



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Minutes of February 2019 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on February 20-22, 2019, at the Commission's offices in Arlington, VA, and at other locations in the vicinity. 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 (as indicated on Feb. 20; all day on Feb. 21-22)
- The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson (as indicated on Feb. 20; all day on Feb. 21-22)
- The Honorable Mark Gearan (telephonically on Feb. 20)
- The Honorable Avril Haines (only on Feb. 21-22)
- 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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February 20, 2019

Business Meeting

From approximately 0900 to 0920 ET, the Commission convened at its offices in Arlington, VA, for a business meeting. All Commissioners except for Ms. Haines attended, with Vice Chair Gearan and Dr. Davidson attending by telephone. The Chairman moved to close this and other business meetings to occur on February 20-22, 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 January 2019 Commission meeting. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the January 2019 minutes as presented.

Mr. Abernathy then briefed the Commission on logistics for the February 21 public hearings.

Chairman Heck reviewed the Commission's approach to deliberations around public hearings. He explained that in the month prior to a hearing, the Commission would receive a briefing on the issues to be covered and that the Commission would hold a discussion about the hearing on the morning immediately after the hearing. The Chairman noted that over the past several months, Commissioners had received information on hearing themes and had an opportunity to provide input on themes and potential panelists. He indicated that staff would appreciate further input on potential panelists although there would be limited opportunity to incorporate additional input for hearings in March and April.

Commissioners then provided updates on engagements since the January meeting. On February 14, Mr. Kilgannon spoke to America's Service Commissions. He provided an overview of the Commission and then participated, with staff, in a discussion with participants. Mr. Abernathy noted that he received a standing ovation. Chairman Heck reported participating in a panel discussion with CNCS CEO Barbara Stewart at a Corps Network event. He also conducted an interview with a radio station in Louisiana. Vice Chair Wada delivered a keynote address at the conference for the California School Personnel Commissioners Association, an organization of employees for the education districts in California.

Commission Discussion on Growing National Service

Following the business meeting, Commissioners held a discussion on growing national service from 0920 to 1030 ET. Commissioners Allard, Heck, James, Khazei, Kilgannon, Skelly, and Wada participated in person, while Vice Chair Gearan participated over the phone.

Dr. Rough explained that this discussion would build on discussions held in January and assist the Commission in preparing for the March public hearings. This discussion would focus on a fellowship program concept, which she noted is one of the more technical proposals that the Commission is exploring.

As an introduction, Annie Rorem, Deputy Director of Research, provided background on the current framework for national service organizations to participate in CNCS-sponsored programs. First, organizations can apply directly to CNCS for grants and receive funding from

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CNCS. To qualify, each organization must have at least ten members in their program and must provide matching funds. Second, organizations can apply to state service commissions. In that case, the state service commissions receive funding from CNCS and they distribute it to different organizations. Ms. Rorem explained how the latter approach works, with state service commissions receiving funds based on their population. Sandy Scott noted that about 80% of all AmeriCorps grants are administered by state service commissions. Ms. Rorem indicated that staff had prepared primers on the grant process for the Propensity to Serve Work Group and would distribute relevant material to all Commissioners in the coming months.

Ms. Rorem then turned to the fellowship program concept. She stated the objective of the discussion would be for Commissioners to consider how new models could foster growth in national service and provide flexibility, for example, by empowering individuals to create opportunities with organizations rather than relying on organizations with ten or more members to create opportunities.

John Lira, research team lead for national service, described the five key elements of different fellowship program models: (1) method for allocating fellows; (2) certification of national service organizations; (3) matching fund criteria and requirements; (4) benefits packages to participants; and (5) organization.

Mr. Lira next outlined the first of three models – the Serve America Act model. It was noted that the Serve America Act, the 2009 legislation promoted by John McCain, authorized one of the models the Commission would discuss, the Serve America Fellows Program; that program, like other parts of the Serve America Act, has never received a congressional appropriation. The Serve America Act model includes a match requirement, and the living allowance is 70-100 percent of the VISTA allowance. This model also includes eligibility requirements for education benefits and fellows' hours are reported directly to CNCS. Because the program has not been funded, there is no existing data on its effectiveness. Ms. Rorem further explained that the program was intended to add 1,600 fellows over a period of five years to the existing CNCS infrastructure.

Mr. Lira introduced the next model, the Service Year Alliance (SYA) model, named for its originator. Under this model, opportunities are allocated by formula and are non-competitive. Organizations apply directly to a third-party agency (which places the organization on their website). This model centralizes organizations from all states rather than having each state commission host. Certification is accomplished when the third party certifies positions before receiving a fellow. The third party adds the position to the website. This model extends beyond nonprofits. The application process works as follows: applicants apply to state commissions and the state commissions organize panels to select the fellows. Fellows (ages 16-24) then choose from certified positions on the 3rd party website.

Mr. Khazei provided background on SYA efforts to date. He explained that SYA created a Service Exchange platform, funded by CISCO, to help volunteers find organizations, including ones that are not AmeriCorps funded. The Exchange has been live for several years. Some state service commissions are very small. Although some might prefer leaving it to the states, the

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problem is that many of the state commissions don't have the infrastructure to handle this or aren't well-run. That's the advantage of the fellowship model – it allows small organizations to get funding to set up service programs. There's an advantage for organizations that aren't currently AmeriCorps (organizations have to be a certain size to receive AmeriCorps grant) so they can apply without having to meet that AmeriCorps threshold and still receive help.

Mr. Khazei explained that system was designed not just for this, but also to create more of a marketplace and streamline the process. State Commissions were clunky like USAJOBS. This exchange makes the fellowship process easier. Mr. Lira explained that this was really a community response to CNCS' inability to fund all of the service organizations that require funding

Ms. James asked whether there has been a cost/benefit analysis between the Serve America Act and the SYA model. Mr. Scott indicated that he is not aware of any such study, and assumed the the SYA model would be more expensive per member. Mr. Khazei suggested remembering that the SYA model relies on VISTA benefits, which is not that high (about \$14,000). Ultimately, this model supports smaller organizations, which might help get more funding that can offset the cost of the model.

Mr. Lira next introduced the third model, the state commission model. This is a model developed by a state commissioner in Iowa and currently before the state legislature there. Under this model, the state commission acts as a grantee, in that the state applies to CNCS for a certain number of spots. The state then allocates those spots through a competitive grant process; in essence, organizations apply to be sub-grantees, and then recruit individual participants to serve with their organizations under those grants. Member benefits would provide full AmeriCorps State and National benefits (locality pay is not included in this; pay is determined by each state commission as part of its grant process). The state commission decides the allowance rate when applying to CNCS. State commissions ensure organizational compliance with sub-grantee terms; state commissions report fellow's hours to CNCS and may provide additional accounting support. Smaller states get less if population-based, but if needs-based they could potentially surge.

Ms. James asked about the Service Year Alliance model: who determines the formula for the fellowship? Mr. Khazei explained that it will be allocated based on population. California would get more than Iowa. Ms. Rorem noted that the formula can be changed however and could be based on need rather than population.

Chairman Heck asked about the state commission model, and staff confirmed that the sub-grantees have a relationship directly with state commissions. Mr. Scott further explained that state commissions can operate VISTA programs, and many do because there is no matching requirement. Vice Chair Wada asked where they get this VISTA funding? Mr. Scott explained that for VISTA, the states administer funds from the federal government. He noted that VISTA, however, is a program that focuses on poverty and capacity building. VISTA members cannot perform direct service (for example, in a mentoring program, VISTA would recruit the mentors,

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but would not serve as mentors themselves). State commissions want to be able to use federal funding for state and national AmeriCorps programs in the same unrestricted way.

Ms. James observed that, under the 3rd party model, organizations can be nonprofits or public organizations. She asked if other models also allowed nonprofits to participate. Mr. Lira explained that it would depend on state requirements, as the other two models rely on state commissions to certify organizations.

Ms. Skelly asked how Commissioners should use the information on the different fellowship models. Ms. Rorem suggested that this information could inform conversations with stakeholders at the March hearing. Shirley Sagawa, for example, who proposed the SYA model, is a panelist in March. The Commissioners can think about which elements they like from each of the models, so that they can mix and match and create the best fellowship model.

