



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

**Minutes of January 2020 Commission Meeting**

The National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (the Commission) held a meeting on January 17, 2020, 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 (by telephone)
- The Honorable Mark Gearan (by telephone)
- The Honorable Avril Haines
- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck
- Ms. Jeanette James
- Mr. Alan Khazei
- Mr. Thomas Kilgannon
- Ms. Shawn Skelly
- The Honorable Debra Wada

Staff present:

- 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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*January 17, 2020*

**Business Meeting**

Chairman Heck convened the Commission at 0800 ET, with eight Commissioners physically present; Vice Chair Gearan and Dr. Davidson participated by telephone. Ms. Haines arrived at approximately 0815 ET.

Chairman Heck moved to close this and other business meetings to occur on January 17 because pre-decisional and organizational matters would be deliberated. A motion was made and seconded, and all Commissioners agreed.

Chairman Heck then moved to approve the minutes for the November 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded and the Commission voted unanimously to adopt the minutes subject to technical edits and clarifications.

*Reports on Recent Engagements*

Ms. Skelly attended the Partnership for Public Service's Best Places to Work breakfast, held on January 10, 2020. She described the event as positive and had an opportunity to speak with senior Partnership staff.

Mr. Kilgannon attended an event in Bentonville, Arkansas, in December that included a roundtable discussion arranged by Theresa Walsh of the Boys & Girls Club. The discussion included representatives from Walmart. Sandy Scott, Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement, also attended this event and reported that Walmart requested information about the Employers of National Service program run by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Mr. Kilgannon also spoke with Rep. Michael Waltz (R-FL) around an event hosted by the Freedom Alliance. Rep Waltz said he was looking forward to the Commission's report.

Chairman Heck described follow up discussions he has held with members of the For Country Caucus, which includes Rep. Waltz, and with the group With Honor Action, which was created to promote veteran leadership in public service through education/advocacy programs, grants, and charitable contributions. He noted that both the For Country Caucus and With Honor Action have interest in the Commission's mandate and said he plans to meet again with With Honor Action on January 30.

Ms. James addressed a meeting with Janet Tran of the Reagan Library and Commission staff. She explained that the Reagan Library is pursuing an initiative on civics and civic education and that Ms. Tran is interested in the Commission's work and in helping the Commission. The Reagan Institute Summit on Education will occur in June 2020 and, while the summit agenda is nearly locked, there might be an opportunity for the Commission to present there; if not, Ms. Tran would explore a possible Commission event at the Reagan Library in July 2020.

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Mr. Barney met with Matt Donovan, currently serving as Acting Under Secretary for Personnel & Readiness, on January 16. He noted that Mr. Donovan is aware that the Commission has met with P&R staff in the past and is open to engaging further with the Commission.

Mr. Khazei met with Eliot Gerson of the Aspen Institute on January 16. Mr. Scott also attended. Mr. Gerson is open to holding a plenary session at this year's Aspen Ideas Festival, which will be held on June 27-July 3, with a follow-on strategy session.

*Prioritizing Recommendations and Key Messages*

Beginning at 0815 ET, the Commission deliberated on how to prioritize recommendations by category. Chairman Heck initiated the discussion by noting that the Commission will make over 160 recommendations and sub-recommendations and will need to prioritize one or two recommendations in each category in its communications.

Ahead of the discussion, Commissioners received memoranda on priority recommendations and key messages by recommendation category. Several Commissioners expressed a preference to prioritize recommendations in the context of key messages.

The Commission began with key messages and recommendation priorities in the category *elevating service*.

Ms. Haines recommended incorporating the goal of creating a universal expectation of service into the vision statement set out in the key messages document, which Mr. Scott agreed to do. Mr. Khazei provided thoughts on how to convey the Commission's overall vision. Chairman Heck requested that Mr. Khazei provide staff with text reflecting his views, which he agreed to do. Commissioners agreed to prioritize recommendations 7 (establishing a Council on Military, National, and Public Service) and 8 (establishing a service platform) in this category.

The Commission then discussed key messages and recommendation priorities in the category *civic education and service learning*.

