service alumni, not the work they do. He feels it important that Americans engage in service in part to appreciate what the government provides, likening it to speeches he gives: he is received better and more courteously at his paid speeches than those he delivers pro bono.

Dr. Davidson spoke about the civil-military divide. She expressed concerns about fetishizing military service, general disrespect for civilian public servants, and the military's concerns about elevating civilian service. GEN McChrystal shared Dr. Davidson's concern about fetishizing military service and describing every military servicemember as a hero. While most are great people, he noted, few are actual heroes. He believes national service should be roughly equivalent to military service. He referenced the counterterrorism force he oversaw, which was almost 30% civilian. He believes there should be a GI Bill-equivalent for national service. Even if that means giving people more than they "earned" it would be an investment in the future.

GEN McChrystal turned to the SSS. He recommended an SSS that includes all Americans and that pushes people towards serving in a way that addresses the nation's needs. He thinks we should not be shy about drafting people with special skills because the nation needs them. He also recommended a single service-focused recruiting station where a person can look at opportunities across all streams of service. He feels this would be more efficient and also expose people to different types of service, as well as countering the perception that military service is "cool" while other forms of service are not.

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To the latter point, Vice Chair Wada noted concerns by the military that housing recruiting efforts under the same roof would make it harder for the military to compete for recruits and asked for thoughts on addressing that aspect of military culture. GEN McChrystal feels that if the military cannot compete then it needs to make changes. One symptom of the all-volunteer force (AVF) is that it has generated insularity in the military and fear of change. The fear of a draft is tied closely to the experience of Vietnam. GEN McChrystal would support a return to the draft.

Vice Chair Gearan asked about the current state of American civic life. GEN McChrystal has found people to be connected and engaged in a lot of places in America. He feels, though, that civic life now is in danger, and that there is not enough cooperation among Americans directed at the good of the country. He encouraged a “reset” of civic life.

Ms. Skelly asked if GEN McChrystal had views on how bold the Commission should be in its recommendations. GEN McChrystal said that while he has some inclination to push for mandatory universal service, he does not think it will happen and instead recommends that the nation prove to its people that national service works at scale. To this end, he recommends identifying certain locations or programs and operate them at sufficient scale to get attention, bring young people in and get them to serve, operate the system knowing that there will be flaws, and demonstrate how valuable it is. One million people engaged every year in national service would represent a critical mass necessary for most people to know someone serving, for people to start asking themselves “where are you serving?,” and for the goal of creating a culture of expected service to be real. He does not think mandatory service is worth the fight.

Dr. Davidson raised the issue of critical skills, and noted concerns raised by some that a special-skills draft would be elitist because it would encourage people with means to register for the skills draft and avoid infantry service. GEN McChrystal acknowledge the point but noted that infantry has a different connotation today than during Vietnam and in fact is a sought-after choice for West Point graduates. Although the balance between infantry and other positions may change over time, he thinks a skills draft holds appeal and is worth the possible externality that Dr. Davidson identified.

Mr. Allard asked for GEN McChrystal’s views about young people’s drive to serve. GEN McChrystal described it as less clear-cut than in previous generations but believes it remains. Today, it is less “cool” to be patriotic with respect to the United States rather than towards an issue. Nevertheless, he believes it possible to rekindle the desire. He described people as desperate to be part of something, noting that people, at times, need to be asked or pushed to do something. He reflected that in his experience some of the best things he (and he assumed others) had done was forced upon him and he later realized was amazing. He views this through the lens of responsibility. As a general matter, he feels we as a society have become hesitant to tell people that they need to do unpleasant things because they are good for you. He has seen this at Yale, where he teaches a course; there are bright kids who want to do something great but the school does not push them to do so. He believes to have an engaged citizenry we need to move people toward the stream to drink.

Mr. Kilgannon asked how to lower the percentage of young people unqualified for military service. GEN McChrystal reviewed the main reasons for disqualification. He referred to various

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factors, including growing up in communities where individuals are not benefited by the laws and may see more value in ignoring them and the removal of physical education in schools due to fiscal constraints. He recommended large-scale service possibilities as a way to create a connection between individuals and their society and government, to generate self-respect and a sense of ownership.

Ms. Haines raised the issue of mandating service. She noted that people seem less resistant to incorporating mandatory service into high school. Service tied to high school would likely keep individuals within their communities although part of developing a culture of service is creating bridges across communities. She asked for GEN McChrystal's views on bridging this gap. GEN McChrystal expressed his view that it is very important to get people out of their comfort zones and zip codes. He supports creating intentional opportunities to do that and openly encouraging those efforts, and he believes this will require leadership. His general view on mandatory service is that it would generate a resistance that would confuse the issue. He wants to create a social expectation of service that creates pressure on young people to serve, not unlike the pressure felt by young men during World War II. He hopes service will be so ingrained that future American politicians would not dare to run for office without having served.

