



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MILITARY, NATIONAL, AND PUBLIC SERVICE

Minutes of November 2019 Commission Meeting

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on November 14-15, 2019, at its offices in Arlington, VA. The entire meeting concerned pre-decisional and deliberative matters and was closed to the public pursuant to Public Law 114-328, section 554(b)(3). The Commissioners agreed to make a separate version of these minutes available to the public.

Attendance

Commissioners present:

- Mr. Edward Allard
- Mr. Steve Barney
- The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson (Nov. 15 only)
- The Honorable Mark Gearan
- The Honorable Avril Haines
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck (Nov. 15 only)
- Ms. Jeanette James
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada

Staff present:

- Paul Lekas, General Counsel
- Peter Morgan, Director of Operations
- Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis
- Sandy Scott, Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement
- Other Commission staff

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November 14, 2019

Business Meeting

Vice Chair Wada, serving as Acting Chair, convened the Commission at 0800 ET, with nine Commissioners present. Chairman Heck and Dr. Davidson were unable to attend the meeting on November 14.

Acting Chair Wada moved to close this and other business meetings to occur on November 14-15, 2019, because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated. A motion was made and seconded, and all Commissioners present agreed.

Acting Chair Wada then moved to approve the internal minutes for the October 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to adopt the minutes subject to technical edits and clarifications.

Final Report: Title and Cover

At approximately 0813 ET, Dr. Jill Rough, Director of Research and Analysis, introduced a discussion about the cover and title for the final report. Mr. Sandy Scott, Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement, briefed the Commission on the rationale for adopting a title as well as staff efforts to evaluate title options considered by the Commission at the October meeting. Mr. Scott distributed a memorandum addressing the topic. As reflected in that memorandum, the Commission's public relations consultant, Ms. Erin Pike, expressed a preference for "Service: A National Priority," while Mr. Drew Train, a marketing consultant who has advised the Commission, preferred "Inspired to Serve"—a variation on the title "Inspired and Eager to Serve" that the Commission considered in October. Mr. Scott noted that Chairman Heck endorsed the title "Inspired to Serve" which was also the staff recommendation.

Commissioners debated the pros and cons of each of the four remaining titles: "Inspired to Serve," "Inspired and Eager to Serve," "Service: A National Priority," and "Strengthening America Through Service." Acting Chair Wada then called for a vote and all Commissioners present voted in favor of the title "Inspired to Serve."

Dr. Rough then introduced a discussion of potential covers for the final report. She presented two versions of the cover based on the Commission discussion in October: a "blue" version and a "flag" version. Several Commissioners expressed support for the blue version. Dr. Rough noted Chairman Heck's support for the same version. Acting Chair Wada then called for a vote and all Commissioners present voted in favor of the blue version.

Legislative Drafting Discussion

Beginning at 0830 ET, Mr. Paul Lekas, General Counsel, led a discussion about the staff's approach to legislative drafting. He explained that staff is preparing legislative proposals for each Commission recommendation directed to Congress, with the exception of a handful of appropriations-only proposals, which he would raise with the Commission to seek guidance. He noted that each proposal would have both legislative text and sectional analysis, and proposals amending existing law would also have redline comparisons. He explained that the legislative

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proposals would be presented in a bound volume separate from the final report and would be available as well online. The proposals will be consolidated into a single, comprehensive bill with different sections. Commissioners generally endorsed naming the bill the “Inspire to Serve Act” with some recommending an acronym built into that title. Mr. Lekas also noted that legal staff had sought technical assistance from different federal agencies.

Legislative Proposals – Military Service

Ms. Eleanor Vuono, Senior Legal Counsel, led a discussion of legislative proposals to accompany military service recommendations. When discussing Recommendation 11b (on multiyear funding for military marketing and advertising), Ms. Vuono noted the different views about the need for multiyear funding from JAMRS and the Navy. Regarding Recommendation 12b (on additional funding for the Cyber Institutes program), Ms. Vuono noted that Congress is already engaged on this and appears to be proposing additional funding as part of the FY20 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Recommendation 13a directs DoD to develop a new personnel management structure for specific military occupational specialties. Ms. Vuono explained that the approach taken in the legislative drafts is to require the military department Secretaries to develop plans and report those plans to Congress; while this could delay action, it would permit the personnel experts in the department to develop a structure and give Congress the opportunity to review the proposal. She noted that this approach was discussed with the Commission at the October meeting.