Commissioners agreed to prioritize recommendation 1, which calls for establishment of a civic education fund (recommendation 1a) and service-learning fund (recommendation 1b). Ms. Haines spoke in favor of including recommendation 5, which contains best practices endorsed by the Commission and directed at organizations beyond the Federal government. She expressed concern that these best practice recommendations, designed to create opportunities for and improve access to civic education and service learning, could be lost. Commissioners agreed to include recommendation 5 as a priority.

Ms. Skelly spoke in favor of including recommendation 2, which would elevate the civics component of the "Nation's Report Card." The Commission opted not to include recommendation 2 as a priority.

Mr. Kilgannon proposed that the key messages should convey how the two priority recommendations in this category interact with one another; in other words, recommendation 1 focuses on the Federal government providing funding and recommendation 5 reflects the primary role of the States in education.

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The Commission then discussed key messages and recommendation priorities in the category *military service*.

The discussion focused on recommendations 9 (improving outreach), 10 (increasing opportunities for youth), and 12 (developing educational pathways for military service). Vice Chair Wada spoke in favor of expanding Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) programs across the country, part of recommendation 10, as a cross-cutting issue that, by focusing on younger Americans, would help to connect military service to the Commission's broader mandate – even though, she noted, expansion of JROTC has not historically generated significant support at the Department of Defense (DoD). Ms. James supported a focus on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) exam, also part of recommendation 10. Mr. Barney cautioned against inviting a fight with DoD on two programs that DoD may not support absent new funding, but supported prioritizing the ASVAB recommendation.

Ms. Skelly expressed support for recommendation 10 while cautioning the Commission about the possible reaction from those who feel it represents an effort to recruit kids out of middle school, noting that some will not share the Commission's appreciation on early outreach.

Mr. Kilgannon supported prioritizing recommendations 9 and 10 as addressing most directly the civil-military divide, which he described as the fundamental problem with respect to military service. Mr. Kilgannon felt that these two recommendations, if successful, would help the public to understand the broad array of opportunities in the military.

Vice Chair Wada noted how different States have approached the ASVAB, with west coast States strongly opposed. Ms. James felt that ten more States understanding the usefulness of the ASVAB tool would represent a win, noting the Commission learned that many guidance counselors and teachers were unaware of the ASVAB. She suggested that expanding the ASVAB to be used as a career exploration tool could eliminate some current opposition to using it.

Chairman Heck turned discussion to recommendation 12, focused on funding training and certificate programs. Like recommendation 10, recommendation 12 targets recruiting rather than retention. Dr. Rough noted that recommendation 12 contains programs designed to improve critical skill recruitment and described recommendation 13 as the closest of the group on retention.

The Commission agreed to prioritize recommendations 10 and 12 for military service. Mr. Kilgannon asked staff to revise the first key message in the document to include the following: "Our recommendations will help recruit and retain the military's most important asset, which is its people." Chairman Heck requested Commissioners to send further edits and suggestions to the GPE team.

The Commission then discussed key messages and recommendation priorities in the category *national service*.

Staff recommended prioritizing recommendations 15 (improving benefits) and 18 (new fellowship program). Chairman Heck felt recommendation 18 represented the most exciting of

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the Commission's national service proposals as it would create a program in which funds would follow the participants, essentially flipping the current model for national service programs.

Mr. Kilgannon suggested an approach to the key messages to better convey the goals of these two recommendations. The Commission should, he explained, begin with incentives, stressing the importance of investing in those currently serving; continue with awareness, by conveying how investing in those who serve demonstrates the importance of national service and creating more opportunities raises awareness of national service; and follow with growth. He recommended rearranging the key messages in this way. Vice Chair Gearan suggested that the order might depend on the audience, and for some audiences, leading with growth would make more sense and with others, incentives should take priority. Chairman Heck noted that the key messages as presented on this document are not arranged in order of precedence and can be rearranged for different audiences.

Mr. Scott raised that the national service community will home in on the goal to create "one million" new national service opportunities annually by 2031. He said the community will want to hear that this figure includes a recommendation for growing AmeriCorps beyond the fellowship program.

