



Creating an Expectation of Service Hearing: An Infrastructure to Serve America

Transcript | June 20, 2019

This transcript was prepared by official military court reporters based on an audio recording of the hearing.

Commission:

- The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck, Chairman
- The Honorable Mark Gearan, Vice Chair for National and Public Service
- The Honorable Debra Wada, Vice Chair for Military Service
- Mr. Edward Allard, Commissioner
- Mr. Steve Barney, Commissioner
- The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson, Commissioner
- The Honorable Avril Haines, Commissioner
- Ms. Jeanette James, Commissioner
- Mr. Alan Khazei, Commissioner
- Mr. Tom Kilgannon, Commissioner
- Ms. Shawn Skelly, Commissioner

Panelists:

- Brigadier General Derin Durham, Deputy Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service
- Dr. Ben Ho, Associate Professor of Economics, Vassar College
- Dr. Dorothy Stoneman, founder and Former CEO of YouthBuild USA, Inc., Senior Advisor for Opportunity Youth United
- Mr. Drew Train, Co-Founder and President, Oberland
- Mr. Dakota Wood, Senior Research Fellow for Defense Programs at the Center for National Defense, Davis Institute for national Security and Foreign Policy, The Heritage Foundation



OPENING STATEMENTS

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Well good afternoon, and in a bittersweet moment I welcome you to the 14th and final hearing of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service. Today, the Commission meets to ponder an important question: How can we as a country create an expectation of service in America? And I think there's no better place than at Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library to hold such a hearing. When we think about the impact President Roosevelt had on the creation of civilian conservation corps, probably, the first modern day service program.

In 2016, the Commission was created amid a debate over whether the selective service registration requirement should be extended to include women after military combat roles were opened to women in 2015. The late Senator John McCain and Senator Jack Reed, seeing an opportunity to promote the notice of service above self, championed the expansion of the Commission's mandate to include an evaluation of service in America across all service lines, not just in the military.

They tasked us with fostering a greater ethos of service among Americans, particularly youth. We know young Americans have interest in service given their appetite to volunteer. Over 28 percent of millennials report volunteering in 2017, performing roughly 1.5 billion hours of community service.

But how do we get more Americans engaged and inspired to serve? Our Commission has looked at opportunities and barriers to service through research on aspiration, awareness, and access. Today, we are here to explore in greater depth how to create an expectation and culture of service in America by increasing awareness of and facilitating access to opportunities.



During our first year of work, we learned many Americans are not aware of and have trouble accessing the opportunities available to them across all streams of service, be it military, national, or public. We also learned that service organizations of all strengths have mixed experiences in identifying and recruiting individuals that fit their needs.

With respect to the military, today about four in ten young Americans say they have never even considered military service. Compounding this lack of awareness, military recruitment remains geographically focused with nearly 70 percent of enlisted recruits coming from the American south and west. We learned that more than 60 percent of young people, ages 14 through 24, are not aware of service year opportunities. And while about one-third of young adults agree that the idea of working in some form of public service is appealing, access to these jobs is clearly a problem. Only 6 percent of federal employees are under the age of 30.

As we traveled around the country and discussed this with experts and everyday Americans, it became clear that many Americans are willing to consider a transformative effort to create a culture of service. In an effort to ensure that all Americans have a clear and supported path to service, the Commission is considering recommendations that include creating a voluntary service registration system.

This voluntary service registration system would allow Americans to opt into a system, provide base line contact information, and information related to interests, education, background skills, and service preferences. In turn, this system would meet Americans where they are. They have an interest to serve, and the system would connect them to opportunities in military, national, and public service. Opportunities could include employment, participation in termed service programs, service sabbaticals, and emergency response needs. The system would also allow service organizations to identify and facilitate recruitment of candidates to meet their needs.

Our distinguished panelists this afternoon will address arguments for and against this voluntary registration system concept, whether its objections could be better realized through



different approaches, and how it could address barriers that keep individuals from serving and create a cultural expectation of service in America. I hope they will address this as directly as possible in their oral statements and in their responses to Commissioner questions.

Let me welcome our panelists: Brigadier General Derin Durham, Deputy Commander, Air Force Recruiting Service; Dr. Ben Ho, associate professor of economics at Vassar College; Dr. Dorothy Stoneman, founder and former CEO of YouthBuild USA, Incorporated and senior advisor for Opportunity Youth United; Mr. Drew Train, co-founder and president of Oberland; and Mr. Dakota Wood, senior research fellow for Defense Programs at the Center for National Defense, Davis Institute for National Security and Foreign Policy.