Vice Chair Wada asked about the objective of the fellowship models, in other words, who do the models seek to empower. Mr. Khazei expressed interest in empowering young people who want to serve. He believes that some form of fellowship approach could be designed to do that and is also scalable. He noted that currently, AmeriCorps does not do a sufficiently good job of reaching into smaller, rural communities or low-income areas. Ms. Skelly observed that the models were developed as part of the AmeriCorps paradigm and they predate the Commissions' work, so they represent the current state of play with the current problems that exist for CNCS. She suggested thinking bigger than that. Vice Chair Gearan agreed with Mr. Khazei's recommendation that a fellowship model be scalable. Vice Chair Wada returned to the question of empowerment, viewing that as critical to formulating the Commission's "moonshot." She believes it essential that the model empower the individual. Ms. James suggested considering a model, like the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, that could work well in the public sphere, and recommended that the Commission examine ideas that are not already associated with VISTA or AmeriCorps. Chairman Heck noted his view that both types of ideas could coexist and are not mutually exclusive. He viewed the fellowship models presented by the research team as helpful to sort out the logistics aspect, while keeping efforts to inspire an individual to serve as separate.

Mr. Khazei said that the funding goes to organizations and they choose who can serve. He recommended considering a service model designed like the Pell Grant – in other words, a model that would allow a young person who meets a very minimum criteria to take their fellowship money and serve and perform a fellowship in an open market-place with any certified organization. Mr. Khazei would include age as a minimum criterion. He would not include high school completion or criminal record because the model should not exclude opportunity youth. Beyond age, each certified organization would establish its own criteria for hiring an individual. In addition, Mr. Khazei would recommend that an individual complete their term of service to receive their funding, noting that they would not receive funding if fired from the organization. To ensure accountability, the individual would receive funding only if they are able to find a host organization; the host organization, in turn, would be required to submit the individual's hours as a condition for releasing the funds, as in the Pell Grant program.

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Ms. James expressed a concern about the age limit. Recognizing the interest in focusing on youth, she recommended that a program like this should also help professionals who want to take a service sabbatical or perform service later in life. Mr. Khazei noted that currently, the VISTA program is not age-restricted, and those individuals could apply to VISTA. He supports the age restriction because he views it as a better way to apply limited resources: targeting young people creates a civically minded individual and creates opportunity for them into the future.

Ms. Rorem remarked that it sounds like the Commission is interested in looking at a model which empowers the individual and does not look at the existing programs. She also noted that Commissioners have some interest in learning more about Pell Grants and who is eligible for those grants.

Vice Chair Gearan said that one must appreciate that the national service community has been on the defensive for the last 25 years and, moreover, the non-profit sector was not nearly as robust in 1993 as it is now. He believes that as technology has made things so much easier—to connect individual to organization, for example—there is a generational cohort that wants choice.

Ms. James commented that it would incentivize the organizations receiving folks to make the work worthwhile. Perhaps make the work more impactful because the organizations are competing. Mr. Allard agreed that would be a win-win-win – what a fellowship should be.

Chairman Heck agreed with the input of his fellow Commissioners and noted this information is useful because it allows the Commission to craft its own proposals and ask the panelists what they think about our proposals – not the other way around. He suggested that the Commissioners think about what entity would be responsible for certifying individuals and/or organizations and consider related questions to pose to Shirley Sagawa, in particular, at the March public hearing.

Ms. Rorem said the research team would use information from this conversation to develop a preliminary proposal for the Commission to consider.

Content for March Hearings – Part 1

From approximately 1045-1135 ET, Vice Chair Gearan briefed the Commission on policy options under consideration by the Propensity to Serve Work Group (P2S). A handout was provided and is [available on SharePoint](#).

Vice Chair Gearan explained the organization of the options into three clusters: increasing awareness of national service opportunities, making service feasible and attractive for all Americans, and increasing access to national service for all Americans. Vice Chair Gearan briefly summarized each of the different options presented in the handout, noting that certain of them would be floated ahead of the March public hearings on national service.

Vice Chair Wada inquired about the proposal to recommend that federal, state, and local chief executives prioritize national service by issuing calls for service, appointing chief service officers, and establishing national service offices. Vice Chair Gearan explained that at the state level, the chief executive is usually the governor and having them weigh in elevates the importance of national service. Mr. Khazei noted that some states have a service chief in a

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senior position while others have a service chief who does not have a strong formal relationship with the governor. He explained that this recommendation is designed to help elevate the importance of national service through increased executive attention and marketing.

Mr. Allard encouraged the Commission to consider recommendations addressed to the private sector. He suggested the Commission include a specific request for CEOs to be vocal in support of national service.

Ms. James asked how to incentivize military members who enter national service, noting a recommendation for accelerated promotion of national service members who later enlist in the military. Vice Chair Wada suggested allowing military recruits to get a tier advantage for national service, even if they do not have a GED or high school diploma. The different tiers go from tier 4, young people who barely qualify for military service, to tier 1, the most qualified. Ms. Rorem noted that a lack of centralized national service recruiting presents a challenge.

Vice Chair Gearan then addressed approaches to modernize AmeriCorps benefits, an issue consistently raised to the Commission. Mr. Khazei requested detail on a proposal to provide need-based federal housing benefits for AmeriCorps members. Mr. Lira described different approaches to address this interest. This approach would require either a matching grant or expansion of public-private partnerships in housing. Ms. Rorem noted that P2S has focused on options for adjusting the current living allowance and Commissioners have not delved into details of other approaches to address housing concerns.

Mr. Khazei raised a concern that a uniform provision could lead to a rapid escalation of costs, which might exclude some organizations. He thinks the living allowance is a better approach because you can scale the cost to the locality. Our focus should probably be on making it affordable no matter where you live.

Mr. Khazei then asked about the indexing options for living allowances. Mr. Lira explained that the stipend would be equal to the 10th percentile of income in an area. It allows the AmeriCorps stipend to scale to local area conditions and adjusts upward if the economy improves and wages go up. Ms. Rorem noted that other scaling options will be expanded upon in an upcoming memo, including tying it to the GS-scale or military pay by select ranks. Ms. James expressed support for increasing the living allowance, a topic raised frequently in the Commission's work, but opposes indexing it to anything in the military. Ms. Rorem noted that other Commissioners shared this reservation.

Mr. Allard shared that during his time with the Selective Service System, he went to certain bases with extra housing to try to recoup funds. He asked whether excess barracks could be offered to national service members. Ms. James and Vice Chair Wada clarified that there are military bases that lease their excess building to civilians at the market rate. Chairman Heck noted that local housing costs do not make it cheap, but there may be ways to reduce the cost. Vice Chair Wada stated that the Defense Department is facing plenty of trouble with rising housing costs, which probably makes this an unlikely option. Ms. James added that the housing allowance in the military is meant for military families, not necessarily the soldier themselves.

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Vice Chair Wada suggested incorporating national service participants into the framework available to federal civilian employees to access.

Mr. Khazei asked about the option to permit all AmeriCorps alumni to use their Segal Education Award for the same education, training, and assistance programs authorized by the Post 9/11 G.I. Bill. Mr. Lira said that currently the national service members cannot use their Segal Award on vocational schools. Mr. Scott expanded on this point, noting that the statute was interpreted in congressional appropriations to only allow veterans that go into national service to use their Segal Award like the G.I. bill award.

Noting that the scheduled time was up, Ms. Rorem promised to provide time to finish this update later in the day.

Logistics for February Hearings

From approximately 1035 to 1050 ET, staff briefed the Commission about administrative aspects of the February 22 public hearings.

Mr. Morgan reviewed logistics for the February 22 public hearings. Ms. Lowry briefed Commissioners on the run-of-show. Mr. Abernathy highlighted that the Commission will convene for a quick debrief about logistics at the end of the event. Cristina Flores, Public Affairs Officer, provided an update on anticipated media coverage and guest RSVPs. Dr. Rough explained that each Commissioner had received sample questions to guide their questioning of panelists during the two hearings. Staff agreed to provide each Commissioner with copies of questions provided to each Commissioner for future hearings. Ms. Lowry closed by discussing the protocol for the public comment period near the conclusion of each hearing.

Engagement Update

From 1200 to 1330 ET, the Government Affairs and Public Engagement (GPE) team presented to the Commissioners the overarching goals and plans for 2019. A [PowerPoint presentation](#) facilitated this briefing.

Review of Interim Report Event and Congressional Engagement

Morgan Levey, Partnership Engagement Officer, started by reviewing the Interim Report event held in January. She noted that 115 people attended out of 190 RSVPs. The audience reflected representatives from military, national, and public service. Cristina Flores, Public Affairs Officer, addressed press coverage and digital media. She reported that staff pitched 1000 outlets and followed up with 150 of them. Ten reporters attended and C-SPAN aired the event. Commissioners conducted interviews with CNN, Federal News Radio, Brietbart, PBS, and Sirius XM POTUS. NPR covered the interim report launch nationwide. USA Today covered the report in the print edition, above-the-fold, as well as online. On the digital side, the Commission streamed the event on Facebook and received 2,700 views. From January 23 to February 15, the Commission received 354 public comments on its website. Over 5,600 users visited the website in January, representing an increase of 678% over average monthly traffic. 86.3% of these

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visitors were new. In addition, key stakeholders, including Senator Reed, Service Year Alliance, and CNCS put out statements, and the McCain Institute retweeted the McCain tribute video.