With respect to messaging, Chairman Heck asked that messages be revised to follow the terminology the Commission has used for the past two-plus years, centering on the analytical framework of *awareness, aspiration, and access* rather than alternate terms such as incentives and growth.

Chairman Heck noted the Commission's agreement to prioritize recommendations 15 and 18 and adjust messaging terminology as described above.

The Commission then discussed key messages and recommendation priorities in the category *public service*.

Ms. James spoke first to recommendation 21, noting that the call to reform Federal hiring, though important, did not represent a fundamentally new idea. She endorsed prioritizing the recommendations designed to encourage and incentivize young people to enter public service – recommendations 24 and 28 – ahead of recommendation 21 and those designed to address hiring preferences and noncompetitive eligibility – recommendations 22 and 23.

Ms. Haines concurred on recommendation 23, which includes reform of veterans' preference, noting that it will garner attention regardless of the Commission's priorities. Mr. Barney agreed, noting that the Commission will have an opportunity to discuss potentially controversial recommendations such as this one and the cafeteria plan recommendation because people will raise those with the Commission regardless of the Commission's prioritization.

Ms. Haines endorsed recommendation 28 (improving benefits) as a priority and further proposed that the key messages address the substance of recommendation 22 (using existing authorities more effectively) without explicitly prioritizing that recommendation.

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Ms. James supported recommendation 24 (pathways for students and recent graduates) as a noncontroversial approach to addressing the concern over an aging workforce and the impending loss of that knowledge base. Mr. Barney supported this recommendation as well, noting its positive message.

Ms. Haines suggested recommendations 21, 24, and 28 as the priorities. Chairman Heck supported this group of three. He queried other Commissioners and the Commission agreed to prioritize recommendations 21, 24, and 28.

The Commission then focused on messaging and stakeholder interests on the topic of *veterans' preference reform*.

Jeff McNichols, Deputy Director of Government Affairs and Public Engagement, explained the need to convey the Commission's approach to veterans' preference proactively as strengthening hiring authorities for veterans, particularly younger veterans, in part by a proposed expansion of the Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA). He noted that traditional veterans service organizations (VSOs) will likely object because the recommendation would also limit the use of special hiring authorities for veterans, especially retirees.

Ms. Skelly requested staff to develop messages focused on veterans' preference and other issues likely to encounter significant resistance from different stakeholder groups. Mr. Scott acknowledged that staff would develop talking points on veterans' preference and other topics to go along with the key messages.

Chairman Heck requested cogent, six-second soundbites on veterans' preference and other hot-button issues to assist Commissioners in proactive messaging, responding to inquiries, giving interviews, and other interactions.

Mr. Khazei inquired about the Commission's strategy to neutralize expected opposition from VSOs on veterans' preference. He recommended seeking statements of support from organizations like Team Rubicon.

Ms. James described the traditional veterans' organizations—the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA)—as the ones most likely to resist reform of veterans' hiring authorities. She expressed concern about limited engagement with these groups and recommended providing them with an opportunity to share their views on veterans' preference and VRA. Vice Chair Wada noted that these organizations had declined requests to meet with the Commission and that staff has continued to engage with them periodically.

Chairman Heck agreed with Mr. Khazei's suggestion to engage the organizations of younger veterans and to incorporate them into the Commission's pre-release schedule to allow them time to prepare press statements. He also recommended meeting with VFW, American Legion, and MOAA. Ms. James recommended outreach to those traditional VSOs now. Chairman Heck requested to offer a meeting for January 30 and, if they cannot meet then, to offer a meeting on February 20 or 21.

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The Commission then discussed key messages and recommendation priorities in the category *Selective Service System and national mobilization*.

Ms. Haines requested that staff revise the first messaging point to say the Commission believes the United States “should” rather than “must” maintain the Selective Service System. She proposed to prioritize recommendations 31 (reaffirming the need for a draft contingency mechanism to meet the mobilization needs of DoD during a national emergency) and 41 (requiring regular exercises for mass mobilization) to reflect the Commission’s emphasis on the need to ensure the readiness of a draft contingency system and a reflection on the Commission’s ambivalence towards the current Selective Service System.