Legislative Proposals – Selective Service and National Mobilization

Ms. Vuono next led a discussion of legislative proposals to accompany national mobilization recommendations. Regarding Recommendation 37 (on requiring a report on deferments and exemptions), Commissioners discussed the timeline and appropriate actors to implement the recommendation and agreed to defer further discussion for a later session with Chairman Heck present. Recommendation 44 calls for the President to create a position on the National Security Council staff responsible for whole-of-government national mobilization efforts. The Commission discussed the necessity of legislation here and deferred further discussion for a later session with Chairman Heck present.

Legislative Proposals – National Service

Ms. Isvari Mohan Maranwe, Attorney Advisor, led a discussion of legislative proposals to accompany national service recommendations. She indicated that the staff legal team had met with CNCS and noted that, based on their guidance, the legislative proposals will not use the term “AmeriCorps” because it is a branding term that is not based in statute. Regarding Recommendation 15b on anchoring the Segal Award to the average cost of in-state tuition at public colleges and universities, Ms. Maranwe noted that staff is using prior bills as a model for this proposal. Mr. Lekas noted that an anticipated bill from Rep. Michael Waltz would propose a variant of this. Also under Recommendation 15b, Ms. Maranwe discussed a proposal to allow national service participants to use the Segal Award at a wider range of institutions. Ms. Maranwe explained that annual appropriations language currently restricts the broader authorized use to only military veterans. Regarding Recommendation 15d (which calls for allowing older AmeriCorps alumni to transfer the Segal Award to a broader range of individuals and permits

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transferees a longer time to use the Award), Ms. Maranwe noted that CNCS counsel offered to provide guidance on how to describe family members in an appropriately inclusive manner. Recommendation 16b removes the geographic restrictions on the RSVP program. Ms. Maranwe noted that this proposal will require additional technical assistance from CNCS and appears to require a clarification in the law to ensure program leaders understand the scope of the restriction.

Ms. Maranwe discussed Recommendation 17a, which calls for appropriations to increase participation by opportunity youth and tribal youth in national service programs. Mr. Lekas then explained that this is one of a handful of proposals that seek only appropriations. He noted that in some instances, staff built into draft proposals different types of reporting requirements to serve as a hook for appropriations requests. The Commission discussed the need for legislation for proposals, such as this one, that do not require authorizations. Ms. James recommended including a list of appropriations sought by the Commission's proposals. Ms. Haines recommended speaking directly with appropriators about what form would be most helpful to them and recommended a legislative provision that would compel the executive branch, through OMB, to provide a one-time report on the executive branch's use of funds to pay for each item.

Ms. Maranwe then discussed Recommendation 17b, which authorizes additional wraparound support for participants of AmeriCorps State and National and VISTA who are most in need. Mr. Lekas explained how this issue is addressed in statute for participants of the NCCC program. Regarding Recommendation 18a (which replaces the current ServeAmerica Fellowship with a new national service fellowship model), Mr. Lekas noted that Sandy Strokoff, Senior Legislative Counsel, recommended moving some detail out of the legislation given the difficulty of amending the U.S. Code to alter any of those details.

Ms. Maranwe discussed Recommendation 18b, which calls for CNCS to conduct five demonstration projects over three years in specified areas. Ms. Haines recommended that the legislation permit but not require CNCS to conduct these demonstration projects. She and Ms. James discussed this approach and ultimately concurred. When discussing Recommendation 20a (which calls for demonstration authority for remote participation in the Peace Corps Response program), Mr. Lekas noted that the Response program was not created by statute.

Legislative Proposals – Public Service

Ms. Rachel Rikleen, Deputy General Counsel, then led a discussion of legislative proposals to accompany public service recommendations. Recommendation 21b calls for an appropriation to help agencies adopt advanced assessment tools. Ms. Rikleen noted an intent to treat this in the same manner as the other appropriations-only proposals and would require agencies to report on their compliance as a way to build this recommendation into legislation. Regarding Recommendation 23b (on noncompetitive eligibility for federal interns, scholars, and fellows, AmeriCorps alumni, and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RCPV) and expanding the Veterans Recruitment Appointment authority), Ms. Rikleen noted an intent to speak with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) regarding the VRA statute to avoid any unintended consequences for other VA programs. Ms. Rikleen also noted that "RCPV" is not defined in statute; she further noted that Peace Corps employees (versus RCPVs) already have 36 months of noncompetitive eligibility and the proposal would not affect that. She explained that the last piece of this

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proposal would be tied to the Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center proposal, but if that proposal does not pass, it would need to be restructured. Ms. Rikleen then discussed Recommendation 23b, which authorizes noncompetitive eligibility for certain “high-performing” civilian employees. Ms. Rikleen noted the complexity in defining “high performing” in statute and indicated that further work, including speaking with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), would be necessary. Recommendation 24a addresses the Pathways Internship and Recent Graduates Programs, which Ms. Rikleen noted are currently governed by executive order and federal regulations. Ms. Rikleen referenced interest in Congress to formalize the Programs to ensure they remain supported across presidential administrations and sought clarity as to Commission intent. Commissioners confirmed their intent that the legislative proposal codify these two Pathways Programs. Ms. Rikleen indicated that the proposal would likely incorporate them by reference to the executive order.