Mr. Khazei expanded on the point made by Ms. Haines and asked about turning the second semester of high school senior year into a capstone service experience. GEN McChrystal noted that he had not previously considered this idea but thinks it could be a great way to inspire service so long as it is well run and creates a worthwhile experience for the students. He suggested testing this idea before scaling.

GEN McChrystal then provided concluding remarks. He believes the right answer is to have strong national service that is considered equivalent to other types of service. The main challenge is the lack of people in positions of power who are willing to do anything towards this goal. He challenged the Commission to push this issue into the national discourse and make the issue real for Americans.

Dr. Davidson asked for GEN McChrystal's view on the window that would enable a realistic effort to put forward significant policy changes. He believes the current political divide or divisiveness presents the window. But, he noted, this theme does not resonate with everyone and that he and his colleagues have been searching for the right window.

Mr. Allard inquired about the idea of a national service academy. GEN McChrystal provided his view on the military service academies and his hope for a series of service academies that would prepare individuals for all streams of service.

GEN McChrystal closed with thoughts about large-scale policy change. Using the example of joint service work in the military, he noted that the services fought tooth-and-nail against joint service programs. Policymakers nevertheless encouraged joint service programs by changing personnel laws to require joint service experience for elevation to the top ranks. Over time, this effort effected a change in culture and now the military cannot get enough of joint operations. GEN McChrystal recommended exploring a similar effort that would require individuals to have served before they could be considered for prestigious positions in government.

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Public Hearing Debrief

From 0840 to 1000 ET, the Commission held a deliberation regarding the prior day's hearings on expanding the registration of the selective service. Chairman Heck led the discussion and all Commissioners participated.

Vice Chair Wada thought the hearings and witnesses were good overall. She noted that nothing arose in the testimony that made her pause or think differently than before. Referring to the first day of testimony, she wondered what the Commission could do to help convey the situation the nation is in with respect to potential future threats to the larger American public and the need for a draft mechanism. Dr. Davidson concurred.

Ms. James referred to the second day of testimony and the topic of expanding registration to all Americans. Beginning with the first panel—those opposed to expanding registration—she said Ms. Randal helped clarify for her some of their positions that were a little all over the place in the past because they heard so many different voices on it. She thought Mr. Hasbrouck provided a rational argument for his position. She felt Dr. Coppenger's message was undermined by a sloppy delivery that made his views seem flippant rather than thoughtful. She appreciated the thoughtful deliveries of Ms. McGuire and Ms. Eden. She appreciated the staff and the folks who worked to find the witnesses. She also appreciated the inclusion of the faith-based perspective. Even though Ms. McGuire had a faith-based background, she was presenting a secular argument, which was helpful.

Ms. James next addressed the second panel, which included panelists supporting the extension of registration to all Americans. She appreciated Dr. Dempsey's testimony. She was disappointed in the testimony of LTG Darpino because she seemed to discount some factors such as injury rates that Ms. James felt could weigh against extending registration to women. Overall, Ms. James expressed the second panel did make her think differently though perhaps not enough to change her conclusions on the topic.

Mr. Allard said he thought the hearings overall were great and all the panels provided tremendous insight and information. He wondered whether the panels on the second day would have been better with integrated, counterpoint perspectives instead of one for extending registration and one against. Chairman Heck indicated that this was a unique situation and future panels would not feature the same approach. Several Commissioners appreciated the counterpoints presented by Dr. Rostker and Mr. Benton.

Chairman Heck reviewed the process for building each public hearing and identifying panelists. He clarified that the questions provided to the Commission are based on research needs and suggested that Commissioners use those in the first round of questioning and use the second round to ask questions based on the oral testimony.

The Vice Chairs recommended beginning each day with a review of goals for the public hearings on that day.

Dr. Davidson then reviewed several takeaways from the hearings. First, she recommended that the final report be sensitive to the public's concerns about United States military policy. She

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highlighted Dr. Dempsey's final comment (which she noted could have come from Mr. Hasbrouck) regarding poor decisions; the next generation has noticed this and may view the Commission as hypocritical if it asks that generation to step up and serve. Second, she noted that while national security threats may seem obvious to the Commissioners they are not to the general public. Ms. Skelly added her surprise that Dr. Coppenger did not elaborate on that issue and felt any risk was too remote. Third, Dr. Davidson recommended that the Commission look at registration as an opportunity to educate, following Dr. Dempsey and MG Svenssen. She was particularly interested in the 52-question survey that Sweden requires.

Mr. Barney added to the last point, suggesting the process could be a way to actively engage people and provide more than what DoD has characterized as a "moment of pause" when the SSS letter arrives in the mail. The idea of someone sitting down to go through a 52-question survey, he noted, requires a commitment of time and reflection. He said he is torn on this because of the balance of solemnity, ensuring people use the system, and communicating in a positive way to the nation at large. His sense is that the value of the SSS is largely symbolic therefore it needs to be a powerful thing, not only for people in the country but also as it is received by people in other countries. While he indicated he was not yet ready to concede on passive registration, he recommended that the Commission at least consider an approach that would include a survey as a way to convey a strong value and also provide an opportunity for individuals to register, for example, for a civilian reserve component.