Ms. James concurred in prioritizing recommendation 31 and conveyed her sense that House Armed Services Committee (HASC) staff was more interested in whether the Commission would recommend maintaining the system than whether it would recommend extending registration to women.

Chairman Heck proposed recommendation 33 (affirming the key values of a draft contingency mechanism) as a more powerful statement in support of maintaining the Selective Service System. Ms. Haines supported this substitution.

Chairman Heck then proposed to prioritize recommendations 33 and 41, for the reasons expressed above, as well as 49 (extending registration to all Americans). Commissioners agreed to prioritize these three recommendations.

The Commission then discussed *key overall messages* as reflected in a draft circulated by Mr. Scott.

Mr. Khazei addressed the messaging statements on national service, proposing to lead with a message on taking bold action to expand national service and then address the need to improve benefits.

Ms. James and Ms. Haines discussed a statement about improving the quality of life for all Americans. Ms. James felt the phrase was too fuzzy while Ms. Haines recommended clarifying the concept by providing supporting detail. For example, the Commission could explain that when service addresses critical needs, such as in healthcare, it generally improves the quality of life for the Americans served as well as for those who serve. Building on Ms. Haines’ suggestion, Mr. Barney suggested the message say that service can improve the quality of life by addressing critical needs, invigorating civil society, and strengthening democracy. Ms. James and other Commissioners supported this approach.

Mr. Kilgannon noted the absence of a key message about service as a means to unite Americans. Other Commissioners’ agreed about the importance of this message and asked that it be included.

Commissioners also requested separate talking points on the legislative proposals.

Commissioners then discussed whether the final report should be considered a unanimous or consensus product. Mr. Scott quoted from the Commission’s cover letter for the final report,

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which states: “Although the 11 of us come from varied backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, we stand united behind this report as a consensus product of this Commission and an expression of our desire to serve our Nation and empower our fellow Americans to do the same.” Mr. Barney supported presenting the report as endorsed by each Commissioner. Ms. James cautioned against an approach that would invite people to perceive dissent within the Commission. Mr. Kilgannon felt that the recommendations and final report would gain legitimacy if Commissioners were free to indicate their overall support while noting that they did not agree with everything.

*Review of Draft Legislative Proposals*

Following a short break, the Commission reconvened at 1030 ET to discuss legislative proposals. Commissioners received a draft of the legislative proposals and section-by-section analysis in their preparatory material.

Mr. Barney provided background about the legislative drafting process, advising his fellow Commissioners to limit the impulse to build narrative text into the legislative text.

Mr. Lekas reviewed the process undertaken by the Commission legal team to prepare the draft legislation. He reviewed the structure of the proposed bill and explained that the full bill along with a section-by-section analysis would be included in a printed volume. This material would be made available on the Commission website along with redlines of amended statutory text and separate files containing individual legislative provisions.

Mr. Lekas then directed Commissioners to specific provisions in the draft bill. He noted that some language in section 101, which would establish a Civic Education Fund, derives from a section of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2020, which created a civic education pilot program at DoD schools.

Mr. Lekas next referred Commissioners to section 106, a resolution supporting teachers. Vice Chair Wada and Ms. James assisted in the drafting of this resolution. Commissioners had reviewed the draft by email and Mr. Kilgannon provided input to reflect the importance of parents in education. Mr. Lekas flagged a proposed change to one paragraph of this resolution. Thereafter, Commissioners engaged in a robust discussion about how to convey parents’ role in education vis-à-vis the government’s obligation to provide education to children. Commissioners ultimately agreed with a formulation stating that “parents have a critical voice” in ensuring “their children receive an education that will help them to be engaged and productive members of American society and members of the teaching profession are crucial to helping them achieve that goal.” Chairman Heck directed Mr. Lekas to adapt the Commission’s proposal to the legislative text.