Recommendation 24c calls for compensating federal interns. Ms. Rikleen sought clarity on whether the proposal was intended to cover the whole federal government or just the executive branch. Mr. Lekas noted that the Commission decided at the October meeting not to extend this to congressional interns. Commissioners discussed this issue, with Ms. Haines noting that she was not present at the October session and felt strongly that the language was intended to cover not only the executive branch but all three branches, including the Congress, but that it should not apply to interns who receive school credit for their internship service. Commissioners present seemed inclined to support a proposal that covered all federal interns in all three branches, with an exception for those interns who receive school credit for their internship service. Acting Chair Wada proposed to revisit the matter with Chairman Heck at the Friday session.

Legislative Strategy Discussion

From approximately 1110 to 1200 ET, Mr. Jeff McNichols, Deputy Director of Governmental Affairs, and Mr. Lekas led a discussion about legislative strategy.

Mr. McNichols began by providing a summary of discussions with the Senate and House Armed Services Committees (SASC and HASC) and other key jurisdictional committees. He noted a positive meeting with SASC staff that focused on Selective Service and military service. SASC staff also expressed interest in assisting the Commission to advance its legislation.

Mr. McNichols noted that Chairman Heck recommended not sharing detailed recommendation information with congressional committees until January. Mr. Lekas explained the reasoning behind this approach. The public comment period remains open through December, and the Commission should remain open to receiving input until the end of that period. In addition, the Commission would not want to send mixed messages to different groups, such as DoD and the Armed Services Committees, that may be in contact with one another. For the present, therefore, staff plans to hold confidential discussions with agencies and congressional staff based on the slate of options considered by the Commission prior to voting.

Mr. Lekas noted that the current plan with SASC is to hold a member briefing in January with a subset of the Commission. Ahead of that, Commission staff would plan to brief SASC staff in

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further detail as well as the military legislative assistants (MLAs) for SASC members. These efforts would focus on Commission recommendations to consider for the FY21 NDAA.

Mr. McNichols described a recent meeting with HASC staff as very positive. They were open and receptive to ideas and seemed focused on Selective Service and national mobilization issues. He explained that HASC staff is thinking tactically about how the recommendations will work with their members given significant turnover since the last Congress and a new majority. He explained that HASC views the 2017 report from DoD as DoD's baseline position on Selective Service and noted DoD's position that it did not factor Selective Service into its operational plans. HASC staff asked if DoD's view had changed on this issue.

Dr. Rough noted for the Commission that DoD, in discussions with Commission staff, has adopted a different tone and appears interested in having serious conversations about national mobilization. Ms. Skelly, who also attended a recent meeting with senior DoD officials, concurred, and conveyed her view not to rely too much on DoD's position as expressed in 2017 given changes in leadership and other developments since that time. Dr. Rough noted changes that have arisen since publication of the National Defense Strategy and its strong emphasis on great power competition. She noted that issues around national mobilization appear to have generated high-level interest at DoD not only in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness but also at the DoD's Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation office and the Office of Net Assessment, for example. Mr. McNichols noted that HASC staff felt a change in DoD's posture would resonate with HASC members.

Mr. McNichols and Mr. Lekas explained that HASC staff expressed interest in holding a member briefing with the Commission in February 2020 and hearings on possible NDAA proposals in early April 2020. Mr. McNichols noted that HASC staff indicated that hearings would be necessary for any proposals the Commission hopes to include in the FY21 NDAA.

Mr. McNichols then briefed the Commission on meetings with other jurisdictional committees, noting that some have proven fruitful, and others have been hard to schedule. He discussed meetings with House Oversight and Reform Committee staff. In one meeting, majority and minority staff for the committee suggested considering the suspension calendar as one approach to advance discrete, noncontroversial legislation. In a separate meeting, Commission staff met with staff for Rep. Connolly, who heads the Government Operations Subcommittee and will be proposing legislation addressing the overall Federal workforce in three stages (interns and recent graduates, midcareer, and the future workforce). Mr. McNichols assessed this as a potential avenue to advance Commission legislation in public service in 2020.