Dr. Davidson said these issues have made her rethink some ideas around mandatory and addressed the emergency service scenario. She suggested the Commission look to leverage scenarios in which people volunteer to serve in emergency situations, for example in the California wildfires. This is a form of civic duty that would be powerful to connect with the Commission's overall message.

Mr. Kilgannon observed how the different panels viewed the fundamental role or function of the SSS. Mr. Benton, for example, views the SSS as a "third tier" of the national security apparatus, and Ms. Kania described it as a robust tool of national security. In contrast, individuals in the final panel talked about the SSS as a social construct and a tool to message to society about specific issues.

Ms. James spoke about MG Svensson's testimony about Sweden's neighbors taking notice when Sweden reinstated the draft as one of the more powerful statements in the hearings. She noted that this may be more relevant for that country than for the United States. While she found Dr. Rostker's testimony about moving to a post-mobilization system somewhat compelling, she has concern that eliminating the SSS would send the wrong message to U.S. adversaries and that the general public would not perceive the nuance between eliminating the system and moving to deep standby. Dr. Davidson felt that Dr. Rostker's case presupposed that nothing would happen in the homeland. The more she hears, including in GEN McChrystal's talk earlier in the day about the civil-military divide, the more she sees important reasons for a pre-mobilization registration.

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Mr. Barney explored the idea of building a survey into the registration process. He suggested such a survey could include a question about conscientious objector status, but also about skills, physical abilities, and other issues. He suggested incorporating the ASVAB or something like it and using the process to assist individuals in their own career exploration. This would keep the core of the SSS as an operating entity but with an expanded purpose.

Ms. Haines thought this idea interesting. She indicated that a valid purpose for the system could include communication. She noted a theme that arose in testimony was that the purpose for which the SSS was originally established may not be the same as the purpose the nation wants or needs today. For example, she added, it is clear that the nation does not want a system solely to supply combat replacement troops. She suggested that the system should be designed to be effective in the event of a national emergency – not just a military emergency. With that purpose and assuming it is intended to be voluntary, it would also be important to ensure informed consent, and one way of doing that would be the idea that Mr. Barney described. She expressed concern, however, about how robust the system would be without mandatory registration.

Mr. Barney felt that the idea of mandating registration for some segment of the population would be helpful. He also suggested an approach that would allow individuals to select the service of their choice in pre-mobilization which would facilitate mobilization upon a Presidential “call for volunteers.” Vice Chair Wada said this might need a lot of education. Ms. Skelly said the point just made about the universality of requirements to register, she has a deepening concern that there is not an equal opportunity to register across the nation because of different approaches taken by the state and that the system is too subjective.

Chairman Heck provided thoughts in response to various comments made by fellow Commissioners. He said he supported the idea of a pre-mobilization process with incentives rather than penalties to register. He agreed that eliminating the SSS could send a message, noting that it would depend on how the SSS is repurposed and how that repurposing is messaged and communicated to the public. He agrees with others that the Commission should look at mobilizing the nation for purposes beyond the military. As to a survey, he expressed support for the idea but wondered when it would make sense for an individual to provide that information, given that few individuals have much information about critical skillsets and the like at age 18. He likes the idea of a 52-question or ASVAB-like survey and suggested that could be a way to identify those individuals predisposed to service.

Ms. James addressed the idea of positive versus negative reinforcement. She noted that there are some things you just have to do—paying taxes, jury duty, and, for males, registering with the SSS. She views these three tasks as critical to the foundation of the nation, and it would be catastrophic were people to decide not to do these things. There are consequences for not doing any of these things and she hesitates to remove these penalties. She supports enticements or benefits to encourage people to register but believes there must be a forcing function.

Mr. Khazei had not thought about post-mobilization until hearing Dr. Rostker’s testimony. This approach intrigues him although he thinks it important, in that case, to have a serve-your-country

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system in which individuals would update their information periodically for opportunities to serve their country in all streams of service. He suggested a tax benefit for those who register.

Ms. Haines echoed Ms. James in suggesting that a key question is whether the Commission thinks there should be compulsory registration. She noted that the Commission seems in agreement that a call for volunteers is the right first step in the event a need for mass mobilization arises. She suggested that such a call would be made more efficient and timely with a sign-up process that allowed an individual to indicate willingness to commit and areas of interest in the event of a call up. She noted that the Commission has just heard about how people who want to serve just want to be asked or told. She said there could be incentives not only with respect to the actual service that one engages in but also incentives associated with maintaining an updated profile.