Before we begin, let me explain briefly how we will conduct this afternoon's hearing. The Commissioners have all received your written testimony, and it will be entered into the official record. We ask that you summarize the highlights of your testimony in the allotted 5 minutes. Before you, you will see our timing system. When the light turns yellow, you have approximately 1-minute remaining, and when it turns red, your time has expired. After all testimony is completed, we will move into questions from the Commissioners. Each Commissioner will be given the same 5 minutes to ask a question and receive a response. Depending on time, we will proceed with one and possibly two rounds of questions. Upon completion of Commissioner questions, we will provide an opportunity for members of the public who are in attendance to offer comments either on the specific topic addressed today or more generally on the Commission's overarching mandate. These comments will be limited to 2 minutes. The light will turn yellow when you have 30 seconds remaining and red when time has expired.

So now that we know the ground rules, we are ready to begin with our panelists' testimony, and I'd like to begin with General Durham. Sir, you're recognized for 5 minutes.



Brigadier General Derin Durham

Thank you, Chairman Heck, Vice Chair Wada, distinguished members of this committee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and talk about the importance of service to our great nation.

As you've experienced from all the past testimony, the knowledge the American public has about the Air Force, and the military in general, is decreasing every year. The unfortunate effect this has on the youth of America is that they are less likely to serve. This alone is an important reason that the Department of Defense continues to advocate for a service database, and I use that term in the generic sense, for individuals on which to draw from for recruiting and to have in case of a national emergency.

Today, only 29 percent of youth are eligible for military service without requiring some form of a medical standards waiver. Recruiting high quality youth with focused critical skills is more imperative today given the smaller size of our military force and the rapidly changing technological environment in which we live. Our focus on high quality, critically skilled youth inherently limits the pool of recruits. In fact, less than 2 percent of the 20.6 million 17 to 21-year-old citizens in the United States are eligible and inclined to serve and are of a high academic quality.

As a result of lower youth propensity, recruiters must work harder to find qualified youth who desire a future in military service. All of DOD reports difficulty in finding sufficient numbers and quality recruits to make their annual recruiting targets. Unfortunately, all departments will continue to face significant challenges, as we expect the economy to remain strong and the recruiting environment to remain difficult for the foreseeable future.

So, the basic question that I think you have posed and that we are presented with today is how we develop that desire to serve the nation. In many cases the seed of that idea must be planted at a very young age. Using myself as an example, I came from a middle-class family in



the upstate of South Carolina. While my father had served in the South Carolina National Guard, his service had long ended before I was born. I had no real exposure to the military at all. The one thing I can clearly remember at a very young age, maybe 8 or 9 years old, was sitting on the beach each year during summer vacation at Pirate Land Family Campground in Myrtle Beach and watching A-10s from the now closed Myrtle Beach Air Force base flying low along the coast. At that point I decided that was for me, and I would pursue that dream.

As a service, the Air Force has embraced the idea of and institutionalize the concept of inspire, engage, and recruit. And I think we are going after that inspire piece with this Commission. As a service, the Air Force is embracing the concept of total force recruiting. To do this, we are pursuing new uses for technology and a more customized call center. We are recruiting for the whole of the Air Force and not just one component. So highly dependent on a potential recruit's desires, their physical qualifications, and their education levels they can join us as an officer, enlisted, or a civilian. They can serve in many ways through the active component, the Reserves, or the Guard. If choosing the officer path, they can be Commissioned through the academy, through ROTCs, or through officer training school. All of these are options or pathways to a potential future member that the Air Force may take.

As recruiters, our mission is and will be to engage with people and help them decide which path is best for them. Survey after survey reinforces the fact that even though we can affectively pre-screen potential recruits via electronic means, in most cases that person and that person's family want to interact with a real human being before committing their lives to something more than themselves. In fact, just last year, 53 percent of new recruits said talking to an actual Air Force recruiter was what convinced them to join the Air Force. And 66 percent said a recruiter is what sparked their interest in finding out more about the Air Force.

So, distinguished members of the committee, I could go on, but I think your specific questions would probably better serve our time here. Thank you for inviting the Air Force



recruiting service to share some ideas with you as the Commission works towards a solution that benefits the nation. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thanks, General.

Dr. Ho, you're recognized for 5 minutes, sir.

Dr. Ben Ho

So, thank you very much. Is this on? The light's broken here.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

I don't think you're on.

Dr. Ben Ho

Hello. Is it working? Okay.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

There you go. Now you're on.

Dr. Ben Ho

So, thank you very much for having me here. I am here in two capacities. The first as an educator having served as an economist for both the Clinton and the Bush administration and also having studied computer science and social sciences at MIT and Stanford and having taught at Cornell, Columbia, and now at Vassar. I've advised many students on what to do after college, on how to serve. I've also advised many students on coming up with platforms for matching



people to organizations. You know, I've sort of been teaching during the age of web 2.0 and .coms, and so lots of people have similar tech ideas. I've seen them all, and so I'll talk about some of them here.

I'm also here in the capacity as a scientist. I've been doing research into behavioral economics for almost two decades now. My own research on trusts and identity and inequality and climate change have been published in outlets like *Management Science* and *Nature Human Behavior*, and I'll tell you a bit about what the literature in behavioral economics says about creating this registration system and the pros and cons.