Jeff McNichols, Deputy Director of GPE, then shared that leading up to the interim report release Vice Chair Wada, Mr. Barney, and Ms. James attended sixteen meetings with congressional members and staff of the Commission's primary jurisdictional committees. These meetings included seven Chairs and Ranking Members of key committees as well as members and staff from six other committees.

Ms. James asked whether any members have mentioned the Commission in townhalls, a topic raised at those meetings. Mr. McNichols replied that he is working with Rep. Jackie Speier on one. Mr. Abernathy added that several congressional members mentioned the Commission in speeches at the Voices for Service dinner that occurred in January. Mr. Khazei asked whether Sen. Inhofe was supportive of the Commission's work, and Ms. James said that he was. Mr. Allard asked whether staff have asked members to mention the Commission in their newsletters, and Mr. McNichols confirmed that they have.

Vice Chair Wada asked whether there are plans to engage with the various caucuses. Mr. McNichols said that he has been researching the most active and relevant caucuses with the plan to reach out to them. He plans to engage with specific members of congress, including some caucus leaders. This includes the national service caucus, which is still very active, and the women's caucus, based on a recommendation from Vice Chair Wada.

Vice Chair Gearan expressed concerns that the selective service portion of the Commission's mandate runs the risk of overtaking the Commission's overall messaging. Ms. Lowry acknowledge the concern and, with respect to media coverage, explained that her team generally uses the hook a reporter comes with, and then makes efforts to encourage the reporter to cover the Commission as a whole.

Events and Hearings in 2019

Ms. Lowry then shifted the briefing to describe the engagement and hearing activities the team has prepared for the next year. The engagements have multiple goals, including to keep up relationships developed in the past year as well as seek out new groups that connect the Commission to young people. The GPE team asked Commissioners to send along newsletters of relevant organizations and personal invitations to events that may be better attended in one's official capacity. Ms. Lowry noted that busy weeks will include around three engagements. She said staff would aim to confirm all engagements no later than three weeks prior to the event.

Vice Chair Gearan asked whether there are any engagements at which we have not been able to secure a speaking role. Ms. Lowry said there are a small number, but this was a result of bad timing or inappropriate themes. Vice Chair Wada and Mr. Khazei noted a few additional ideas, and Ms. Lowry asked them to confer with her after the session.

For hearings, Ms. Lowry talked through the goals—first, for vetting policies but also for engaging the public—as well as the panelist selection criteria. She described the themes and panelists for March, April, and May. She noted that the public affairs officers will create toolkits

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for the panelists to assist them in promoting the hearings in social or print media. Mr. Allard asked whether any media is following the Commission through all of the hearings. Ms. Lowry said that most of the journalists attending in February also attended the interim report event in January.

Ms. James expressed concerns about the panel for the selective service hearings in April. She noted, in particular, the need to have a panelist who reflects an opposition to women registering not because they have a general opposition to the system all together. She noted that Elaine Donnelly would be a prime candidate for this role except that the Commission has already heard from her. She said she would assist Mr. McNichols, the GPE lead for the April hearing, to find someone who will oppose women registering specifically. Discussion turned to the Catholic Church and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Dr. Rough explained that they have doctrinal views but have not taken a position on women and selective service.

Mr. Khazei raised a concern that for April there is no one to describe how the selective service system could be changed or modernized. Chairman Heck clarified that the afternoon of the first day in April will be focused on how to modernize the selective service system to achieve military goals and mobilization needs, leaving discussion of potential expansion of the SSS mandate for June, which will feature a panel to explore whether a registration system could be helpful in the broader goal of engaging individuals in service.

Chairman Heck reminded the Commission that he cannot attend the May hearing and asked if Vice Chair Gearan would be there to participate in person. Chairman Heck requested that Vice Chair Gearan serve as interim chair for one day of the May hearings and Vice Chair Wada serve as interim chair on the other.

Mr. Allard asked about the advertising of the hearing schedule. Ms. Lowry said that the general themes and dates are in the interim report, on the website, and in a Federal Register notice. She explained that the Eventbrite RSVP system goes live two weeks in advance of the hearing, and that additional information is provided at that time. Mr. Allard raised the concern that members of the public may get off topic, and Chairman Heck said that this outcome is fine. Vice Chair Gearan suggested that the other hearing topics could be highlighted in the Chairman's introduction.

Strategic Communications and 2020 Report

Ms. Lowry turned the discussion to strategic communications. She noted that the Commission's two public relations consultants, Marsha Catron and Erin McPike, had joined this portion of the discussion by telephone.

Ms. Lowry explained that the team is starting to plan for 2020 and requested Commissioner input on audiences to reach and communication tools to use. She noted that the Commission has several opportunities in the coming year, such as public hearings, speaking engagements, podcasts, and twitter townhalls, but that it is not feasible to pursue all of them. She then outlined three different, non-exclusive approaches for engaging target audiences. First, under the deliverable approach, the Commission would use document releases to draw attention to its

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work. Second, under the grasstops approach, the Commission would seek high-level service ambassadors to talk about its work. Third, under the grassroots approach, the Commission would focus on youth and local organizations to generate buzz. She also outlined three topline messages and wanted confirmation that they should be the central focus for communications.

Ms. Lowry next discussed different target audiences within the general audience of “Americans.” Ms. James strongly recommended that seniors and veterans be considered key target audiences. Ms. Lowry asked about how to prioritize amongst audiences. Ms. Skelly asked about how to measure success. She suggested that retweets from a few high-profile people would be the best way to get a message out. Vice Chair Wada asked about the end goal, wondering if it is to generate attention now or find groups that will keep this conversation going after the Commission ends. Ms. James added that one goal could be getting more input from people before the final report is issued.

Ms. Lowry reframed the question as do we want to make people aware of what we are doing so that they are ready to talk after we leave or to make sure people hear about the final report. Chairman Heck expressed that it should be about fostering discussion after we leave, which means engaging stakeholders now. Mr. Khazei responded that he sees the plan as having two phases. First, to generate feedback now so that the Commission can say that it heard from many people by the time the final report issues. Second, to generate sufficient interest such that the Commission’s recommendations are addressed in the 2020 Presidential debates.

Vice Chair Gearan recommended that the policymakers be the ultimate audience, because they are the people who can do something about the recommendations. He recommended that the Commission explore working with celebrities as a tactical instrument but that it must remain focused on Congress. It would be essential, he explained, for the Commission to build foundational credibility as a thought leader between now and the final report release in March 2020. He also agreed that the Commission set expectations that staff must focus its resources and cannot be all things to all people.

Chairman Heck pointed to the Interim Report launch as a sign of good momentum, noting the importance of capitalizing on that momentum. He suggested that each Commissioner publish an op-ed in a local paper. He agreed that the Commission needs to build credibility with policymakers but also felt that a grassroots movement would be needed.

Ms. James suggested that for the selective service recommendations the Commission needs to target parents and influencers because they will impact how society accepts the proposals. She noted that younger generations cannot be the only focus.

Mr. Kilgannon expressed concern that only a select group of people—those who already believe there should be service—are listening to the Commission. He noted that “stakeholders” should include parents whose kids could be required to do a year of service or whose kids could be drafted. He asked how the Commission could better get hold of people’s attention. Should the Commission, he asked, be more provocative and less concerned about putting out different points of view? He worries that when the Commission issues its final recommendations, most of the American public will question how those recommendations came to be.

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Ms. Lowry summarized Commissioner's input as recommending that the GPE team continue to focus on deliverables while also looking to identify one-to-three major influencers and putting a lot of effort into the grassroots approach.

Mr. Khazei added that the opportunities for media are around the public hearings and suggested looking for key media people who are service fans and push for columns. He mentioned several columnists, both conservative and liberal, who support service and whom the Commission could encourage to write a column between now and June. Among these are David Brooks, EJ Dionne, and Mike Gerson. Vice Chair Gearan agreed, noting that the Commission should also make an effort to connect with columnists other than the "expected" service allies.

Mr. Khazei also recommended finding service champions who are celebrities, such as America Ferrera. He noted that this approach would take significant work.

Vice Chair Wada recommended engaging with an executive at NBC News, noting that NBC has offered to do a public service announcement for the Commission. She suggested inviting someone like Mr. Solomon to meet with the Commission and provide guidance on how the Commission can shape its strategic communications effort and seek to identify service champions.