Mr. Barney developed the idea of incentives, suggesting connections to a driver's license renewal process or to the filing of taxes or receipt of tax refunds. Chairman Heck cautioned against reconceiving an incentive as a penalty. Mr. Allard described the potential fine line between those two concepts, noting that a 52-question survey could entitle one to federal funding and jobs but would also impose a burden on the individual.

Other Commissioners added their views on this issue. Ms. Skelly noted that if a survey is part of a systematic approach that begins in grade school, then people will be prepared once they encounter the system at 18. Dr. Davidson added that if the system is open to all Americans, it is much easier to view it as a benefit—"If I complete this I have access to a federal system and certain benefits"—than as a penalty. Ms. Haines emphasized not losing sight over the fact that there are responsibilities that come with citizenship, even if it may be useful to have incentives.

Ms. James expressed concern about "Big Brother" having information that an individual may not want to provide, and the possibility that insurance companies and others could gain access to that information. The United States, unlike Sweden and Norway, has a government less intimately involved in its citizenry. Vice Chair Wada said the kids from California made her think there is not a shared view across the country for what we think service is and what the obligations of citizens are. She stressed the importance of the Commission articulating what it means to be a citizen and the divergent opinions about this across the country.

Ms. Haines said to the extent the Commission views civic education as a critical part of this, it should endorse recommendations that teach young people how to participate and lend their voices to the process. This is essential to building trust. People have objected to compulsory service in part because they do not trust the government to make good decisions. She said it is important to shift the narrative to build trust in the government.

Vice Chair Gearan referenced GEN McChrystal's point that the first thing democracy needs is engaged citizens. He said that this Commission has an opportunity to determine what this form of civic engagement and education means. Ms. Skelly recommended viewing an engaged populace and civic health as a component of national security for many reasons, including that these features lead to a functioning economy.

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Mr. Kilgannon expressed concern over the idea of including a survey as part of registration. Moreover, he felt that the tenor of the discussion did not give sufficient credit to the millions of people doing things at a local level and he feels it critical to indicate value for what they are doing. Mr. Kilgannon also referred to Ms. James comment about the limited number of things Americans are required to do, noting that, to him, that limited list makes it clear that the nation allows individual freedom, which he views as a good thing. He also worries about a slippery slope, where three things turn into six or more.

Mr. Kilgannon stepped back to ask what problem, ultimately, is the Commission trying to solve. He asked whether it is to create a system for a national emergency, or a system designed to cure society's ills.

Mr. Khazei responded by pointing to oft-repeated concerns about the present pre-mobilization system in which there is little solemnity and most registration is passive. He believes that Congress and the President would institute a draft if faced with an existential threat. The mission of the Commission, he noted, is to look at public, military, and national service as well as the SSS. He believes, consistent with this mandate, the Commission can recommend a post-mobilization system for a potential draft along with a Serve America system that operates continuously that enables voluntary service along with service streams to tap into in emergency situations.

Chairman Heck said he sees an overall approach that takes pieces of what other Commissioners have said. He believes the country can demonstrate national will to mobilize in a different way and can utilize the current system through rebranding to fulfill the goal of increasing willingness to serve in all three pipelines – all without asking for additional funding. He recommends that the system be used to fulfill the tri-service mission and that when the balloon goes up it could be used for a mass mobilization because the infrastructure is in place and has been maintained. He believes under this approach, the government could flip the switch from voluntary mode to mandatory mode. He said this approach brings together the various elements. It would involve a continual exercise of the system to reduce lag time in the event of a draft need.

Ms. Haines identified two challenging questions around this approach as (a) ensuring sufficient numbers of individuals registering to enable mobilization when needed and (b) messaging around the effort so that people do not perceive the country as stepping back from a defense or national security posture.

Chairman Heck believes that when a national emergency happens and there is a call to register and serve, Americans will answer the call. Vice Chair Wada asked how this would be enforced if they did not and noted that in a mobilization situation there would not be manpower to send the U.S. Marshalls after everyone who did not register. Ms. Haines raised the question of whether we should consider a scenario in which mandatory registration remains in place until the system is tested to ensure that a post-mobilization system would work.

Ms. James expressed another challenge, which is how would a voluntary approach instill a sense of service in young people and increase their motivation to serve. She said the cynical side of her is that a whole bunch of 18 years old are going to say “dodged that bullet.” Mr. Khazei

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suggested this could be addressed through various K-12 initiatives. He said there could be accompanying pieces such as a summer of service for students and expanded service-learning programs in schools. Further, he recommended an incentive (such as a \$100 tax credit) for signing up with the system at the age of 18. He believes this approach could be really powerful because people would see something in it for them. He thinks this would encourage people to sign up once a call is put out.

Chairman Heck noted that in thinking through the options he does assume that civic education and the other foundational components the Commission is exploring would accompany it.

Vice Chair Wada indicated that she could support this way forward but that she would not support any option that would compromise national security and raised concerns about implementing a proposal holistically. She added that she will be comfortable with the Commission's overall recommendations so long as they ensure national security is protected.