Finally, given that we're here at the FDR library, I was sort of inspired by a story about FDR's Vice President Harry Truman, who famously said, you know, "Give me a one-handed economist," because he was frustrated that all his economists would always say, "On the one hand this, on the other hand that." So, it's probably an apocryphal story, but as a warning, I am a two-handed economist.

So, the proposal we're talking about here today is about matching markets, right? It's basically matching citizens to service opportunities, and with economics, matching markets are known for what's called network externalities or increasing returns to scale. What that means is size matters, and they are really hard to get off the ground. Google this week is just talking about launching their 13th messaging platform, because the first 12 have failed, right? So, lots of tech companies have tried launching these kinds of platforms, and most of them fail along the way. And so that's something I think we have to be mindful of. So, I'll give you some insights from behavioral economics and sort of how to overcome the high failure rate of these kinds of networks. But, you know, as a warning, I think it's a little hard to know how to generalize past experience.

A story that I like a lot is, you know, there is a lottery winner who just won the lottery, and someone goes up to him and says, "Hey, how'd you win the lottery?" And he says, "Well, you know, I played my birthday. So, the secret to winning the lottery is to play your birthday."



That's clearly the wrong interpretation. I think the secret to winning the lottery is to try over and over again. And so just like Google has tried 13 times to get their networking platform off the ground, I think this project may or may not work but I think it's an important one and so it's worth trying.

All right, so I think the main issue of sort of getting people to sign on to a registration system like this is just inertia, right? So, people procrastinate a lot, we know this. Young people especially procrastinate a lot. They procrastinate in sort of making decisions. One of probably the most effective insights from behavioral economics is we could change that inertia by sort of changing the default, right? So, we see that all the time in terms of, like, when you're signing up for some website. They often leave the opt-in box checked and force you to uncheck it. That's the most everyday example, but in more like, you know, bigger examples, this has led to big policy changes like how we save for retirement. The default now at many companies is you automatically save, and you have to opt out. Or the default is for organ donation in many states and many countries now. It's you default to becoming an organ donor, and you have to opt out. And this has been tremendously effective in sort of getting people to sign up for different programs. This registration system and linking it to selective service is a great way to sort of, you know, change the default of how all this works.

The downside of changing the default though is it changes the meaning of things, especially if this registration program becomes associated with, you know, selective service. If it becomes associated with mostly men that actually may inhibit the effectiveness of this program, and that's something else to be mindful of.

A few other quick insights for how to overcome that inertia, reduce the risk. There's been experiments by Laura Gee on LinkedIn showing that the more information you give about things, the more effective they are; the more information you give about what other people are doing. The more social that the registration is, the more effective they are.

And so, you know, all in all, just to sort of wrap things up, I think the main thing is that I think the registration system is a good idea. I think it has a high chance of failure, but maybe



applying some insights from behavioral economics like default effects, like procrastination, like mitigating risks could help it along its way. Thanks.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Great. Thank you, Dr. Ho.

Dr. Stoneman.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Thank you. Now let's see if this is working [repositions microphone]. Is it?

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Not yet.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Now is it?

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Yes, ma'am.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Okay. I am honored to be here with you. I am all in for fostering and inspiring the ethos of service among all Americans, and especially young people. I'll first comment on the registration system, then on expanding and improving opportunities for low-income populations



who have a deep desire to serve, repair, and free their own hard-pressed communities from the poverty, violence, and hardship from which they suffer.

It is this powerful force for good, the infinite energy which I have experienced over decades within low-income communities, especially among young people that I pray your Commission will understand as a precious, invaluable resource lying dormant, awaiting the chance to break through in a marvelous array of new initiatives; service initiatives fueled by love, pain, and experience, intelligence, and a deeply held vision for a society that is fair, opportunity-rich, the real beloved community which Martin Luther King invented. We need a dynamic, bold -- you've used the word, "bold," all day -- expansion of national service opportunities designed for low-income service givers to fulfill their highest potential and their highest aspirations; their noblest aspirations. I am proud to share that there are a group of Poughkeepsie YouthBuild AmeriCorps Program members, who have chosen to be here today and who represent the powerful force for good that is lying dormant in urban, rural, and tribal communities across this nation.

So, welcome to all of you.

[Persons in the room clapped.]

Regarding the voluntary service registration program, since writing my testimony, I've actually reached a different conclusion. I do not recommend the creation of such a system. It would be too expensive, inefficient, and I think it puts the burdens on the wrong people. I do instead strongly recommend the creation of a centralized recruitment website on which all Americans could find and be inspired by and apply to all forms of service opportunities. This overarching, unifying website will build on and link to all the existing websites of all the recruiting entities. It would put the responsibility on those entities to post updated information rather than on the individuals having to be enticed and pushed to update their own information and then be recruited.