Mr. McNichols discussed a meeting with staff on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee (HELP), which has jurisdiction over national service and education. He explained that Chairman Alexander is focused on school safety and reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and staff conveyed that it would be difficult to advance anything beyond that scope. Ranking Member Murray is focused on improving reading and math. Mr. Lekas emphasized their apparent reluctance to consider proposals related to civic education. The Commission then discussed different approaches to encouraging congressional action on this front, with a focus on individual members who sit on the jurisdictional committees, even if not in

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leadership roles. Mr. McNichols highlighted the interest that Rep. Michael Waltz and the For Country Caucus have shown on Commission issues.

The Commission then recessed for approximately one hour.

Final Report: Elements

The Commission reconvened at 1300 ET. Mr. Lekas provided a clarification on recommendation 43, relating to an SSS public awareness campaign, noting that staff did plan to address this in a legislative proposal.

Dr. Rough provided a status report on the final report production schedule and then led a discussion of the elements—call-out boxes and other features—for the final report.

Dr. Rough discussed a draft version of a call-out box addressing needs of the nation in different areas. She requested Commission feedback on the content and on whether the element should be presented in a single call-out box or peppered throughout the national service section of the final report.

Commissioners then provided input on the draft elements shared with them ahead of this discussion.

Mr. Khazei identified several elements as “must dos.” Those included Public Service – Arizona State Public Service Academy; The Selective Service Act of 1917; A Fair and Equitable System; Deferments and Exemptions; and Opportunity Youth. With respect to the last of these, he recommended adding a definition of the term “opportunity youth.” He recommended including the following elements only if space permits: Flint National Service Accelerator Best Practice; and Team Rubicon. Mr. Khazei recommended including data on the estimated scale of benefits from investment in national service, referencing work that Voices for National Service had commissioned.

With respect to the needs of the nation element, Mr. Khazei recommended revisions to convey what service can do to address existing needs in each of the areas, such as in economic opportunity and conservation. These revisions would assist in making the case for growing new service positions to one million per year. Mr. Khazei recommended that the discussion of educational needs highlights how national service can assist in supplying educators to schools in need. Ms. Haines recommended including statistics on the need for more educators. She also recommended that more be added to the report on what the needs of the nation are and the impact that national and public service can have on the needs of the nation, noting that this argument is what inspires many to engage in public service, the statute establishing the Commission specifically indicates that it should be matching its methods for increasing participation in service to address the needs of the nation, and that this is among the best arguments for advocating for significant investments in the infrastructure that will support what the Commission hopes over time will develop into a universal expectation of service.

Ms. Haines also recommended including stories on how public servants make changes for the betterment of the nation and its citizens. As one example, she noted how the U.S. Digital

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Service lists examples of how they make Americans' lives better every day by doing things like modernizing health data access. Building on this point, Mr. Barney recommended highlighting public servants who continued to work—for example, with TSA—even through the government shutdown, highlighting their commitment and dedication. As another example, he mentioned a woman the Commission met in Colorado who processed paychecks for firefighters in California. Dr. Rough noted that the public comments have stories that can be used and noted that the main purpose of the elements is to bring the main text to life. Ms. James endorsed the views of Ms. Haines and Mr. Barney and supported highlighting the work of public servants.

Ms. James inquired about the element in the civic education section about Mr. Wexler's class and asked if that initiative had bipartisan support. As a general matter, she requested that staff ensure that initiatives highlighted in the report are not controversial. As to the needs of the nation element, she cautioned against appearing too "pie in the sky" and recommended relying on evidence and data where available.

Ms. James noted that the element addressing the legislative history of the civil service and merit principles is quite long and asked if it would work better as an appendix. Separately, she requested language changes to the element on inequities and the draft, removing the phrase "well-off men" from the text.

Acting Chair Wada recommended highlighting the Sammy award winners in the public service section.

Dr. Rough noted all comments received and provided concluding remarks before closing the session at 1335 ET.

Engagement Update

At 1340 ET, Mr. Scott and the GPE team provided an update on engagement efforts. Mr. Scott began by summarizing plans for the final report launch. He indicated that staff is looking at the third or fourth week of March for the primary launch event—sometime in the period March 18-31. The date would be finalized once congressional calendars become available and he would notify the Commission as soon as that occurs.

Mr. Scott then addressed efforts to arrange events at presidential libraries. John Bridgeland spoke to the Chairman recently and offered to assist with an event at the George W. Bush library. He noted that Vice Chair Gearan and Mr. Khazei are working on outreach to the Clinton and Kennedy libraries.