Ms. Haines recommended piloting a program in areas to test out the model, while leaving the present system in effect in other locations (with exemptions for those in the pilot areas). Vice Chair Gearan noted that this is similar to GEN McChrystal's recommendation to scale up national service.

Deliberation: Framing the Commission's Eventual Recommendations

From 1015 to 1215 ET, Chairman Heck led a discussion about overall objectives for and framing of the Commission's eventual recommendations. He described the discussion as one of two sessions the Commission would devote to defining its "moonshot."

The Commission began with a discussion about the appropriate role of the federal government.

Vice Chair Wada noted the fine line between promoting good government and concerns about a government that has grown too big. Dr. Davidson emphasized the important work that the federal government bureaucracy does to support the lives of Americans, including keeping food free of contaminants and ensuring that planes do not fall from the sky. Vice Chair Wada recommended that the Commission explain the benefit of government, recognizing that what government does is not fallible – citing the example of the OPM data breach as one example.

Mr. Kilgannon explained that conservatives believe firstly in the individual over the government. When flooding occurred in Texas, the people there took great pride in having individuals helping other individuals and not simply relying on the federal government to come in to help. He explained that conservatives easily see value in certain aspects of the federal government—such as the military and foreign policy—but that for other aspects, the value is not clearly demonstrated or the task could be handled by individuals or a more local government. He described this as coming out of a desire to be left alone and not told what to do.

Vice Chair Wada recommended focusing on the empowerment of the individual as a common ground, a tenet that both liberals and conservatives could support. Mr. Kilgannon said there is also, on the conservative side, a tremendous sense of patriotism. In speaking with young people

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about serving their country, he has heard them describe it as service to the country – rather than to the government.

Chairman Heck, noting his perspective as one who has made both liberals and conservatives unhappy, recommended that the Commission address the role of the individual in American democracy and avoid defining the appropriate role of the government. To be effective, the country needs people in all of these various service roles; he noted that the various service roles and options available to individuals are generated not only by the government but also by the private sector. Mr. Allard concurred and described the government role in this as *enabling* individuals to get engaged and serve. Chairman Heck agreed and, referring to the Commission’s vision statement, emphasized the power of the individual to engage in selfless service and said the Commission should make recommendations to foster clear and supported pathways to service. Mr. Allard and Ms. James added *awareness* as a key element for service and generating an inspiration to participate. Dr. Davidson stressed the community impact dimension of service as another important vantage to consider, with the goal of making America a better place to live.

Commissioners continued by discussing perceptions of government, which led to a discussion about the stereotyping of public servants. Ms. James and Mr. Kilgannon referred to outrage in parts of the country following President Obama’s comment in 2012, “you didn’t build that.” While intended to emphasize the government’s role in helping business owners, it was received differently. Ms. James noted a farm near her with a big sign that read, “My family built this farm, not your government.” Nevertheless, Dr. Davidson added, society in general vilifies public servants and lacks awareness of government contributions. She cited DARPA’s role in developing the foundations for the internet as an example.

Commissioners then sought to connect this line of discussion to the moonshot. Ms. Haines suggested exploring the idea of unifying the country or creating more connections through promoting service in U.S. communities that are not where you come from, in order to improve the cohesiveness and effectiveness of our democracy. Ms. James suggested enhancing cross-cultural understanding. Mr. Kilgannon cautioned against pursuing a goal that is not concrete like a moon landing. Ms. Skelly recommended including in a notion that the Commission supports an engaged citizenry and efforts to prepare people for participation in democracy – informed and exposed to the experience that will enable them to understand their rights and obligations.

Vice Chair Wada suggested a compilation of efforts. For example, increasing the percentage of kids who understand the structure of the United States government or who can articulate the meaning of democracy or who participate in elections. These and other features are measurable and it would be possible to propose metrics over a period of time. Chairman Heck was cautious about relying on metrics related to knowledge because of the difficulty in truly measuring how well the American democracy is functioning now and in the future.

Ms. James suggested following GEN McChrystal’s example to propose a certain number of people serving by a certain year. She felt this would be a metric that the Commission could support and that connects clearly to the Commission’s mandate. Several Commissioners concurred.

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Chairman Heck acknowledge that having engaged citizens connects with a functioning democracy, but asked what the moonshot should be. What is the goal? Are there specific numbers or dates? Should deadlines be tied to important moments in U.S. history?

Ms. Haines advised against using civic knowledge as a metric for success, but noted the importance of using those metrics in demonstrating the usefulness of the proposed outcome. To that end, she further recommended that the Commission engage institutions of higher education to study the Commission's recommendations as implemented to determine whether the Commission's program is successful.

Chairman Heck reminded the Commission of its prior discussion on "moonshot math" that set out different ways to reach different benchmarks in terms of growing service.