In addition, those existing sites, as I said in my testimony, should be improved. They should more deliberately invite the many populations eager to serve, but who may not be sure they are wanted: people who have grown up in poverty, people who might have a criminal record, people with a disability, without a college degree, or without a high school diploma. Society must deliberately offer alternative pathways into respected, adult contributing roles when the existing tracks do not suffice, or when individuals have made mistakes in their past due to circumstances largely beyond their control in their childhood and youth.

In the current websites and the current array of opportunities, these populations are not adequately welcomed, nor are there sufficient opportunities deliberately developed and created to match those skills, needs, and passions. Recruitment is not an issue in YouthBuild across the country. There are more than enough low-income young people who, if they know they are welcome, they will be at the door. And then if they are received with the kind of respect and love that they have not received elsewhere, they are there to stay.

In addition, to build the national culture of service, I recommend a full-blown communication strategy: sharing inspiring stories, giving frequent public awards, uplifting good news, having results, magnifying the joy and the deep spiritual satisfaction that comes from doing good, and guiding all people to that central website through which they can find the pathways to service and to their own best self. Now about improving service opportunities, I had a list in my testimony. I don't think I have time. I'm already on orange. I'm skipping my recommendations for improvements, and I want to talk briefly about the new service programs designed for low-income communities, two forms:

One, community improvement projects designed by low-income residents. When I started YouthBuild -- and now I'm on red. I'm in trouble.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Please continue.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

All right.

I started by doing what the speakers this morning spoke about. That is, we ask the young people. If I could get you the adult support and the resources and the skills to improve your community, what would you do? I wasn't mandating or tasking them. I was inviting them to think and offering them the resources and support that they don't expect to get from adults. They were filled with great ideas. We implemented them all. We did get the resources, and YouthBuild grew out of that. And 180,000 YouthBuild students have built 35,000 units of affordable housing across this country.

A new funding stream should be authorized for CNCS, allowing local nonprofits to work with local residents to create community improvement projects of their own design. It used to be a funding stream under the Community Anti-Crime Program, which did that. Second, fellowships for social entrepreneurs rising in low-income communities; and those are young adults in their 20s and 30s who grew up in poverty, who found themselves, were ready to do something new, but they have no financial slack or family support that would enable them to start a nonprofit even though they're ready. And there ought to be a fellowship for that sort of level of social entrepreneur.

Again, finally, strongly recommend dramatic expansion of all the proven programs. There are a lot of proven programs, and we need to go to full scale, which, if you ask me later, I'll define what that is. Let us do everything in our power to unite our nation in love and service with responsibility, community, and opportunity for all. Thank you. And thank you for your patience.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you, Dr. Stoneman.

[Persons in the room clapped.]

Mr. Train, you're recognized.

Mr. Drew Train

Thank you for your time today. And thank you for the invitation to speak to this important committee. I'm going to summarize my testimony with three salient points, as I think about this from a marketing perspective. First things first is product development. The product that you're looking to build, as Dr. Stoneman said, is this integrated, matching engine. As you look at consumer matching engines, you want to focus on sites like Amazon.com and good examples, because, as she said, they put tremendous burdens on the sellers to maintain and provide accurate information and very low cost of entry for individual consumers; whereas sites like Monster.com or Match.com put much more of the burden on the individual and, given the dynamics that you're trying to create with a culture of service, you want the bar to be as low as possible for those folks to enter. Similarly, Amazon is a master of multichannel. They work well on mobile. They work well on desktop, and the technology in and of itself has to be first class if you want to attract young people to it. They have a much higher expectation for how these sites perform and fit into their lives than older generations, and they can see poor digital production and recognize it. And it's a turnoff, because they think that's a symbol of what the rest of the experience is going to be like. So, don't underinvest in the product development.

I want to also encourage you to think about the language that you're using and the semantics. So, words like "systems" and "databases" are things that you get lost in and that are full of bureaucracy. "Platforms" are attractive things that support you to jump forward and move on in your life. This is a digital platform in the same way that Amazon talks about themselves as



a platform, and some of the other tech companies talk about themselves. Use the language of the consumer to make this seem like an opportunity. Another semantic example, the expectation of service; people procrastinate when they have to meet other people's expectations. This is an opportunity for service. This is a chance for people to better themselves and better the world around them, which is an important objective for young folks. So, let's position it positively as opportunity.

Also, "register"; consider words like "join." Become a part of the community. Become a member of something. Become part of something bigger than yourselves. "Registration" immediately implies bureaucracy and things that I don't want to do. I have to register my car at the DMV. This is not what we're trying to sell here. And I also think service; service is a word that will appeal to a lot of people, and it has a lot of selflessness in it. But words like engage and participate are also a little bit more friendly for a younger audience. They don't imply as much selflessness, and they can lead to the same result. And people want to participate in the system in the nation. They want to engage with their communities, but not everybody is as selfless to serve. And so, if you can use a word that's going to just open up your audience a little bit, I would ask you to consider that.