Ms. Cristina Flores, Public Affairs Officer, provided an update on communications efforts. She explained that the GPE team is working to leverage key dates such as Veterans Day. She provided an overview of recent activity by Commissioners and the tie-in to the Commission communications strategy. She highlighted a national service ceremony on Cape Cod attended by Mr. Barney, an op-ed in *The Hill* by Chairman Heck, an interview in a Colorado paper by Dr. Davidson, and recent blog posts. Looking forward, Ms. Flores noted that the Commission would be highlighted this fall in *World View* and would likely receive a follow up in the spring; staff has developed new relationships with publications including the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*; staff

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plans to update its blog each week and issue a newsletter once a month, a redesign of the Commission website, an upcoming special feature on selective service in *USA Today*, an upcoming Department of Veterans Affairs podcast to feature the Commission, and an upcoming *Politico* event involving Dr. Davidson and Vice Chair Wada. Ms. Flores closed by noting that the public comment period would close in December.

Mr. Scott explained that his team plans to reach out to each Commissioner in December as part of developing individualized messaging plans that would include the recommendations each Commissioner desires to address or avoid as well as information on their availability, affiliations, and contacts. Separately, he noted that GPE will engage Commissioners about possible volunteer opportunities in January, conduct video interviews in January, and hold media training in February.

Mr. McNichols and Ms. Levey discussed efforts to map stakeholders and congressional interest related to each recommendation area. They requested Commissioners provide their input on stakeholders and contacts on a series of papers posted on walls throughout the office.

Legislative Drafting – Public Service

Mr. Lekas continued the review begun earlier in the day of legislative proposals to accompany public service recommendations. Regarding Recommendation 24e, which establishes a Federal Fellowship and Scholarship Center, Mr. Lekas confirmed that no substantive changes had been made to the proposal since its adoption by the Commission in July. Recommendation 24g creates a Public Service Corps. Mr. Lekas noted that the proposal could be fashioned to fit in either title 5 (personnel) or title 20 (education) of the U.S. Code, and as such could be considered during Higher Education Act reauthorization in 2020. Recommendation 24g also includes the creation of a public service cadet program at military academies. Mr. Lekas noted that the proposal would be structured as a requirement for the Superintendents of the military academies and the Secretaries of the military departments to develop a plan for Congress within one year.

Recommendation 24h establishes a Public Service Academy grant program to fund institutions of higher education. Mr. Barney recommended keeping the public service academy proposal ambitious and leave it to Congress to water down the recommendation if it so desired. Ms. Skelly asked for clarification on if the goal was to establish 50 Academies by 2031. Mr. Lekas said the date was not identified but the program would provide for declining government support over time as the universities learned to run their own programs. Ms. Skelly asked how to convince universities to do this. Mr. Lekas said that staff would examine the issue. Mr. McNichols suggested that it would be a good proposal for a young member of Congress to champion.

Recommendation 25c authorizes Federal agencies to engage in robust public communication about their missions. The Commission discussed how to draft this proposal to avoid suggesting proximity to anti-propaganda restrictions and other limitations of fiscal law. Ms. James recommended avoiding the word “promote” and she and Ms. Haines recommended developing language focused on educating and informing the public. Part of Recommendation 26 extends the portability of licenses for all Federal health care personnel operating within the scope of authorized Federal activities. Commissioners confirmed that they intended this to apply to all

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health care workers. Commissioners also recommended against proposing that the provision be included in a specific title of the U.S. Code.

Recommendation 27d establishes a pilot program for a Civilian Cybersecurity Reserve. Ms. James asked if the Reserve would be mandatory or optional. Mr. Lekas explained that as drafted the proposal would authorize the program but not mandate participation. Recommendation 29a expands OPM demonstration authority to test changes in personnel systems. Mr. Collins explained that the proposal would authorize OPM to develop the pilot and determine which employees could participate in the pilot but that the legislation would not require all agencies to participate.

Legislative Drafting – Cross-Service Recommendations

Mr. Lekas then reviewed legislative proposals for cross-service recommendations, to include five proposals for improving coordination across Federal agencies, the establishment of a Council on Military, National, and Public Service, and the establishment of an internet-based service opportunity platform.

Mr. Lekas noted that a number of proposals reference the Council on Military, National, and Public Service. Although that entity has not been established, Commissioners supported leaving references to that entity in other proposals, noting that Congress could change the reference if desired and it would convey the Commission's conviction in the proposal to establish the Council.

Mr. Allard inquired about the constitutionality of the Department of Defense sharing information received from the Selective Service System with the national service sector. Mr. Lekas said that it would not be unconstitutional per se, but it would be important to ensure the protection of privacy and that there were appropriate legal underpinnings to permit that type of information sharing.

In the proposal to create the Council, Mr. Lekas explained there was a requirement that the person would oversee this report and a strategy for service. Mr. Lekas explained that Vice Chair Wada recommended a strategy report every four years and a report on cross-service participation every two years. Ms. Haines said there would be a budget report every year as well. Commissioners agreed after some discussion to have both reports be quadrennial, one due every two years (on the off year).