Ms. Skelly queried whether a number is the best way to set out the Commission's long-term, strategic end state, since it focuses on quantity rather than quality. A goal of one million is insufficient if what the Commission really hopes to achieve is for everyone to be inspired.

Mr. Khazei recommended taking a staged approach to the moonshot. One million more people serving will help to achieve the next stage. If the goal is to create a cultural expectation, he recommends shooting for one million by 2030. He recommended holding a competition in which different cities or localities would vie for funds to undertake their proportion of that one-million benchmark (such as 5,000 persons in Tulsa) and test, on a pilot basis, whether the addition of that service activity fundamentally changes that community.

Vice Chair Wada asked whether the Commission would endorse separate moonshot goals for public and military service, noting that the one-million figure relates almost exclusively to the national service space. Ms. Skelly suggested focusing on lessening the civil-military divide as one goal. Ms. James suggested focusing on reserves and recruiting for military service and, in public service, an effort to fill critical vacancies. Mr. Khazei agreed that recruiting challenges and the reserves seemed an appropriate focus. With respect to public service, he supported concrete improvements in the hiring process. Dr. Davidson agreed in the importance of breaking down barriers to public service, not only at the federal level but also at state and local levels. She views the civil-military divide as an additional, essential focus.

Vice Chair Gearan stepped back to look at the overall narrative for the Commission's message. He sees value in the collective impact of service and the possibilities that service will have for the nation. He endorsed calling the moonshot a "moonshot" because people understand what that means and it relates to President Kennedy and his aspirational approach. Chairman Heck added that increasing the number of national service participants to one mission by a certain date is an idea that has been floated and, as a result, makes sense and is clear.

Ms. Haines noted the important goals the Commission is identifying with respect to military service and public service and asked how the Commission would message an issue like fixing USAJOBS. Mr. Khazei suggested the cross-cutting proposals would help to bridge this, for example, by providing better inroads to federal civilian service or the military for those who

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participate in a year of national service. He believes these sorts of proposals will help to elevate all streams of service and connect them to one another.

Commissioners talked about opening military recruiting stations to national service recruiters. Mr. Khazei indicated support for a pilot program along those lines. Chairman Heck supported providing access to national service recruiters, if they exist, and sharing pamphlets for national service programs in military recruiting offices, but not tasking military recruiters with recruiting for non-military programs. Vice Chair Wada noted that it would be simple for a military recruiter to point unqualified individuals to other options if a website like “Serve America” were available. Ms. James suggested running two pilots to compare. This could be done in Times Square to make a splash.

Chairman Heck proposed the Commission define its moonshot as one million serving by 2032, the 70th anniversary of President Kennedy’s moonshot speech. That would be ten years after the Commission’s proposed legislation is likely to pass. Several Commissioners supported this idea. Chairman Heck floated benchmarks other than the moonshot speech, to include the anniversary of the Constitution (written in 1787) and the Declaration of Independence (written in 1776).

Vice Chair Gearan requested input on other large ideas that should be included in the overall moonshot proposal. Ms. Haines wondered if the “life of service” concept could be included to demonstrate the pathways into and out of service. Chairman Heck noted that staff will prepare an updated version of this for presentation at the next moonshot discussion in June.

Vice Chair Gearan raised the topic of voting. He views voting as significant as jury duty and taxes and believes the Commission could make recommendations to facilitate voting. He noted that the Commission will communicate something with its position on voting, even if that position is not to address it. Chairman Heck questioned the nexus of voting with service. Vice Chair Gearan said that the Commission should avoid the phrase “engaged citizenship” if it chooses not to address voting because that phrase necessarily evokes voting. Ms. Haines added that since the Commission is exploring issues beyond service, strictly speaking, such as civic education, it does not follow that the Commission would avoid the topic of voting. She recognized that there may not be a consensus or comfort among the Commission to address the topic, which would be a different issue. She said she supports the position that when an individual is capable of registering to vote, that individual should register and should vote, and it would make sense to support this as part of civics education.

Mr. Allard suggested connecting voter registration with SSS registration, such that both would be undertaken at the same time. He views this as connected with the Commission’s work on civic education. Chairman Heck sees voting as a byproduct of civic education but expressed wariness to venture too far from the focus on service. Vice Chair Gearan raised concerns about the logical coherence of this approach. If the Commission views civic education and related elements as building blocks or foundations of the Commission’s service-oriented recommendations the absence of voting would raise concerns. He described a key part of developing civic knowledge and a service-experienced population as having more individuals participating, which includes voting. He said the Commission needs to have a conversation

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about voting and needs to address voting in some way in the final report. Dr. Davidson highlighted the intellectual link, referring to various metrics relating to a strong democracy. Chairman Heck reflected on the input and agreed that the Commission should address voting in the final report, but should not let it seem like a critical piece of the report.