Following this discussion, Mr. Lekas referred the Commission to section 201, which would establish the Council on Military, National, and Public Service. He explained that, where possible, the legislative drafting team sought to utilize existing statutory definitions. He noted that this section contains a definition of “military service” and flagged for the Commission that this term has slightly different meanings in different sections of the proposed legislation – in

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some places including all uniformed services (as in the Commission’s organic legislation) and in other places including only the armed forces. He explained that the draft legislation takes a case-specific approach to other defined terms, such as “Federal agency” and “Executive agency.” Mr. Lekas also highlighted the definition of “national service” and explained that the legislative drafting team continues to tinker with the definition in order to capture all relevant Federal programs and allow room to include non-Federal programs that may appropriately be considered national service.

Mr. Lekas then referred the Commission to section 202, which would establish an Internet-based service platform. He reminded the Commission that the proposal calls for the service platform to be created by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) with oversight by the Council for Military, National, and Public Service. He noted that the Commission originally recommended that the platform be run out of the General Services Administration, but later changed this view, and that the final report offers possible hosts for the platform without a specific recommendation. Chairman Heck asked that brackets or another notation be included, as appropriate, in the legislative proposal and section-by-section analysis to indicate OMB as a placeholder for legislators.

Mr. Lekas explained that the legal team is undertaking a review of the different report, deadline, and guidance requirements contained in the legislative proposals to ensure they are logically consistent.

In closing, Mr. Barney described the legislation as a big accomplishment that will assist Congress in advancing the Commission’s proposals if there is a desire to do so.

This session concluded at 1130 ET at which time the Commission recessed for a one-hour lunch.

**Briefing by Barbara Stewart, Chief Executive Officer of CNCS**

The Commission reconvened at 1230 ET for a discussion with Barbara Stewart, Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Ms. Stewart, accompanied by Haley Lamm, CNCS Deputy Director of Business Transformation, and Kirsten Grantham, CNCS Deputy Director Government Relations and Strategic Engagement, briefed the Commission on CNCS’ efforts to improve branding and marketing of national service.

Ms. Stewart discussed research findings indicating the need for improved branding of national service programs. She noted that the more than 20 visual logos used by CNCS generate brand confusion and contribute to a lack of awareness, which CNCS has found to be a key reason more Americans do not consider participation in national service programs. About half of people have heard of “AmeriCorps” but many do not consider participation because they believe it to be a bank or an international development organization. Branding is one of the six transformation goals that CNCS has identified to improve its programs.

Ms. Grantham discussed efforts to improve awareness and explained that CNCS hired Axis Research to conduct stakeholder interviews and a survey of members, volunteers, grantees, sponsors, and alumni; conduct a nationwide public opinion survey; and hold focus groups with

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community leaders. She said that 81% of participants in the survey answered “yes” to the question, “Would a stronger brand awareness make a difference in recruiting?”

Ms. Lamm discussed CNCS’s work with BrandPie, a consulting firm, to improve the CNCS brands. BrandPie has a six-month period to develop its recommendations and currently is in the discovery and brand architecture strategy phase of its work. BrandPie will create a virtual focus group to hear from hundreds of stakeholders to include grantees, sponsors, members, volunteers, and alumni. In March, BrandPie will hold a two-day workshop on branding issues. Refinement will continue through June 2020 and the recommendations will be implemented from July 2020 through July 2021.

Ms. Stewart then discussed the fundamental problem of awareness, noting that too few Americans know about their opportunities to serve. She explained that a lot of people are not aware of the life-changing experience of service. CNCS has hired a fundraiser who has a 30-year career raising a lot of money for nonprofit organizations to explore ways for CNCS to partner with other organizations to amplify national service. She explained that CNCS continues to assess what “success” in national service might look like. One approach would be to increase the percentage of Americans aware of CNCS programs from 48% to 58%. Another, more aspirational approach would be for Americans to refer to the CNCS programs by core values – for what they are doing in communities around the country, rather than as “the domestic Peace Corps.”

Thereafter, Ms. Stewart held a question and answer session with the Commission.

**Business Meeting**

*Legislative Affairs Update*

Beginning at 1300 ET, Mr. McNichols briefed the Commission on legislative affairs. Chairman Heck was absent for the first portion of this session.