Mr. Kilgannon noted significant effort required to recruit for media. He recommended that in addition, Commissioners make an effort simply to publish who they are. In addition, he requested that staff build in time for Commissioners to meet with media, arranging small-group meetings with two or three Commissioners and key figures in media (such as the columnists Mr. Khazei named and others).

Separately, Mr. Khazei recommended that the Commissioners ask a number of prominent people to submit written testimony in connection with the public hearing as a way to bolster the Commission's credibility. Vice Chair Gearan noted that Commissioners need to make it easy for such people. He also felt that testimony will be more impactful if it comes from a surprising source. Mr. Khazei requested a draft email that could be sent to specific leaders, with the intention of posting their responses on the Commission website. Vice Chair Gearan suggested asking every former Secretary of Defense. They agreed that the testimonies would need to be received by June to take advantage of the public hearings as a reason for seeking outside testimony.

Ms. Levey turned to the final report release in March 2020. She indicated that staff hopes to have Commission agreement on the goals of any release events relatively early, ideally in March 2019, along with thoughts from Commissioners on Commissioner roles, key speakers, and the kind of event or events the Commission should organize. She noted that Commissioners should anticipate a follow-up email on this topic. Ms. Skelly recommended that staff look at primary calendars to make sure that there will be media available to focus attention on the Commission.

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Work Group Deliberation

From 1330 to 1500 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.

Content for March Hearings – Part 2

The Commission reconvened at 1510 ET for a continuation of Vice Chair Gearan's discussion of national service policy options. Mr. Barney arrived to join eight other Commissioners in person, with Vice Chair Gearan participating by phone. The session concluded at approximately 1520 ET.

Vice Chair Gearan focused on the third cluster of options, directed at increasing access and aspiration.

Vice Chair Wada asked about expanding nontraditional funding sources, specifically if there is a reason CNCS cannot do this now. Mr. Scott noted that there is currently authority, but there are other limitations. In the higher education context, for example, CNCS needs permission from the President to do it.

Ms. James asked about the proposal to create service corps in different federal agencies. Mr. Lira explained that under this proposal, the President would request that agencies identify places where federally funded service corps could exist and where they could partner with the service partners instead of CNCS to create federally partnered service corps that are outside of CNCS. Ms. Rorem explained that the Interior Department runs the conservation corps in this manner, i.e., separate from CNCS, but it is still considered a national service group. Mr. Lira added that there are two related proposals, and that the difference is whether the Commission recommended new legislation or more direction to use existing authorizations. Vice Chair Wada asked why the previous administration did not do this. Mr. Scott responded that it did, pointing to FEMA Corps as an example of a program established by the prior administration.

Commission Discussion on Merging Mandates

From 1520 to 1555 ET, Dr. Rough and Mr. Lira led a conversation on the concept of a lifetime of service. Mr. Lira reviewed a handout displaying various opportunities for service as one ages, from early upbringing through adult life. Mr. Lira highlighted that a key period of a potential service member's life is early adulthood, because of the many opportunities for military, national, and public service available during that period. Dr. Rough explained that the diagram included both existing and proposed opportunities.

Mr. Barney said that he liked how the diagram showed people the opportunities available to them and argued that society needs to plant the idea of service early, such as in middle school. Mr. Allard agreed that he likes the diagram, but that it assumes that young people have positive experiences in their upbringing. He asked what happens to kids who do not receive these formative service experiences.

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Ms. Skelly argued that the recommendations from the Propensity to Serve Work Group would achieve a “moonshot” idea and asked how the staff hoped to apply resources to deal with barriers to service. Dr. Rough said that the Commission staff is working on building the scaffolding for a moonshot idea, but that this also works. She noted that service is presented here as an answer without defining the question. She said that the Commission would work on explaining the question and the answer for the final report. Mr. Allard stated that individuals can become more complete people through a lifetime of service. Mr. Khazei argued that service strengthens democracy.

Ms. James asked what “RETC” stood for, and Dr. Rough explained that it stood for Reserve Enlisted Training Corps, a proposal for education for enlisted service members. She mentioned that commissioners would hear more about this idea at a future date.

Dr. Rough pointed out that the goal of the Commission was to strengthen American democracy, by having all Americans inspired and eager to serve. Chairman Heck argued that many people do not think of their service as strengthening democracy, and the Commission should show that they are.

Mr. Khazei suggested adding service learning in the middle school period of the diagram, and also noted that many people still serve through retirement.

Ms. Skelly asked when the staff planned to move past incremental adjustments to the system to working on the “big ideas,” or “moonshot.” Dr. Rough noted that as the staff works on building a foundation for “moonshot” ideas, that the Commissioners should come up with ideas as they have them. Mr. Abernathy offered that there are only about six days left for commissioner work between now and June, and that after that, the Commission would be focused on figuring out the vision for the final report.

February 21, 2019

Public Hearing: Inspiring Universal Service Across America

In the morning of February 21, 2019, the Commission convened at the Claudio Grossman Hall at the American University Washington College of Law in Washington, DC, for a public hearing on Inspiring Universal Service Across America. Panelists included Tom Chabolla, President of Jesuit Volunteer Corps; Dr. Robert Grimm, Director of Do Good Institute at the University of Maryland School of Public Policy; Jeff West, Global Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability Lead at IBM; and Teresa Walch, National Vice President of Training and Quality Improvement for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission’s Facebook page.

Public Hearing: Should Service be Mandatory?

In the afternoon of February 21, 2019, the Commission convened at the Claudio Grossman Hall at the American University Washington College of Law in Washington, DC, for a public hearing on whether service should be mandatory. Panelists included Doug Bandow, a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute; Dr. William Galston, the Extra K. Zilkha Chair and Senior Fellow at the

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Brookings Institution; Ted Hollander, an author; and Lucy Steigerwald, an author. A live stream of the hearing is available on the Commission's Facebook page.

Public Hearing Logistics Debrief

At the conclusion of the public hearings, the Commission convened nearby for a twenty-minute debrief focused on the logistical elements of the hearings. All Commissioners, except for Vice Chair Gearan, were present during the discussion.

Commissioners were advised that future hearing venues would be less ideally suited to the public hearing needs. They were also reminded to speak into their microphones. Commissioners requested that the pre-hearing meet & greet with panelists be continued but shortened. They also requested that staff make efforts to ensure panelists are prepared for the hearing-specific topics and asked that staff circulate panelist testimony as received.

February 22, 2019

Public Hearing Content Debrief

From approximately 0800 to 0950 ET, Chairman Heck led the Commission in a review of the testimony received the prior day and its bearing on the issues facing the Commission's work in 2019, with a view to narrowing down policy recommendations. All Commissioners, except for Vice Chair Gearan, were present during the discussion.

Mr. Barney said he felt a lack of American support for mandatory national service. Even supporters, he observed, recognize many challenges. He expressed support for universal access and a cultural expectation of service, instead of a mandatory program.

Ms. James said that she approached the public hearing agnostic about mandatory versus universal service. Her inclination towards mandatory related to the overall Commission interest in "going big" and sparking a conversation. She explained, however, that the hearing has caused her to walk back from mandatory. She pointed to the written testimony from Mr. Bandow, which helped her understand the challenges of a truly mandatory—as opposed to a universal—program. She wanted to focus on providing "high quality opportunities," as Mr. Bandow had encouraged.

Ms. Skelly concurred with Ms. James. She thought that while mandating service could be easy in one respect the mandatory nature would make people less receptive to the program. She expressed the key as developing a way for the federal government to empower yet not overwhelm those who serve locally.

Mr. Barney said that he felt there was no strong support of mandatory service, which disappointed him. Mr. Barney also felt Mr. Bandow's testimony made good points. Yet, Mr. Barney noted, the United States never would have gone to the moon if it felt the technical obstacles were too much. He believes there remains an opportunity for the Commission to be disruptive without taking on the baggage of recommending a program of mandatory service. Mr. Barney also expressed skepticism about relying too much on the federal government to run a

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program of universal (rather than mandatory) service, noting that it will be the people close to local needs who can develop creative ways to generate service opportunities. Vice Chair Wada agreed, describing the role of the Commission as that of a “convener.” Chairman Heck also endorsed the phrase “convener.”

Chairman Heck recommended looking at service growth and the Commission’s moonshot as a phased approach covering a 20-year, generational period, with a goal to create a universal expectation over that time.