Legislative Drafting – Civic Education

Ms. Maranwe then described the civic education proposals except for the civic education fund and service-learning fund, which Mr. Lekas said he would address the next day.

Mr. Lekas shared, for Commissioner review, drafts of the teaching profession resolution and a separate resolution on the blended Federal workforce. Ms. James mentioned an old 1940s/1950s-era radio show, *Our Miss Brooks*, featuring Eve Arden, and wondered if similar programming today could draw attention to teachers. Commissioners discussed ways to increase the influence and visibility of teachers.

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This session concluded at approximately 1530 ET and the Commission concluded its business meeting for the day.

November 15, 2019

Business Meeting

The Commission reconvened at 0900 ET on November 15, 2019, with Vice Chair Wada presiding as Acting Chair in the Chairman's absence until approximately 0940 ET. All other Commissioners were present.

Legislative Drafting – Remaining Proposals

Ms. Maranwe led a discussion of legislative proposals to accompany civic education recommendations.

Recommendation 1a creates a Civic Education Fund in the amount of \$200 million per year and establishes goals for measuring improvements in civic education by 2031.

Commissioners discussed whether to include the recommendation's target metrics in the legislation. Codification would make them clear and prominent but would make it challenging to change them. Mr. Barney felt including the goals in the proposal would help with the Commission's messaging and Congress could choose to strike that portion of the proposal if it so desired or keep the metrics as a signal to appropriators. Acting Chair Wada concurred.

The Commission then revisited the target metrics for the Civic Education Fund. Dr. Davidson recommended clear levels rather than percentage increases. Mr. Lekas provided background, noting that a goal of 50% proficiency is approximately twice or 200% the current level. Dr. Davidson suggested 75% proficiency as a goal. Dr. Rough supported a high goal but expressed concern about the funding required to achieve such a goal. Mr. Barney acknowledged the funding hurdle but recommended setting a mark that forces a debate on the topic. Vice Chair Wada expressed skepticism about both the 75% goal and the funding required. The Commission then reviewed current proficiency levels in other subjects, noting that math and reading assessment demonstrate 25-30% proficiency. Vice Chair Gearan felt a 75% goal would seem like "settling" for less than ideal and felt "doubling" or "a 100% increase" would message better even if the goal is less ambitious.

Dr. Davidson referenced the sense of urgency in the introduction of the report and felt it critical that the goals conveyed by the Commission reflect that sense of urgency—that the Commission set the bar, not do the work of Congress to achieve those goals.

Commissioners discussed spending for STEM education as a comparison. Acting Chair Wada recommended against any comparisons to the national defense budget and noted that STEM spending grew over time. Mr. Kilgannon noted the tepid reaction from Senate HELP staff to a civic education program.

Commissioners discussed the figure of \$200 million in the recommendation for a civic education fund. Mr. Lekas explained how this related to past spending in civics: when the Teaching

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American History program was in place and before the cuts to civic education spending, the Federal government spent approximately \$140 million per year in this area. Mr. Lekas noted Ted McConnell's recent statement comparing Federal spending on STEM to civics.

At this point, Chairman Heck arrived from meetings on the Hill with the For Country Caucus. He noted the Caucus members' excitement about the direction the Commission is heading and that the Commission would be preparing legislative proposals.

Chairman Heck opined on the amount proposed for the Civic Education Fund and recommended against increasing it. He noted that \$200 million will be considered a huge amount by some lawmakers.

Mr. Kilgannon returned to the goals of the civic education initiative. He recommended an aspirational goal for proficiency. Other Commissioners agreed. Chairman Heck recommended 100% and this was met with general agreement.

Ms. Maranwe then discussed Recommendation 1b, which creates a Service-Learning Fund to provide grants supporting three types of programs: service-learning in K-12 and higher education, summers of service, and semesters of service. Mr. Lekas explained that legal staff has explored different approaches to establishing this fund in legislation and is recommending an amendment to existing authorization created by the Serve America Act. The amendment will tweak existing authorization language to match the Commission's objectives and will specify the Commission's goals and funding levels. Commissioners agreed with this overall approach. Commissioners also agreed that the summer of service component of the program could cover grades 6-12; that the 100 hour requirement for summer of service should not be considered a cap; that the educational award, which presented administrative difficulties for CNCS, should be a completion award; and that the semester of service program should have a minimum requirement of 150 hours instead of 70 hours as set out in the existing legislation.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the changes to the Service-Learning Fund recommendation and all Commissioners voted in favor of adopting these changes.