Mr. McNichols began by explaining that the Commission staff has held several conversations with the For Country Caucus in the House of Representatives. Eighteen representatives—ten Democrats and eight Republicans—comprise the For Country Caucus; each is a military veteran and in their first or second term. The Caucus is led by the “core four” of Don Bacon (R-NE), Mike Walz (R-FL), Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA), and Jimmy Panetta (D-CA). The Caucus is exploring legislation that matches well with the Commission’s mandate and, through the core four, has expressed interest in introducing the Commission’s legislative proposals as a comprehensive bill. While they do not know the Commission’s recommendations and have not seen the legislation, they are discussing among themselves whether to introduce the proposals as a single bill or as a series of bills.

Ms. James asked how the Commission might engage the For Country Caucus without appearing to exclude other congressional caucuses or members who may have an interest in these issues. Mr. McNichols noted that Commission staff has sought to engage with other congressional caucuses as much as possible and that, to date, the For Country Caucus has expressed the most interest. Even so, discussions with the For Country Caucus remain at an initial stage.

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Mr. McNichols discussed Commission staff's outreach to congressional committees. He reported on positive conversations with House Oversight and Reform, particularly over the past month. He noted that Rep. Connolly, the Chair of the Government Operations and Federal Management Subcommittee, is exploring legislation on Federal hiring and has an interest in improving the process for new hires and attracting more interns to the Federal government. Rep. Connolly's staff has suggested holding a subcommittee hearing on the Commission's recommendation after release of the final report and the subcommittee may have interest in building on or introducing Commission proposals.

Turning to the Senate, Mr. McNichols reported on positive conversations with Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee (HSGAC) and said that Sen. Lankford, who chairs the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management, has expressed interest in Federal hiring reform. Mr. McNichols noted that the HSGAC has not advanced major pieces of legislation and suggested that interest in the House could help to develop interest in the Senate.

Mr. McNichols reported on positive conversations with the Senate and House Armed Services Committees (SASC and HASC). He said that Commission staff would brief SASC staff on January 24 and that Chairman Heck would brief military legislative assistants for SASC members on January 30. Mr. Lekas noted that the goal of the January 24 briefing would be to introduce SASC staff to the Commission's recommendations on a confidential basis to begin exploring provisions that may be suitable for the Chairman's mark, which represents the Commission's best chance to include legislative proposals in the FY21 NDAA. Mr. McNichols noted that staff will be pursuing a similar strategy with HASC staff, beginning with a detailed staff briefing in late January or early February.

Mr. Khazei inquired about efforts to identify a Republican counterpart to Sen. Reed. Chairman Heck arrived at this point and reported on his conversation with Sen. Romney, who indicated that he could not commit without having a thorough understanding of what the legislation would contain. Mr. Khazei suggested Sen. Sullivan or Sen. Cassidy, who is the Co-Chair of the National Service Caucus, as possible allies. He also felt that Sen. Romney would support the national service fellowship proposal.

Mr. Khazei recommended that Commissioners reach out to the current and former members who appointed them to the Commission. He discussed a positive meeting held with staff for Sen. Schumer, who appointed Mr. Khazei, held the prior day. Mr. Khazei also said that it would be great for Mr. Allard to reach out to Speaker Pelosi and ask for 15 minutes to brief her. Ms. Haines offered to connect Mr. Lekas with Doug Letter, the General Counsel of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Khazei recommended that staff connect with the National Service Caucus. Mr. Scott noted that staff has already sought a meeting with that Caucus.

Commissioners discussed the importance of generating a bipartisan group of supporters in Congress and noted the lack of notable bipartisan efforts in the current Congress. Commissioners recommended connecting not only with members of the For Country Caucus but also other

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members who have served in the military or in national security positions over the past 18 years, including Rep. Slotkin and Rep. Crenshaw.

Commissioners considered additional candidates to join Sen. Reed in endorsing the Commission's proposals. Chairman Heck directed staff to focus on Sen. Sullivan in the first instance.

*Planning for Final Report Release*

Beginning at 1345 ET, Mr. Scott led a discussion of events in the week of March 23-27 to accompany release of the final report.