Mr. Kilgannon turned the discussion to his experience of the terms “service” as a noun and “serve” as a verb. He described “service to country” as having a positive connotation while “how are you going to serve your country” as having a negative connotation. He suggested the Commission explore ways to avoid sounding demanding, such as a phrase “build America through service” in lieu of “serve America.”

Dr. Rough raised a separate point about the debate over the terms “democracy” and “republic” to describe the United States. Commissioners discussed the proper usage of these terms in political philosophy and in popular discourse and also identified alternative formulations (“democratic republic” and “representative democracy”) that could be used in the final report.

Executive Session

Beginning at 1245 ET, Commissioners held an executive session outside the presence of staff.

Preparation for May Hearings

Vice Chair Gearan and Mr. Barney, assisted by staff, briefed the Commission on content issues relevant for the May 2019 hearings on military and public service from 1400 to 1600 ET. The full Commission was present for the start of this discussion although Chairman Heck, Vice Chair Gearan, Ms. James, and Mr. Khazei departed early for travel. Following this session, the Commission concluded its April meeting.

Preparation for Public Hearings on Public Service

Annie Rorem, Deputy Director of Research, described the panelists, handouts, and top sheets that outlined the major proposals/policy options put forward by the P2S workgroup. Ms. Rorem shared the general themes planned for each panel: improving major hiring processes and critical skills and benefits for public service. Dr. Davidson asked if all levels of public service would be included and Ms. Rorem said that they would. Vice Chair Gearan encouraged staff to ensure that one of the panelists, the Executive Director of the Arizona State University Public Service Academy, be prepared to speak to broader issues.

Ms. Rorem described the value that the DHS would bring to the critical skills panel. Vice Chair Wada said that she would be interested in an explanation as to why the agency is second or third from the bottom when ranked on staff morale. Brian Collins, the Team Lead for Public Service, informed the Commissioners that DHS hiring authorities are not uniform across the organization, were implemented haphazardly, and can often be at a lower pay scale. Mr. Allard asked how difficult it would be to get a special hiring authority. Mr. Collins said that it would depend on the agency (the DoD might have an easier time) and that the entire government could not often use special hiring authorities. Mr. Collins also noted that OPM has a little-used demonstration

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project authority. Ms. James pointed out that agencies often do not use authorities that are available to them.

Ms. Rorem asked the Commissioners to evaluate if the major themes were accurate. Ms. Haines asked about discussing the need and desire to bring in mid-level, technically trained employees and considered elevating that to a major point.

Ms. Rorem described the research objectives guiding each panel. The first two objectives are to explore revisions to competitive examining and enhancements to noncompetitive hiring.

Ms. Rorem then discussed noncompetitive hiring and hiring preferences, including the difficulty of using non-competitive eligibility options. Ms. Rorem highlighted the importance of striking the right balance between retaining preferences and not undermining the merit-based system. Vice Chair Wada asked if staff had looked at the hiring practices used by major corporations and Mr. Collins said that the staff had; the main takeaway was that subject matter experts should review resumes. Mr. Barney said the government has to focus on long-term adaptability more than the private sector does. Ms. Skelly agreed. Vice Chair Wada asked about assessment tools and Mr. Collins said that OPM has tools, but that agencies do not use them.

Ms. Rorem then focused on internships and fellowships. Ms. Haines said that she has seen people hire legal and intelligence interns. Mr. Collins said that that was because they are in excepted service. Mr. Collins said that a DoD report found that only 4% of the total applicants had any chance of being hired because of veterans' preference. Vice Chair Wada highlighted the success of the Army Corps of Engineers, especially in Louisiana, in running intern programs. Vice Chair Gearan said he wanted to highlight the importance of loan forgiveness. Ms. Rorem said that the proposals to create a public service academy and a public service corps would also part of this discussion.

Ms. Rorem moved on to discuss critical skills, such as healthcare, IT, and STEM. Mr. Collins noted that Congress did not move on recommendations from other commissions focused on healthcare. Ms. James asked who government healthcare providers are and Mr. Collins said mostly VHA, along with a few at prisons and NIH/HHS.

Ms. Rorem said that an option in cyber security was a civilian reserve model. Ms. Rorem said that the panelists would likely be able to discuss this option and identify challenges. Mr. Collins noted that the NSA mentioned challenges on maintaining clearances and forcing people to come back to work for them. Ms. Haines was interested in options in this space. Vice Chair Wada, Dr. Davidson, and Ms. Skelly all agreed that people may return because they want to do cool work with the government.

Ms. Rorem went over the last points on benefits, long-term personnel systems, and more teacher training programs. She noted that the last point is a little different from the other proposals. Dr. Davidson said that teaching programs would not be at the federal level and she wondered if there were other local or state level programs that could inform what is done federally or that has a relationship between national emergencies and public service. Dr. Rough, said that the public service academy and public service corps would support state or local efforts as well.