Mr. Khazei expressed agreement with the prior comments, saying he also found Mr. Badow’s testimony compelling. He said he thought that promoting mandatory service would spark a debate but worried that it could overshadow other recommendations by the Commission – such as a recommendation in favor of a universal expectation of service. He emphasized the importance of building a pipeline, including reforms to AmeriCorps and the Peace Corps, and empowering the nonprofit sector. He analogized the situation of service to college: millions go to college, millions get Pell Grants, and they all have a choice as to where they go and whether to keep or lose their grants. He felt the Commission should recommend ways to build infrastructure from the bottom up. He was chagrined at the low number of people aware of service opportunities today.

Ms. Haines endorsed the Commission’s approach regarding a universal expectation of service. She also felt that “universal” access is connected to creating a “culture of service” as identified in the Chairman’s Letter for the Interim Report. She views this approach, building change from the ground up, as a way to avoid the binary choice of mandatory versus non-mandatory that Ms. James identified. Ms. Haines expressed a desire to see states—and even cities—experiment with ways to achieve a universal expectation of service, which would leave up to states the decision of whether to have a mandatory service model.

Dr. Davidson responded to this suggestion by stating that while the Commission could make recommendations to states, they could not mandate changes. In addition, Dr. Davidson felt strongly that a mandatory service proposal would not be successful. She felt that in the education space, she hoped for the federal government to motivate and target programs that could actually get funded, such as scaling up AmeriCorps. Any request that states develop programs would need matching federal dollars. She views “convening” as part of the catalyzing and messaging role for the federal government.

Mr. Allard supported these ideas. He further indicated support for programs such as the Do Good Institute at the University of Maryland and exploring ways to develop successful programs as pilot projects in cities across the country. He agreed that mandating service would run against people’s preference not to be told what to do, but felt the school environment presents a contrasting situation as students are told what to do. He suggested working with the Department of Education to introduce civics and create a culture of service over time, expressing dissatisfaction at the fact that immigrants know more about America than the average student. He would use the power of the Commission, he said, to set up more grants and direct the priorities of the Department of Education.

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Chairman Heck concurred, especially with the sentiment in favor of requirements during school-age years. Drawing on his experience in Clark County, Nevada, which has the fourth largest school district in the country and presents many demographic challenges, Chairman Heck felt that focused requirements that helped to bring together kids from across the district would prove to be a significant boost to the county.

Mr. Khazei agreed, citing Boston as another place that could benefit from such programs. He noted that the two hearing panelists who generally supported libertarian perspectives were not opposed to requirements in high school.

Dr. Davidson then addressed the practical elements of an “education proposal.” She suggested that one way the Commission could work in this area is to highlight best practices and ensure schools/districts are following them, perhaps as a condition of funding. She felt that the Commission should set priorities and objectives, not pedagogy. Dr. Davidson said that she felt the Commission’s needs to look at service both from the perspective of part-time or volunteer work and from the perspective of options for careers in service, including recommendations related to internships. She sees these issues overlapping with both the Education and the Labor Departments. She wondered if this requires the Commission to revisit its definition of service.

Ms. Skelly referred to the lifetime of service chart discussed earlier in the Commission’s February meeting. She wondered if an additional line could include a role for the employer. Later in the conversation, Mr. Khazei agreed with this. Mr. Barney agreed that the Commission should give employers recognition and hold them accountable. Ms. Skelly said that it was interesting to hear about IBM and their infrastructure during the panel and that she wanted to hear from local small businesses in the future.

Mr. Barney then returned to Dr. Davidson’s comment on a definition of service. He felt that the panels had rejected the Commission’s definition and he wanted to take a fresh look at it.

Other Commissioners disagreed with this view and Chairman Heck felt that rather than disagreeing with the Commission’s definition, the panelists were simply providing their own definitions, which often were tangential to the Commission’s. Dr. Davidson said that she at least felt the Commission could provide more context around its definition, such as by including corporate responsibility. Mr. Heck said that he felt the current definition included part-time service, but that the Commission could share examples of other service types.

Mr. Barney said that under the exercises the Commission had performed surrounding the definition of service, he felt that the IBM model would not be considered service. Chairman Heck asked if Mr. Barney would consider a teacher in a private school service. Mr. Barney suggested the answer should be yes, stating that there could be an IBM employee in the United States or in Ghana and that individuals could satisfy this universal expectation without what the Commission would call service.

Mr. Kilgannon stated that he felt Mr. Bandow had found all those activities noble and worthy of encouragement. Mr. Kilgannon recalled also that Dr. Galston and Mr. West had said that people have to serve their self-interests as well as their communities’ and that that is a good thing, and

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Dr. Grimm spoke to the need for service to come from the heart. Mr. Kilgannon felt there was agreement that if we start young and teach students to be aware, a passion for service will develop. Even when performed during high school as a requirement, Mr. Kilgannon felt that the project needed to be driven by passion and interest.

Ms. James said that she was disappointed by individuals on the panel responsible for advocating for mandatory service. In her opinion, even Dr. Galston, who advocated for mandatory service, could not put up a clear enough argument for her. She wondered if anyone had a compelling, unencumbered argument in favor of mandatory service.

Mr. Khazei thought that General Stanley McChrystal, the retired Army four-star general who led the Joint Special Operations Command in the mid-2000s, should talk to the Commission because he was originally for mandatory service. Although he has changed his mind as he became more involved in the national service community, Mr. Khazei said that he can still make a compelling case in support of mandatory service.

Ms. James remarked on this Commission as being the first effort to pull together military, public, and national service. She asked if there has been an attempt to recommend universal expectation or a culture of service before and what happened to it. She worried that the Commission's message might be lost if the Commission is not more provocative.

Vice Chair Wada highlighted Mr. Bandow's and Ms. Steigerwald's comments about high school as interesting: neither had strong objections about mandates during high school. Vice Chair Wada proposed mandating some form of service in high school.

Dr. Davidson highlighted the blur between civics education and service learning, stating that she hoped for a mandated experiential-oriented civics education class.

Vice Chair Wada recommended an approach in which the federal government generates interest and involvement by incentivizing rather than penalizing. Like the Presidential Physical Fitness program, the government would serve as the convener and help communities that want to do more.

Mr. Kilgannon felt that the positions set out in the hearing by Mr. Bandow and Ms. Steigerwald were more nuanced as to requirements for high school students. He felt they would agree that the federal government should be less involved in curriculum and that programs would be more effective and acceptable at the community-level with buy-in from teachers and parents.

Chairman Heck said that General McChrystal's position highlights issues associated scaling a mandatory program to everyone in the country. He noted that General McChrystal calls for one million service opportunities per year, for a country with over 300 million people. While there is no plan to scale a true mandatory service program to give everyone an opportunity, one million opportunities would represent a moonshot. Mr. Khazei agreed that one million opportunities would represent a moonshot, and that if achieved, that could provide a baseline for a real discussion about mandatory service. He said that incentives can help; high school was not mandatory in the past and now it is. He agreed with Mr. Kilgannon that the federal government

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should not mandate schools, but just incentivize them. He cited the Race to the Top initiative during the Obama administration as an example of a successful program that incentivized the development of new standards; in that example, 44 states participated in the competition and around ten received federal funding. Chairman Heck recommended a similar approach in which the federal government does not mandate but incentivize by tying receipt of federal funds to development of new programs.

Mr. Allard noted that as the Commission has learned, people do want to serve but the limiting factor is that there is simply not enough money to allow them to do so. He recommended that the federal government seek to advance service by partnering with the private sector for additional funding, citing the “catalyst” role that the United Way has undertaken in many of its projects.

Ms. Haines referred to a point raised by Chairman Heck about whether people are drawn to service or if the service experience itself creates the ethos to serve. She cited her own experiences and the impact of those experiences, noting that a reason for the Commission’s focus on the younger generation is to provide them with experiences they may not have considered that could have a similar impact and draw them into a culture of service. She noted that the Commission may have concluded that mandatory service is impractical at this time but if the Commission believes that everyone should serve but should not be compelled to do so, the question is how to promote universal service without compelling it and how to make it possible for those who want to serve to serve. This will require investment by the federal government as well as states, communities, and cities to build the appropriate infrastructure. She views this as a responsibility associated with citizenship, with being a part of this country and its communities.

Mr. Khazei wanted to focus on full-time sustained service. Mr. Kilgannon said that many individuals volunteer because they want to change the world and enjoy what they are doing. Commissioners then discussed the importance of considering volunteer activity in addition to paid service positions. Ms. Haines felt that the Commission could encourage both types of activities.

Commissioners then turned to high school. Chairman Heck said that he would support a program that focuses on K-12, renovates civics, and encourages states to have pilot projects. Dr. Davidson supported competition between states or districts. While Mr. Allard liked the idea of a pilot, Mr. Khazei thought a “pilot” seemed too small. Chairman Heck said he hoped service would be embedded in the four years of high school and not just a one-semester program. Mr. Khazei highlighted the connection between a semester of service and job training particularly as an important avenue for those students not intending to go to college. Mr. Kilgannon said that he would be more inclined to support mandating service in high school than after high school, in part because students would not be taken out of the work force or required to forego college plans.