And then, fundamentally, there are some value propositions that we need to address, and I think two of them in particular that are holding this overall effort back. One is the military community is probably one of the most othered and isolated communities in our nation. Drawing that community into the broader culture, pop culture, everyday experience is going to be enormously important, and veterans are our most effective way of doing that. Unfortunately, they're dying by suicide at an alarming rate. Young people see this happening. This is not the Vietnam War veterans of 35 years ago and 40 years ago. We see kids we looked up to in high school coming home and being messed up and not being helped in an adequate way. And the fundamental value proposition of military service, which is a few years of service potentially for a college education or some job training is fundamentally a lousy proposition when you know you're going to be left in the cold when you come home. And I know that's not the story for



every veteran, but fundamentally if we don't change the way people are treated after their service, it's going to be structurally difficult to continue to recruit them to serve.

Lastly, most of our public officials routinely trash public service and public servants. The idea that the American government is the problem or that it should be drowned in the bathtub or that government employees, our teachers, our cops, our firemen, our soldiers; it is unprecedented, the amount of damage that we do to the idea of participating by continuously degrading it. I know this committee can't stop every politician in both parties from saying things like that, but what we can do is create an opportunity to counter the narrative. American volunteers and governments landed on the beaches at Normandy. They landed on the moon. They created the Internet. They created the highways. We've done phenomenal things as a country, and the government has achieved many of them. We need to tell those stories in a modern, sophisticated, ever-present, always on, multi-hundred-million-dollar style. This is fundamentally the government needs to brand itself and become something that Americans can be proud of once again, instead of something Americans want to eliminate. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you. Thank you for those insightful comments.

Mr. Wood.

Mr. Dakota Wood

I agree largely with what was just said. So, I'll reserve the rest of my time.

[Persons in the room laughed.]

Thank you for the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair, and Commissioners, to share some thoughts about the concept of service. Obviously, these are my own views and not the



views at Heritage Foundation. I believe that service is at the heart of an involved citizenry who take pride in their country and want to contribute to it in some way. It is also at the heart of a society that values such participation. Motivation to serve could be driven by various factors: love of country, it could be an experience, a sense of duty, or from outside pressures such as family expectations. It can also be forced, as is the case in military conscription, or incentivized by some sort of reward like preferential hiring. Either way, a majority of the society has to agree that service is sufficiently important to warrant some system of carrots and/or sticks.

The questions before the Commission are whether our broader society is of the opinion that service warrants reward or penalty from the government, and the extent to which government should be involved. Ultimately this leads to a discussion about the role of government in public life and the extent to which government can or should actively shape societal values and expectations. I disagree with the notion that all types of service are variations on a theme. I think that different types of service appeal to different communities, and the demands of each type of service can differ dramatically. It is also the case that the government's role differs. It has a constitutional obligation to provide for the national defense, whereas supporting other types of service is a matter of choice and has the government involved in ways that prompt debate.

The idea of service as an obligation implies a need to characterize the obligation of the citizen. The U.S. imposes no other universal requirement on its citizens, and even the basic idea that America is something special and thus worth serving has been increasingly challenged over the past decade or so. One aspect of America is the promotion of individualism, but the idea of community often comes up in discussions about service. But community can be characterized in many ways. Our culture has gone to great lengths to promote the idea that each individual should be free to choose their own identity and how that identity is expressed with no social or economic repercussions. Yet the Commission is considering ways to promote social pressure to conform this area of service and, potentially, to stigmatize those who are inclined not to serve. Any program of universal service might have to reconcile individual liberty with the notion that



all citizens should somehow feel obligated to serve. The Commission will need to address this and take a position on one or the other side of the argument, or at least to explain it.

The government can serve as a bully pulpit from which officials at all levels can champion the idea of service to community and country; so too can education and religious leaders, coaches, teachers, prominent business figures, and, most importantly, mothers and fathers in the home. But there is a substantial difference between promoting an idea and running a program to implement it in practice. I think the government officials are well-placed to champion ideas, but the private sector is best placed to implement them. I do believe that the federal government has a clear role to play in promoting service to country within military affairs and in funding and managing efforts to this end. Related efforts in the civilian sector to promote patriotism, service to country, and especially service in the military are critically important contributors to federal efforts, because they represent a public sense that this is in fact valued. But they are not a substitute for the government's role in recruiting Americans to serve in the military. The government would be derelict in its Constitutional responsibilities if it did not cultivate an expectation of service in this regard, but this does not mean it has a similar role to play in other service efforts, especially when the private or social sector is better-positioned to promote and manage service opportunities that more closely relate to the subsets of our national community.

The Commission has undertaken important work. The idea of service to community and country is both noble and necessary to the health and resilience of our country. I believe that the Commission's final recommendations will be most relevant if they address the root factors affecting the volunteerism and national service and the part the federal government plays in championing such. As we've just heard, creating an expectation of service is a messaging issue, not necessarily a database or a federal program issue. Thank you for the opportunity to join in this discussion, and I look forward to your work and the questions to follow.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Great, and thank you all very much for those very insightful comments.