Mr. Scott explained that the Commission would hold briefings with key agencies and key members of Congress on March 23-24. The congressional briefings would include those in leadership positions, such as Senate Majority Leader McConnell, Senate Minority Leader Schumer, House Speaker Pelosi, and House Minority Leader McCarthy.

Mr. Scott said that the Commission will hold a press conference in the morning of March 25 to announce release of the final report. At the press conference, it is expected that Chairman Heck and Vice Chairs Gearan and Wada will deliver remarks. The press conference will occur in the Hart Building and Chairman Heck recommended that commissioners visit the rotunda following the press conference to speak with broadcast media.

Erin Schneider, Public Affairs Officer, explained that the final report release would be accompanied by media interviews, publication of op-eds, meetings with editorial boards, and other events. She also stated that the public affairs team is working to secure exclusive news coverage of the final report and would also engage on social media.

The Commission will convene stakeholders for an event on Thursday, March 26. This event will be designed to brief stakeholders on the Commission recommendations. Morgan Levey, External Relations Manager, explained that the stakeholder event would be followed by small-group roundtable meetings through the remainder of March and April, some in person and others telephonically, with a request for one or two Commissioners to join each engagement. Mr. Scott noted that following the March 26 stakeholder event, Commissioners will be scheduled for additional congressional briefings.

Commissioners then discussed possible outside speakers for the March 26 stakeholder event. Mr. Khazei said that he has begun to engage with John Bridgeland about inviting Stanley McChrystal and Howard Schultz. Mr. Barney spoke against outside speakers in order to emphasize the Commission's own message but support including an outside speaker if unique and relevant to the Commission's mandate, such as Gen. McChrystal. Ms. James expressed a preference for no outside speaker, barring availability of a speaker like Gen. McChrystal. Vice Chair Gearan and Ms. Skelly also expressed support for including Gen. McChrystal if he is available. Mr. Scott explained that outside speakers could help to generate public interest and media coverage.

The Commission then discussed the stakeholder communities and hopes that organizations in those communities might carry the Commission's baton once it disestablishes – for

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example, Voices for National Service and Service Year Alliance, regarding national service; the Partnership for Public Service and the Volcker Alliance, regarding public service; and DoD, regarding military service. Vice Chair Wada recommended that the Commission make an effort to connect these organizations with one another. Commissioners then discussed how to do this in the context of the March 26 stakeholder event. Ms. Haines recommended engaging with think tanks to publish pieces about the Commission's recommendations and mandate during the rollout period.

Following this discussion, Chairman Heck directed staff to explore the possibility of including a notable keynote speaker at the March 26 event and to develop the March 26 event similar to the event of the release of the interim report with breakout sessions for different stakeholder groups.

Commissioners then discussed specifics regarding the format for the March 26 event. Commissioners supported an event that focused on the Commission's work and its recommendations. One option proposed would have six Commissioners on stage—one for each category of recommendations—with each Commissioner presenting for 3-5 minutes, followed by questions. The panel would be preceded by a keynote address, if possible, by a notable speaker. Staff will consider the Commission's input as it continues to develop this event.

*Post-Release Events*

Mr. Scott then briefed the Commission on post-release events that his team is working to organize. He discussed a prospective event at the McCain Institute in Arizona on April 16, 2020, that would be a service "summit" focused on inspiring the next generation of leaders. Mr. Scott also discussed efforts to arrange follow-on events at the libraries of Presidents Kennedy, Clinton, George W. Bush, and Reagan.

Chairman Heck informed the Commission that any event not solidified by the deadline identified by Peter Morgan, Director of Operations, would not be entertained.

*Ethics Briefing*

Thereafter, Mr. Lekas provided the Commission with an ethics briefing. Mr. Lekas addressed the following issues during this briefing: financial conflicts of interest; appearance of bias; gifts; outside activities; misuse of government position; post-employment rules; Hatch Act compliance; and Anti-Lobbying Act compliance.

At approximately 1500 ET, the Commission then adjourned its January meeting.

Prepared by Paul Lekas, General Counsel

Adopted by the Commission on February 20, 2020.