Mr. Barney raised the issue of student debt and suggested the Commission opine about how service could improve college success rates, while providing an opportunity for students to take five to six years to graduate. Chairman Heck asked the research team what the average number of years spent in college was. Dr. Davidson highlighted that there is a lot of misinformation in

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this space and that many college students go to community colleges or take longer. Seventy-five percent of students, she said, work 20 hours and 25 percent of them work more. Dr. Davidson strongly supported paid service opportunities. Chairman Heck said that the Commission should show that those who perform service have better success rates regardless of graduation time.

Mr. Kilgannon referred to Dr. Grimm's idea of the federal government sponsoring a prize contest. He recommended a competition that would have prizes for schools, Fortune 500 companies, and others to get institutions invested in service. Chairman Heck endorsed the Presidential Physical Fitness Challenge model, suggesting a Presidential Service Challenge program. Mr. Barney recommended a program to help identify the long-term needs of the nation as a competition for service, in which participants would identify ways that calls for service could address the nation's needs. Ms. Skelly referred to service accelerators and asked whether the federal government could develop a service accelerator function. That would entail the federal government awarding grants for innovative practices, possibly to states. She also recommended exploring a recommendation to require each land grant state to implement a Do Good Academy.

Chairman Heck summarized the Commission's views, noting Commissioners' apparent unity that mandatory service will be difficult to implement and that Commissioners appear to be coalescing around the ideas of growing paid service positions, promoting a universal expectation of service, recognizing the importance of volunteering, and endorsing a moonshot proposal.

Mr. Khazei noted that Harris Wofford used to refer to paid service and volunteer work as the "twin engines." He noted that studies indicate that individuals who perform a year of paid service are more likely to volunteer for the remainder of their lives in more dedicated ways. The upshot is that a term of paid service can be a massive multiplier, so that building capacity to support one million paid service positions would generate a massive opportunity going forward.

Ms. James said that she supported growing national service to the one-million -member mark while also enabling organizations, especially those not currently receiving federal money, to access funding streams to grow their ability to sustain volunteers. Mr. Khazei recommended that the Points of Light representative at the March public hearings should speak to this issue. Dr. Davidson framed this approach as strengthening the muscles we already have as a nation. Mr. Barney suggested government contributions and matching funding based on competitions. Vice Chair Wada flagged that not all communities would be able to compete equally, and it will be essential to keep in mind those communities as the Commission develops its recommendations.

Mr. Kilgannon asked if the Commission would encourage service for self-interest or to achieve national goals; several Commissioners said both.

Ms. Skelly said that she wanted to discuss what the "moon" was in the "moonshot" metaphor, highlighting the importance of clear ideas that are credible, imaginative, specific, and achievable. She shared an article from the *Harvard Business Review* that addressed the development of moonshot proposals.

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Ms. Haines distinguished between seeking to develop a universal expectation of service and a culture of service. Her view is that the moonshot should be to create a culture of service in which service is respected and is integrated into Americans' lives in a meaningful way, noting the connection with civic education. Chairman Heck agreed and said that creating an ethos of service was one of the Commission's key mandates. He framed the question as identifying the correct pathway to achieve that goal. Mr. Barney suggested that the moonshot could establish the United States as having unique service opportunities grounded in innovation. Vice Chair Wada added that the moonshot is a combination of all three sense of universal service: a universal obligation for youth, universal access for young Americans after high school, and a universal expectation for everyone. She viewed the Commission's goal as promoting universal service in different ways at different stages of life.

Chairman Heck emphasized that any moonshot goal would need to be measurable, noting that creating a culture of service is not measurable. He suggested that the Commission set out a ten-to-fifteen-year plan to coincide with the 70th or 75th anniversary of President Kennedy's moonshot speech. A goal to create one million paid service opportunities by that time would be measurable and also demonstrate progress on the road to creating a culture of service.

Work Group Briefs

From approximately 1015 to 1215 ET, each Work Group provided an update on its progress to the full Commission. The Propensity to Service (P2S) Work Group and Selective Service System (SSS) Work Group both used PowerPoint presentations to aid in their briefings, which are available on SharePoint.

Propensity to Service

Mr. Barney started by noting that the tactical proposals for national service were shared earlier in the week, and that the proposals for military and public service would be shared in advance of the May hearing. Ms. Rorem added that the research team intends to share catalogues with all of the background materials on these topics with the full Commission. While these materials are currently on SharePoint they can be hard to find. Additionally, ahead of Commission voting in July, the research team will be sharing recommendation bundles with more details about each of these tactical recommendations

Mr. Barney reviewed how the Work Group has approached its work, by initially looking at awareness, access, and aspiration challenges in each of the three service areas, and then considering proposals to address them. He noted that by looking at the tactical issues, the Work Group has had robust discussions on the overarching goal of establishing a cultural expectation of service. Mr. Barney explained that the Work Group has three general proposals, which build towards a moon shot: (1) All Americans will commit a year of service to the nation sometime in young adulthood, (2) One hundred percent of Americans will have access to a service opportunity, and (3) Service—in partnership with formal education and workforce development—will be seen as an essential investment in American democracy. Additionally, each of the service areas have specific goals, such as to ensure the sustainability and resilience of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF), to expand opportunities for individuals to serve through national service, and to improve government agencies' access to the full spectrum of America's civilian

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workforce. Finally, he noted that through this work, the Work Group has found cross-service concepts, including increasing awareness, modernizing recruiting and hiring practices, and making connections between service experiences.

Mr. Barney then raised a strategic issue of how to move recommendations forward. He noted that the Commission could come up with over 100 legislative proposals, and that it should certainly consider including quick fixes that we have identified. But at the same time, the Commission should not lose the bigger message by going too far down into the weeds and overwhelming people with tiny options. An alternative is to present a top 10—maybe the high impact, most challenging, most provocative ideas—that will really enhance the propensity to serve.

Vice Chair Wada noted that for marketing there is a connection to culture, because the culture will impact how effectively the tactical proposals will function. She asked whether the Work Group will highlight the cultural challenges. Amy Shafer, the team lead for military service, shared that in her view, that context will be part of the framework in the final report; however, the Work Group does not have a recommendation specifically on changing the culture.

For the foundational goal, Ms. Haines suggested revising it to say having a “culture of service,” without using the term expectation. She also recommended including the concept of “respect for service” in this goal. Mr. Barney agreed and noted that, rather than a “thank you for your service” approach, the idea is to have people recognize the merit and value of service. Ms. James added that the goal is to change the narrative about service, but she believes it comes from the top down. Vice Chair Wada notes that there is an inherently bureaucratic view of service, and that Federal employees can be their own worst enemies in this sense. Mr. Abernathy added that advocacy groups hope that the Commission can raise the respect given and the attention to service issues.

Mr. Allard added that one thing the shutdown did was raise in the minds of the American public the critical role that public servants play in making America work. When it affected air traffic or Coast Guard work, then people paid attention. The Commission can gently remind them that service does have meaning and is purposeful. Another thing is that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) plays a key role in some of these recommendations. Mr. Barney agreed and noted that the staff have engaged with OPM and asked for their participation at future hearings.

Mr. Barney noted that we have recently seen in our culture a few movements that have been enormously disruptive and changed how people think (e.g., MeToo). He thinks we have an opportunity to be very strong and specific in doing what Mr. Abernathy describes.

Ms. James raised a question on the national service slide, specifically the choice of the phrase “as many opportunities as people prepared to serve.” Ms. Rorem said that the original framework had been about supply and demand, but Mr. Khazei had pointed out that we are not trying to be tied to what demand there is, but rather create more demand. Mr. Khazei suggested the phrase “as many opportunities as people willing to serve.” Ms. James expressed that she does not like the word “prepare,” because it suggests that individuals need to go through preparatory steps.

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She notes that if people follow the lifetime of service chart presented by Mr. Lira earlier, then they will be prepared.

Dr. Davidson asked where the Work Group got the 1 million number for national service positions. Mr. Barney said that it came from General McChrystal. He noted that the specific number is not set, but was included to show the need to set up a specific goal. Mr. Khazei expressed his support for that number because it would put it on par with military service.

For the foundational goal, Mr. Kilgannon stated that the phrase “essential investment in America democracy” jumped out as very important. He noted that when we talk about service, it is a little gauzy, and people need some context like “military service” or “community service” to understand what is meant. He thinks the investment concept is especially important for intergenerational communication, because older generations support investing in America. They want the country to be strong and enduring and want younger generations to be invested in that. Mr. Barney added that the terms “education” and “workforce development” also help support the investment and benefits of service.