So, we'll go into the first round of questioning, and I'll begin. I'll put myself on the clock for 5 minutes. I think for me the overarching goal is trying to create a no-wrong-door system, right? So, we see, as you mentioned earlier, you know, only 28 to 29 percent of today's youth are qualified, eligible, and propensed potentially to serve in the military. But if they walk into the recruiter's, and the recruiter says, "Look, you don't have the ASVAB score. You've got some kind of medical condition. We can't use you," it'd be great if the recruiter could say, "but did you think about maybe this program or that program or this." So, we're looking at ways to try to facilitate that. Because I don't necessarily, whether it's Amazon or Monster, I look at it more like eHarmony or Match.com, where somebody's going to go in and provide a little bit of information on themselves, and then there's a match made with programs that may appeal to their needs.

So thoughts on those types of programs or ideas, regardless of what the Commission does with the greater question of what to do with selective service; irrespective of that decision, trying to create a platform in which we can match individuals who somehow has some willingness to serve, whether they walk into a recruiting office or become aware of a program through a friend or a high school, and how we make that match with the service program that best meets their needs.

Brigadier General Derin Durham

So, I briefly touched on that in my written statement and in the remarks. When you start talking about total force recruiting, there's over 200,000 civil servants that work for the Air Force. And I'm not sure what the total is for DOD, but there is a large population. I think DOD is the largest employer of civilians in the country. So, part of that total force recruiting effort is our recruiters are now all going to the same initial training course; so active duty, guard, or reserve.



And part of that is, just like you said, “Hey, you don’t meet qualifications because you’re a diabetic,” or because you have peanut allergies, or whatever the issue is, “but have you considered civil service?” And there’s over 200-plus career fields in the Air Force that you could participate in as a civil servant.

So, I think the idea is the same. There’s 20.4 million kids in that age group that we’re trying to recruit for. If they’re not necessarily eligible for military service, then they are eligible for some sort of service. And at that point, you know, a rising tide lifts all ships. So, if we can get those folks into the system, then we’ve won.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you.

Dr. Ho, any thoughts from your perspective?

Dr. Ben Ho

Yes, I think part of the point, what I was trying to get at during the testimony, it’s really hard to create these networks. So maybe leverage something that already exists. So, LinkedIn already has half of all Americans. Facebook already has two-thirds of all Americans. And what we don’t see is all the failures that are out there. And so, you think we can just say, “Oh, let’s make eHarmony.” Let’s just make, you know, Monster or something. But you don’t see the dozens that failed. Like, I’ve had dozens of students, literally, start these networks on their own. You haven’t heard of any of them, because they’ve all failed. And so why not? So, I know there’s a drawback for partnering with the private sector in this process, but why not take advantage of networks that already exist?

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Great.



Dr. Stoneman, any thoughts?

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I pass. I spoke on it.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Okay, great.

Mr. Train?

Mr. Drew Train

I would challenge you a little bit on thinking about the system itself and the models. Match.com is an environment where everyone is an equal individual. The system we're trying to build is a system where you have a buyer and a seller, and you're going to want to enable a much more active search process than a matching engine where some algorithm serves you up opportunities. And it's useful, like in Google or in Amazon, where there's a few opportunities. What you really want to do is create a preselected list of opportunities for someone to search through and decide on their own what they want based on their criteria. So, you want to filter out whether it's medical reasons or the other inappropriate reasons why somebody might not be eligible for something. It's not a system of equals. It's a buyer and a seller, and there should be significantly more burdens on the sellers to maintain opportunities.

So, I would just think carefully about who you choose to model the system after. I do agree with Dr. Ho. These things are incredibly hard to build and to get right, so leveraging what's out there in whatever way is possible is good, and I would also build on something that Mr. Wood said. What is the federal government's role in this? And while I don't have an



opinion on what the role of the federal government is, I do think consumers will find a private solution more palatable, for what it's worth.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

All right.

Mr. Wood?

Mr. Dakota Wood

Well, policy is always people, right? I mean, I think Dr. Stoneman is a perfect example of somebody who has a passion for something, and then they drive forward a program that is connected at the root level, at the local community level to what appeals to those individuals who would be involved. You get into the federal government, and that goes out the window. I mean, as we've already talked about, what's the incentive to be part of the government? It's always the bogeyman of negativity and all these sorts of things. And where you have the life and death cycles of various programs and the market figures out what works, you start a federal program and it has no sunset clause. And it just continues on.

So very largescale efforts and lots of taxpayer money are always added to all the other things that government is doing, and \$22 trillion dollars in debt and counting, right? So, I think that these private solutions as articulated here and we've seen examples of at the local community level is probably the best way to go. If the government can find some way to connect those things, fine. But a very light touch, I think, where large-scale government really shouldn't be involved.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Okay, thank you.



Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I'm ready to respond now.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

I'm out of time, ma'am. So, I'm going to get you on the second round.

Vice Chair Wada.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Thank you for being here today.