Recommendation 6 is a proposed congressional resolution on the importance of the teaching profession and recommendation 25 is a proposed congressional resolution on the importance of Federal agencies managing their blended workforces. Vice Chair Wada and Ms. James agreed to take the lead on revising these resolutions for Commission review.

Recommendation 18b authorizes CNCS to undertake demonstration projects in specified areas. The Commission discussed this earlier in the meeting and agreed to revisit it with Chairman Heck present. The Commission agreed that the authority should be permissive rather than mandatory.

The Commission then discussed whether the proposal to amend the Military Selective Service Act (Recommendation 35) should include clean-up work that staff had undertaken and vetted with the Selective Service System to remove or correct obsolete provisions. Chairman Heck instructed staff not to include these changes in any MSSA proposal, noting that this task is

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beyond the Commission’s mandate and reflected changes that the Commission had not deliberated.

Recommendation 44 directs the President to designate an official on the National Security Council staff to serve in a lead role on whole-of-government national mobilization efforts. The Commission rejected any changes to the formal recommendation as drafted—which was directed to the President—but endorsed an implementation step directed to Congress and accompanied by a legislative proposal.

Commissioners revisited the Federal intern issue (Recommendation 24c), discussed in an earlier session, to seek Chairman Heck’s view on whether it should exempt from pay those students who receive school credit and whether it should apply to all branches of the Federal government. This recommendation would require the Federal government to pay interns. The Commission agreed that there should be a limited carve-out for students receiving school credit and that the proposal should cover all three branches of government.

Mr. Lekas then provided a brief update on the appellate litigation in the Fifth Circuit involving a challenge to the all-male Selective Service registration requirement.

The Commission next considered a recommendation for the President to submit to Congress a report on deferments and exemptions in the event of a draft (Recommendation 37). Mr. Lekas noted that this would be a proposal for the NDAA and not included in the general MSSA revisions. Commissioners discussed the appropriate framing of the recommendation and of the proposal. The Commission voted to support the recommendation as originally approved, with a focus on the President, and to include implementation guidance and a legislative proposal directing the Director of the Selective Service System, in coordination with the Secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security, to undertake the report.

Final Report: Introduction

Following a short break, the Commission reconvened at 1100 ET to discuss the draft introduction to the final report.

Vice Chair Gearan provided several reflections on the draft introduction. He highlighted the de Tocquevillian nature of the Commission’s journey over the past two years and recommended that aspect receive more emphasis in the introduction. Likewise, he recommended a broader statement about bipartisanship. He recommended tying more closely the question posed in the introduction to President Kennedy’s inaugural address, such as “What will you do for our country?” instead of “How will you serve?” He also recommended highlighting with accurate superlatives the novel recommendations the Commission intends to make.

Ms. Haines supported these reflections and recommended further points. She recommended strengthening the civic education discussion with statistics on the investment per student in civics as compared with STEM. She recommended a stronger connection between attracting Americans to military service and maintaining the talent required to sustain the United States’ global position. More generally, she recommended emphasizing the need for new talent to face the next century of challenges.

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Commissioners then discussed different variants on the question posed by Vice Chair Gearan.

Dr. Davidson noted the challenge of conveying why today's environment requires an investment in service. In contrast to the moon race, there is no external threat to provide the motivation. She recommended further building on the theme of democratic ideals and the de Tocquevillian idea.

Chairman Heck requested that Commissioners send any final edits on the draft introduction to Dr. Rough no later than November 18. He then closed discussion on the introduction, stating that the Commission would not hold further votes on the form or content of the introduction.

Final Report: Gender Chapter

The Commission turned to a discussion of a draft final report chapter addressing the extension of Selective Service registration to all Americans, including women. Chairman Heck noted that he had not received feedback since sharing the last draft with Commissioners. Below reflects top-line points raised by Commissioners during this session; staff recorded detailed notes of the discussion to guide revisions to the chapter.

Ms. James described the draft as a more fulsome and balanced discussion than that contained in the prior draft. She felt it contained enough balance to garner her vote despite her disagreements with some aspects of it. She made discrete requests, including one intended to avoid mischaracterization of the Commission deliberations.

Commissioners discussed the appropriate organization of the chapter. It was noted that while the ultimate recommendation is presented on the first page, the findings and recommendations are not discussed until later in the chapter.

Commissioners discussed the length and value of the background discussion. Vice Chair Wada emphasized the importance of including a thorough background section to provide context. Ms. James concurred. Ms. Haines suggested ways to tighten the section, as did Chairman Heck.