Dr. Davidson found that the foundational goal focused on youth. She recommended adding the term “culture of lifelong service” to make sure we capture opportunities across all age ranges. Chairman Heck agreed. He noticed that the Commission focuses a lot on the 18-24 year-old cohort. He asked whether it is important that they give a year then, or just that they serve at some point.

Ms. Haines recommended revising the first bullet to include “to prepare them for a lifetime of service.” She noted that a whole series of things could connect it to the moonshot, revamping the hiring process and new pathways to service for critical skills.

She also noted that she assumed the Commission would put together a draft for federal legislation that would support the different recommendations, and believes it is incredibly helpful to propose it to Congress. She was unsure whether the Commission should formally attach it to the report or just informally share it, and she imagined there will be variety amongst recommendations—some will have placeholders (i.e., something should be done here) and others will have a lot of detail. She offered a counter-example from the Ends Ways Means (EWM) Work Group, which is preparing a model code for states. Mr. Barney agreed that presenting specific legislation to Congress will make it easy for them in terms of process and politics. Ms. Haines suggested that if the legislative proposals are not in the report, then the Commission will have to describe them in more detail in the report itself. Vice Chair Wada said that she anticipated sharing legislation in an annex, so the report has the narrative and the annex gives the policymakers a toolbox. Mr. Lekas indicated that the current plan is for the Commission to bind the legislative annex in a separate volume, which would allow the Commission to work on specifics even after the main volume of the final report goes to print. He noted that the timing to introduce legislative proposals needs to be considered.

Selective Service System

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Vice Chair Wada began by reminding the Commissioners of their discussion in the summer of 2018 of the need to maintain a compulsory military manpower mechanism. She noted that the Work Group has looked at whether other systems could be used as a replacement database, but they agree that there is no system that currently exists that could meet all of the nation's needs. As a result, the Work Group is preparing three options for modernization: (1) broadening the pool (skill-agnostic) with a call for volunteers, (2) creating a skill-focused roster of volunteers, and (3) developing skill-only drafts that have no registration until mobilization.

Vice Chair Wada shared that the Work Group is still developing broader issues like fair and equitable procedures and policy alternatives. She also noted that the discussion on gender will be treated separately.

Ms. James noted that the draft would still likely be unpopular. As a result, the Work Group proposal includes requiring that the President would need to do a call for volunteers, so that people are on notice that a draft could come and that we need more than the AVF. A call for volunteers also provides a buffer politically and helps legitimize a draft.

Dr. Davidson indicated support for this approach. She felt it would address concerns of those opposed to the draft and also test the theory that Americans will step up when asked. Mr. Allard added that it demonstrates that leaders are doing whatever they can to avoid the draft. Mr. Barney noted that in the face of another Pearl Harbor event, with an immediate declaration of war, the "call for volunteer" step might be circumvented. He and Ms. Haines also pointed out that it could not be a requirement, because of the constitutional authorities granted to the President. Legislation that says the "President must" is relatively weak and at risk of being overturned. Vice Chair Wada says that the Commission could recommend that the President should call for volunteers before a draft occurs. Everyone agreed that this should be stated forcefully in the report, if it is the approach adopted by the Commission.

Jud Crane, research team lead for selective service, noted that many people do not think of personally serving in the military to address problems. It is deeply tied to civilian-military divide. It requires reconceptualization of the connection between military and American public. Ms. Skelly noted that another benefit of presidential call for volunteers is that it adds signaling, a strategic benefit, without using a full draft. Dr. Davidson added that the call for volunteers could be focused on certain skill sets.

Ms. Skelly noted that the draft was running before Pearl Harbor and before the Korean war was declared. It was more persistent in the past and we are in a new paradigm. She liked the phrase "breaking of the glass." Mr. Barney noted that the Commission would be highlighting a tool that the President already has. Ms. James said the Commission would make a distinction between a presidential call up and Commander-and-Chief call up. She would want this to be a presidential call to the nation, so it is not inherently tied to a military role. Chairman Heck highlighted the difference between calling up reservists and drafting people, noting that a call for volunteers would present a new approach.

Mr. Barney asked how long the conscription would last. Vice Chair Wada explained that there is no real answer yet, but it could mean the life of the conflict or a set period of time.

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Dr. Davidson asked whether the Work Group has considered when a call up could occur. Vice Chair Wada said the focus would be on national security emergency purposes, and that the current language could cover national disasters that impact multiple states. The Work Group could not come up with a scenario that would not be connected to the national security piece.

Dr. Davidson expects that people might step up in a national disaster, but worried that volunteers will not appear when it is a war abroad. Ms. James stated that people do not put themselves in uniform for national disasters, but volunteer in other ways.

Mr. Lekas noted that the U.S. Public Health Service has some authority to use civilians and the Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) lays out an authority for the “doctor draft.” However, those authorities have never been tested. Chairman Heck notes that mobilizing physicians for a domestic event is impossible because the doctors will be addressing the crisis in their own communities.

Chairman Heck asked how to distinguish among the three COAs. Vice Chair Wada explained that the skill draft only focuses on certain skill sets. Ms. James expanded that the top one is an involuntary draft, but the middle one is as registration system.

Mr. Crane explained that the doctor draft requires individuals to registrar at the time, and then the SS checks compliance with the state licensing boards. Ms. James noted that the Commission currently lacks information about memoranda of understanding that SSS may have with state licensing offices. Chairman Heck noted that this is hard to do when all skill fields do not have licensing bodies, like information technology workers. Vice Chair Wada said the Work Group has looked at registering challenges, but has not come up with a solution yet.

Chairman Heck asked how the Work Group recommends draft resisters and conscientious objectors (COs) be handled. Vice Chair Wada commented that there is a legal concern about having a box on the registration for COs, because people cannot self-certify and it will likely lead people to a misunderstanding of whether they are in the database and could be called. Mr. Barney added that the box would need to make it clear that the person is expressing an intent to claim CO status in the future. Several Commissioner supported this approach.

Dr. Davidson asked how difficult it is to get CO status. Ms. James and Vice Chair Wada explained how people demonstrated a pattern of belief in the past, and that the objection has to be to all war, not a specific conflict. Chairman Heck asked for available data on how many people have been denied CO status.

Ends, Ways, and Means (EWM)

Ms. Haines started by noting that she would not present the registration models being developed by the Work Group because there was a discussion on that topic later in the day. Instead, she focused on the progress made on civics education proposals and other issues. For civics, the Work Group has come up with a set of priorities and then identified a few objectives and proposals for each of them. The priorities include that civics education must get more attention

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in all levels of education, it should be engaging for students, states and other nonfederal authorities must be responsible for implementing civics education, and the Federal government can help drive this by using incentives rather than mandates. The objectives are organized as the kinds of exposure and programming that should be achieved at different school levels. The recommendations included a model state code, which Mr. Lekas noted was based on a review of legislation from many states and that staff is preparing a 50-state survey that will be shared in the future. Key recommendations outlined were a role for a director for civics to implement requirements and a special advisor on civics for the governor's office. The recommendations for the Federal government included challenge grants, creating an institutional home for civics education initiatives, changing the national report card to include civics, and convening a national summit on the topic. Finally, she noted that there is strong connection between effective civics education and a culture of service with wide-spread expectations that everyone should be serving.

One theme raised is that civics should be as important as STEM education. Ms. Haines pointed out that in 2018, the Education Department had \$300 million in discretionary funds for STEM, but only \$4 million for civics. Even at its height, civics education did not exceed the \$40 million range in Federal grants, and there is a great deal of private investment in STEM education as well. Dr. Davidson asked if we have a summary of how the Federal government pushed STEM education and whether it might provide a helpful model for the Commission. Mr. Lekas noted that STEM programs received formula grants but were also part of race to the top grants.

Dr. Davidson noted that STEM education is strongly supported by employers and raised a concern that the same private sector support may not exist for civics education. She contended a few major companies may push for better civics because it helps them succeed in our democracy. Mr. Allard echoed this concern, mentioning that STEM has lots of sponsors, including military contractors, and it is framed as a way to maintain competitiveness with the outside world.

Chairman Heck raised that the Commission has heard of the evolving needs of corporations; civically-minded folks and those with soft skills are needed. Dr. Davidson contended that the economic arguments are always more powerful and so we need some big corporate leaders. Chairman Heck suggested that the Work Group look at the arts community, which pushed to add A to STEM to create a STEAM focus. Mr. Allard stated that the Commission should not attack STEM, but instead look for who can be the advocates. Mr. Abernathy noted that we have heard from IBM, Microsoft, and Starbucks along these lines. He also noted that in our discussions with the National Governors' Association, they are forming a civics working group that we intend to engage about civic education at the state level.