I just want to start with you, Mr. Train, because you said something that kind of made me think about what would your thoughts be in how do we incorporate the military community into the larger society? Because we have found that to be a challenge.

Mr. Drew Train

It's terribly difficult to do. I think there are some basic public outreach and community building services, but ultimately, I think in my work with veterans; what I have observed; they have a tremendous sense of fulfilling expectations. And they're very willing to do that. I think the military does a great job of recruiting people on the idea of a lifelong transformation and it defines that transformation very clearly during the active duty service but spends very little time setting expectations for what veterans should be like as civilians. And while they're under no obligation after they leave the service, there is this natural, I feel like, compulsion from people who have served to continue to be an example. And I think it's as simple as what does the ideal veteran look like as a citizen after they've served? And it doesn't have to be continuing to serve forever. It can be in private life. I think you've also got celebrity examples. Adam Driver is a great one.



But how can you find the positive stories of veterans and get them out there, but also just set the expectation for what the average Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, Guardsman should be like when they return. And then create incentives, structural incentives, for communities and for the private sector to engage in more meaningful ways. Right now, companies tend to do veterans

initiatives. There's a lot of them out there; out of a sense of obligation, maybe out of a sense of consumer demand building and cause marketing and that sort of thing. But if there are actual incentives for people not only to employ veterans, but to expose them to the world and to show kids what an example of somebody is. Because what you see are the bad stories. Because, you know: it bleeds, it leads, right? So, we just need someone to put out there a counter-narrative to what it's like to be a veteran, and there's no financial incentive to tell the positive story, or the positive stories of other government achievements. But you need something to counter the financial incentive to tell the negative story. And obviously as a marketer I think about things in narrative terms, but I think you need to build the positive narrative, and that's ultimately the solution. People will find their own ways to integrate into their community if you set a goal or an expectation, particularly for people who have served, about what that looks like.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Thank you.

Dr. Ho.

Dr. Ben Ho

Yes, I really liked Mr. Train's point about how the military's other-ized. And I think the divisions in this country right now are actually one of the biggest problems that I see, and there's a lot of work in social science on how to fix that. And so, there was a really interesting case study recently, which was looking at this dramatic shift in gay marriage, which even just Obama and Clinton were against just 15 years ago and now has suddenly shifted. And one of the



conclusions coming out of it, it's getting to know someone personally. It's basically the fact that I think more Americans have come into personal contact; talking to a gay person and similarly talking to a transgender person. And, you know, if we just get people to talk to each other more, especially face to face. Not just in commercials, not just like, you know, through advertising, but face-to-face contact; I think that could have a big difference.

The Honorable Debra Wada

General Durham, from your perspective, because you are recruiting, what have you seen that has worked and what has not worked? And what would you ask of the civilian community when you're trying to reach out and to especially increase the propensity of young Americans to serve?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I think the points made are salient. The outreach piece and face-to-face interaction with veterans, with people who have served, and with recruiters is key. That face-to-face contact really makes the difference. We are all programmed to trust when you're looking another person in the eye and they're telling you, "Hey, this is going to be okay. This is a positive way forward. This is an avenue to something better or something new to improve your situation in life." And I think that that message gets lost in a lot of the negativity that exists out there.

I think we could do, as a country, much better in putting it into perspective what service to the nation means. I think we are in a unique transitional period, because we have been, essentially, at war for the last 20-some-odd years. And then I think something that we haven't appreciated yet is the fact that we changed the retirement system in the Air Force and in the military in general. So, you no longer are tied to a 20-year commitment to get something out of it. I think the message needs to be out there that, hey, there's this thing called the voluntary



retirement system, or VRS, where you have a TSP account. You have something that's transferrable. This could actually be an option that you could get into to learn a skillset, learn a specific job or trade or a profession, and then after 6, 8, or 10 years, move on to something better. And that's part of the total force message we talk about is, hey, you don't have to be active duty for 20 years anymore. You can serve your country, get your education, achieve your goals, and then go out into the private world and then still participate as a Reservist or a Guardsman. And that message, I think when I speak to people about that, the lightbulb comes on. And they go, "Oh, well I didn't realize that." Oh, and by the way, you still get a defined benefit once you reach retirement age from the military.

So just that message and getting that message out there in this constrained budget environment is very difficult. I mean we were talking before we came in, the number of recruiters that we have for officer accessions in the Air Force, you would think there would be hundreds, if not a thousand, for officers. There's 27 officer recruiters for the entire Air Force. So, if you don't come in ROTC or the academy, then you have to talk to one of those 27 people to get into the United States Air Force today. So, it all comes down to money and funding, but getting that personal interaction is the key.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Mr. Train, I know you want to say something, but my time is up.

Mr. Drew Train

Round two.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Yes.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Gearan.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thanks for all of your submitted and oral testimony. We appreciate you being here. The Chair started out with inspiration here at the FDR Library, which is certainly the case. But I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge Dr. Stoneman, because for many of us who have been kicking around national service, she has truly led a life of consequence and been an inspiration for many people in national service. And so out the outset, I thank you very much.