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Preparation for Public Hearings on Military Service

Dr. Rough introduced the next segment of the discussion, which focused on preparation for the May 16, 2019, public hearings on military service. Ms. Rorem explained that the hearings would start with critical skills and then cover military awareness and lessening the civil-military divide. She described the panelists who would be testifying in the military service hearings. She noted that all panelists were confirmed to attend.

Dr. Davidson asked about whether the panel had a diverse group of panelists, and the group briefly discussed the composition of the panels.

Vice Chair Wada asked about whether Dr. Lindsay Cohn would be a good panelist for the panel given her association with the military. Amy Schafer, Team Lead for Military Service, explained that Dr. Cohn is a leading scholar in civil-military relations and has conducted extensive work including a survey of the American public related to civil-military relations. Vice Chair Wada expressed interest in hearing from a panelist without a military perspective, and Dr. Rough noted that the staff could solicit statements for the record from other academics.

Vice Chair Wada noted that she had spoken with one of the proposed panelists, Nicole Camarillo, and noted that she would be able to speak very candidly because she will have left the government by the time of the hearing. Vice Chair Wada explained that the Defense Digital Service, where Ms. Camarillo worked, has been successful largely because of the culture of the organization, and that she would ask Ms. Camarillo to speak to this organizational culture. Ms. Rorem highlighted that many of the proposed options for the military focus on organizational culture, the language in the proposals often “encourages” the military to use existing authorities and policies to make cultural changes. Following a question from Mr. Allard, Vice Chair Wada explained that the military often does not take advantage of existing promotion authorities because of parochial leadership interests and the organizational culture inherent in the military services. Dr. Rough explained that the trend of not effectively utilizing authorities extends beyond the Defense Digital Service.

Vice Chair Wada said that beyond using authorities, the military services need to fundamentally change their culture to effectively manage personnel. Following a question from Mr. Allard about personnel turnover, Vice Chair Wada expressed her view that the inability to change organizational culture stems largely from leadership and leadership’s commitment to change the culture. Ms. Schafer noted that these issues would be particularly important as the Commission focuses on increasing essential skills in the military.

Ms. Rorem transitioned to a proposed policy option designed to enable the military to better use existing marketing funds through multi-year funding. Mr. Barney felt that this proposal was important in order to match the funding calendar with the advertising calendar.

Ms. Rorem then discussed a proposal focused on creating a marketing pilot program. Vice Chair Wada explained that the proposal would enable the military to solicit marketing ideas from more innovative advertising firms.

Ms. Rorem explained that the next set of proposals focused on increasing awareness by expanding cadet programs and improving recruiting in low-propensity areas. Vice Chair Wada asked whether the Commission should recommend that Congress authorize and appropriate additional recruiting funding since DoD already has authority to reallocate funding for recruiting in low-propensity areas. She recommended that the Commission should simply encourage the

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military services to apply existing funding to recruiting in low-propensity areas. Commissioners discussed ways to recommend this change.

Ms. Rorem turned to a proposal that focuses on facilitating movement between the active and reserve components and civilian sector. Dr. Davidson explained that while introducing a continuum of service is a perennial issue, the Commission should reiterate the importance of making it easier to transition between military and civilian life. Dr. Rough explained that there are some areas of the military where innovative policies in this vein were occurring, but that it could happen more broadly.

Ms. Rorem then transitioned to the next group of proposals which would require separate voting given their size, complexity, or potential sensitivity. She explained that the first of these proposals would create a Cyber Corps to develop new practices and professional cultures for managing specialized personnel. Ms. Schafer reiterated these points and explained that a Cyber Corps would be an experimental model to focus on better recruiting and retaining cyber personnel. Mr. Allard asked whether personnel in the Cyber Corps would be assigned across the military services, and Ms. Schafer explained that there would likely be some level of joint service interoperability. Dr. Davidson expressed interest in hearing expert feedback on this proposal and how personnel management would interact with operational needs. Mr. Barney agreed that the Cyber Corps proposal should be introduced and tested with the panelists in the hearings. Ms. Skelly asked which hearing would be best for exploring the question of a Cyber Corps, and Dr. Rough argued that the first hearing would be the best time for introducing the idea. Following a brief discussion, the group agreed that the proposal should be introduced in the first hearing.

Ms. Rorem then introduced a proposal to expand the use of the ASVAB Career Exploration Program. Commissioners agreed that the idea should be explored in the hearings.

Ms. Rorem then discussed the final military service proposal which focuses on introducing educational incentives for enlisted service. Vice Chair Wada stated that despite providing money for recruits to gain professional certifications, the military services would still require recruits to attend military schools. Mr. Barney noted that increasing these incentives would be valued by staffers in Congress who are looking to increase certifications in the military. Vice Chair Wada and Mr. Barney discussed whether education incentives would be best provided before or during military service, and Vice Chair Wada noted that the Commission should discuss these issues with Sergeant Major of the Army Dan Dailey.

Ms. Rorem then concluded the discussion.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

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