Ms. Haines and Mr. Kilgannon, who took lead roles in developing an earlier version of the chapter with Dr. Rough's team, suggested several changes to the new language and organization of the chapter. In particular, Ms. Haines suggested adding language that set out at the beginning a summary of the views of those Commissioners who supported the recommendation as follows: *After careful consideration of a diverse range of perspectives, the Commission determined the time is right to expand the registration requirement to all Americans, men and women. Doing so promotes the national security of the United States by allowing the President to leverage the full range of talent and skills available during a national mobilization. It also reaffirms the Nation's fundamental belief in a common defense, and signals that both men and women are valued for their contributions in defending the Nation. The current disparate treatment of women unacceptably excludes women from a fundamental civic obligation and reinforces gender stereotypes about the role of women, undermining national security.* This language was agreed to, while other Commissioners provided further input as this discussion continued. Chairman Heck then reviewed all the changes proposed during the session. The Commission voted to adopt these changes. Chairman Heck informed the Commission that it would receive a revised

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version of the chapter for situational awareness but that there would be no further discussion on the content or form of the chapter.

GPE Discussion on Messaging

The Commission took a short break and reconvened at approximately 1320 ET with nine Commissioners present, as Vice Chair Gearan and Mr. Khazei had departed for the airport.

Mr. Scott led a discussion on messaging issues. He distributed draft talking points and explained that the documents represented the first attempts at building out how the Commission will speak to the recommendations of the final report in a variety of communications contexts. He explained that the GPE team would prepare multiple versions of these on different subject areas, with different iterations designed for different audiences.

The documents, Mr. Scott explained, are organized with topline messages and three more focused messages. They attempt to convey what the problem is that the Commission identified and how the recommendations are designed to address it.

Mr. Scott then introduced the messaging document on national service. For national service, the topline messages reflected on the document were growth, incentives, and awareness. He described the Commission's moonshot of 1 million national service opportunities by 2031. He then asked Commissioners to consider how to convey the breakdown of that target and whether fully funding the Serve America Act—which called for an increase in AmeriCorps positions to 250,000—was part of the strategy. Vice Chair Wada asked about how the national service community would support the Commission's recommendations if the Commission did not clearly support full funding of the goals set out in the Serve America Act. Mr. Scott said that the community would likely support the Commission either way but would not be as excited about promoting the recommendations, including the national service fellowship program, without a clear statement in support of the Serve America Act's objectives.

Chairman Heck described a sustained commitment required to achieve the goal of 1 million. He said this could include 250,000 from the fellowship program, 250,000 from fully funding the Serve America Act and growing AmeriCorps, and 500,000 from other sources. Mr. Collins reviewed language from the draft text of the final report stating, in the Commission's words, that the 1 million figure represented "federally supported" positions with a one-year commitment. Chairman Heck noted that "federally supported" does not require that the positions be federally funded. Mr. Lekas added that high school-oriented programs like the summers and semesters of service would not meet the definition because they would not be year-long programs.

Chairman Heck explained that the Commission will adhere to the text in the final report which means there is a need to change the messaging around how to achieve the 1 million opportunity goal. Mr. Lekas suggested referencing the snowball effect, that a major investment by the government could lead others to expand or create new programs.

The discussion was tabled and Mr. Scott addressed the incentives and awareness points, requesting Commissioner feedback as the GPE team works to improve the product.

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Mr. Scott next discussed the messaging document for public service. The topline message focused on how critical public service is and the problems with hiring individuals into the government and keeping critical skills in government service. The key messages for public service, as currently prepared, are to fix hiring, bring in the next generation, and make long-term revisions to compete with the private sector. Ms. Skelly recommended incorporating the term “modernizing” the personnel systems which could be helpful in connecting with stakeholders.

Ms. James recommended further attention to awareness concerns involving public service, and the negative perceptions of public servants. Mr. Allard discussed possible congressional efforts to recognize public servants. Ms. Haines recommended sharpening the message about meeting national security needs through public service, in part conveying the message that the nation is at a critical juncture and needs to make changes to avoid losing the talent and skills required for the United States to maintain a competitive advantage globally.

Business Meeting

Chairman Heck reminded the Commission of upcoming meeting dates. The Commission would meet again on January 16-17, 2020, which he noted leads into the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday weekend. The Commission would also meet on February 20-21, 2020. The dates for the March 2020 meeting remain in flux as staff looks to schedule the launch event for the final report around the congressional calendar.

Prior to closing, Mr. Allard addressed a call held with various war resistance organizations on November 13. He and other Commissioners participated in the call. On the call, the Code Pink organization made clear that it intends to oppose women registering for Selective Service if that is a recommendation the Commission adopts.

The Commission then adjourned its November meeting.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

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