Ms. Haines argued that if the government values civic education because it is a critical component of a functioning democratic government, then the government should be the biggest investor. Mr. Allard expressed concern that campaign politics could prevent the Commission from proving successful, and returned to the idea that it need not be a zero sum game. Mr. Khazei agreed, but said it is the mandate of the Commission to make recommendations and we can say that civics must be a priority. He pointed out that the topic keeps coming up and we are

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the right group to raise it up. Ms. Skelly said that the topic isn't being raised because it is a shiny gadget, but because it is a bedrock to the nation's success.

Ms. Haines then noted that the Work Group is also looking at the needs of the nation and the impacts of service. In a previous briefing, she had indicated that the Commission cannot do a comprehensive survey of needs, but we can look at key areas and identify credible viewpoints of significant needs to give people a sense of how service will be impactful. She named 8 focus areas, and said the staff is preparing bibliographies of the ways service impact these areas. She suggested this information could be used for the narrative in the final report. She clarified that the staff is also collecting studies on the impact of service on the individual. Ms. Haines noted that Commissioners had previously discussed an interest in highlighting the impact of the Federal civilian workforce in a way that increases respect for service. She suggested the Work Group efforts in this area would support that goal.

Mr. Khazei asked if fighting poverty is in one of the eight focus areas. Mr. Lekas said it is generally seen as being part of economic opportunity. Mr. Khazei requested that the connection be explicit, and Ms. Haines agreed.

Dr. Davidson noted that she was struck by a comment from the panelist, Mr. West, that every industry has a negative narrative attached to it. She said it is worth highlighting that service efforts demonstrate the good aspects of business, not just in public sector. Vice Chair Wada pointed to a recent news report about the venture capital company, Blackrock, which issued two letters to the companies they invest in about their priorities for how they want to give back to the community.

Executive Session

From approximately 1230 to 1330 ET, Commissioners held an executive session outside the presence of staff.

Commission Discussion on Registration Models

From 1330 to 1440 ET, Commissioners Allard, Barney, Heck, James, Haines, Khazei, Kilgannon, Skelly, and Wada convened for an internal deliberation on the different registration models being prepared by the Ends, Ways, Means Work Group. Ms. Haines led this discussion, facilitated by a handout, which outlined two approaches, the "Linked" and "Integrated" models.

Ms. Haines began by explaining the Linked registration model (where people register for the Selective Service System but can opt-in for public and/or national service opportunities) and the Integrated registration model (where people register for the Selective Service System are automatically added to a public and national service database, in addition to the Selective Service System database).

Vice Chair Wada asked why, if the database is distinct and separate, the proposals exclude the SSS from managing the public and national service databases. Ms. Haines clarified that, in the Linked model, the distinction is made to recognize the solemnity of military service and avoid entangling the mission of the SSS with non-military objectives and, in the Integrated model, no

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separate database exists, meaning that system would be managed, most likely, by a reformed SSS. Ms. Haines indicated support for the Integrated model was premised in part on the idea that it would be a more effective way to promote an expectation of service and to help inform people of all opportunities. She indicated that she personally supported the Integrated model for this reason and would promote solemnity associated with registration for military service outside of the data-entry process, for example, through a swearing in process for registration.

Chairman Heck said he was conflicted, because most 18 years old today are not aware of being registered, and while we want to elevate the visibility of service, we do not want to elevate one variety of service to the detriment of another variety of service. He proposed that, if we cannot make the military draft system more interactive, the Integrated model is the “more obvious choice.” Ms. Skelly questioned if a more active registration process would meet the goal of making people more aware of their obligations to serve the United States. Dr. Davidson said that this moves toward the goal for youth to understand an obligation for service.

Mr. Allard expressed a preference for the Integrated model. In response to a question from Mr. Barney, Mr. Lekas stated that registration could be from a “traditional,” non-electronic fashion. Ms. Haines asked whether it would sufficiently promote solemnity associated with registration for potential compulsory military service if the Integrated model became a system as a means to send an acknowledgement of registration for the draft and an invitation to a swearing-in ceremony. Mr. Kilgannon said this would matter for him but would not “tip the scales,” saying he agreed with Dr. Davidson that conscription has, potentially, life or death implications. Selective service should be a separate registration system, because selective service is mandatory and has a military purpose, unlike the other systems being proposed. Mr. Kilgannon pointed out that ownership of the data could be a concern, given privacy concerns, and said the law should say the draft information should be used only for conscription.

Ms. Haines contended that the Integrated system would not have these privacy issues after implementation of the redesign. Mr. Kilgannon wanted to prevent confusion about the different purposes and uses of the databases and having the data stored in a single place could be problematic. Vice Chair Wada asked if the conversation would change if people outside the normal draft age are included, and Ms. Skelly did not believe the problem would be fixed.

Mr. Khazei stated that if we want to have a contingency and a stronger ethos of service this new system meets both goals. He said we should formally ask every 18-year-old to consider service and expressed a concern that young people do not know how to register. Mr. Kilgannon said that requiring registration for non-conscription databases would be a different kind of America, and not in a good way. Mr. Khazei retorted that we already require registration at 18, so the proposal would not require any new, affirmative actions, and there is nothing wrong with asking individuals upon registration whether they want to also be in a non-military database. Ms. Haines said that the ask is not the same with respect to different types of registrations, as your name would only be put into a public and national service database after Selective Service registration, which would allow informed decisions regarding service participation.

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Mr. Khazei remarked that, if we recommend this step, it would spark a big conversation and would send a message to Congress and the nation that the Commission recommends meaningful change. Mr. Kilgannon expressed concern that this could be seen as a first step toward mandatory service. He noted that if the government demands registration, failure to register should result in some punishment against that individual. Ms. Haines asked for Mr. Kilgannon's views as to the difference between a requirement to register and a requirement to include service learning or another means to learn about various service options. Mr. Kilgannon said that, in high school, that requirement is implemented by schools, teachers, and PTAs as well as state authorities, and any requirement could be escaped by moving to a new state, but that, in contrast, a federal requirement would lack any comparable opt-out provision.

Chairman Heck pointed out that under current law, SSS is required of men at 18 years of age, and that information is already sent to the JAMRS, which, in turn, sends that information to the armed services. Vice Chair Wada stated that JAMRS sends handouts to the SSS, which includes them in mailings, and that data does not go to the JAMRS. Chairman Heck raised the idea that the Commission should let others send stuff to SSS for mailing, not just JAMRS. Vice Chair Wada said that they could do that now, but the mailer cannot be above a certain weight class.

Ms. Skelly said that maybe the group that wants information sent out could pay the bill for the additional weigh, to which Mr. Kilgannon voiced no objection. Chairman Heck said we can address solemnity by changing the name to the military draft registration system, and everything else would be behind the firewall, which, collectively, would be phase I. Ms. Haines said she'd be willing to consider it, if that approach helped the commissioners reach consensus. Chairman Heck said we could set up a registration portal for those older than 25, and if you're in the mandatory group, you end up going to the system to register and can be marketed to, and in the Integrated model, the backend activity is invisible and registrants would go to their respective registration portals.

Mr. Khazei asked if in the model proposed anyone would get information about non-military service, and Chairman Heck replied that AmeriCorps could send information to those people. Mr. Khazei asked if they would immediately see any information saying they are registering for the Serve America System, and Chairman Heck said maybe we could have such a notice, but that it could cause the problem of conflation about which the Commission is concerned. Ms. Haines suggested a clickable link that takes registrants to information on non-military service options, and Mr. Lekas confirmed that this could be possible. Chairman Heck said that, no, there should be a specific page with a URL that is about the military draft.

Mr. Kilgannon expressed continuing opposition to mandatory registration, however, he understood the need for the current system. He dislikes it, but accepts it, saying that using the current model to extend registration for non-military purposes feels wrong. Chairman Heck said we are not requiring registration for the non-military option, such signing up for the Selective Service System and the other opportunities are presented for voluntary action. Mr. Allard said he liked the idea of an information pop-up asking whether someone wants to register to partake in non-military service. Ms. Haines said she would only be interested in that if it allowed national service organizations to send information by mail or email.

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Chairman Heck said he also is opposed to mandatory registration, but people should have the opportunity to affirmatively opt-in, if desired, and suggested that the current system could be scaled-back and have a data transfer in time of need from different systems. Vice Chair Wada said the rebuild process would be so arduous as to be infeasible. Chairman Heck said that the IRS and Social Security Administration can rebuild the data fairly quickly. Mr. Barney agreed creating a system from scratch would be very difficult.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

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