[Persons in the room clapped.]

Now I'm going to ask you a hard question.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I was afraid of that.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

You did observe, Dorothy, calling for a full-blown communication strategy, and Dr. Ho talked about how the military gets other-ized. So perhaps, Mr. Train, you could start us off in terms of the obvious. But we do have a unique mission. Never before in my experience has there been an impaneled group on military, national, and public service. And that's an interesting opportunity, but if one of those three is other-ized, and the other is rightly blamed by both parties about government service; do you have any overarching thoughts to take full advantage of your pro bono counsel here, in terms of Dorothy's point? Is there anything about that unique



governance that we've been given in terms of military, national, and public service that you would commend to us to be thinking about?

Mr. Drew Train

Yes, and I very much like Dr. Stoneman's idea of housing them under one concept. What we're talking about is participating in a country that is presumably going to provide opportunity for you. So, the idea in public is that these things are completely separate. Military service is noble, but impractical for a lot of people and feels distant. Public service is just the government is not an employer of choice. Nobody comes out of college racing to work, you know, for the government, unfortunately. Volunteer service is something that's growing in popularity and could actually be sold probably easier than any of the other two, but it appeals to a much younger audience. So, the idea of bringing these three things together under the umbrella of participating in your society is where I would lead the organization, and then you just make it about finding the right opportunities. So, you're elevating public service, using the nobleness of the military service to balance some of the ignobleness of public service, and you're using the coolness of volunteer service to get a young audience's attention and get them in the door. And then once they're in the door, you know, it's a sales job on which opportunity is right.

But you don't want to have three different doors, because they're not all equal. You're going to get a flood of volunteer opportunities from people who want to do AmeriCorps or Peace Corps, 50 different variations thereof, and not consider the others because it's a separate system. So, I think from a branding perspective, you want to brand this as an effort to participate in your country in a practical way.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Is it participate in country; is it citizenship? Mr. Wood talks about in his testimony the notion of the obligation of citizenship.



Mr. Drew Train

I would steer away from words like obligation.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

I don't think Dakota is writing on compelling in his plan, but again.

Mr. Drew Train

I think people understand, from whatever side of the political spectrum you're on over the last few years, people have understood the importance of showing up and being involved. One side won an election by showing up and surprising people. The other side lost the election by not showing up and is now trying to show up in droves. So, the idea of people participating in some way is more potent than any other theme in culture right now. Leverage that weight.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Dorothy, did you want to comment on this?

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I agree with that. And I think belonging to something that you value, and it is valued by other people is important to every human being. And it comes to the conversation that you and I were having during break about patriotism and the fact that maybe low-income young people don't salute the flag or they don't feel connected to that, but then it turns out that if the service they're doing locally is AmeriCorps and the president talks about it with respect, then you feel pride. You feel like you belong in this country, and the country is embracing you. And that's part of what we need to do.



And I think I wanted to speak to what Mr. Wood said. It's interesting of how much of a conversation we're having today about the role of government, and that's a key piece of this. And I think it is true what you said that I started locally, but I went straight for federal money.

Because I felt like there's public responsibilities to solve the problems of our society, and then I figured out a system, which I'd like to talk more about; about the balance of the government's role and the nonprofit sector's role, and how do you get that federal money. You put a lot of federal money somewhere, you want to make sure it's well spent. And there are system for making sure that it's well spent, and that you get the results you want, which I'd like us to discuss more.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Thank you.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I see you have a red light.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Allard.

Mr. Dakota Wood

I would like to say that federal money doesn't just appear, right? I mean, these are public and taxpayer dollars, so it's an organization that is committing individual taxpayer dollars to a particular thing. So, when we go for federal money, you know, it's everybody's paychecks at some level.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you.

Again, Mr. Allard.

Mr. Edward Allard

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you all for being here, Panelists. Already this discussion's been very inspiring and valuable, and I also salute you, Doctor.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Thank you.

Mr. Edward Allard

The question I have is really primarily for Mr. Wood, General Durham, and Dr. Stoneman, but others may participate as well. There are numerous public and private examples of sites that promote service opportunities. How should the registration system best integrate or otherwise improve on these alternatives, so the registration system is more than a federal linking or another USA Jobs?

Mr. Dakota Wood

I completely agree with the overarching theme that people are typically, not comprehensively, but looking for the opportunity to be part of something larger than themselves. That's the great appeal. So, if you're going out to clean up a marshland or building a home in your community or joining the military, it's not you. You're part of something that's larger, right? But there are different expectations for what that involvement is. I can come and go on a



house-building project. I commit to the military, it's 3 or 4 years, because it takes time to build skills, unit integrity, cohesion, actually getting tactically competent. I mean, there are the realities of military service, but you're identifying with whatever that effort is.

So, I think in this messaging, what is the message being put forward by leaders in various functions; whether it's government officials, sports, your coach on the field, parents in the home, whatever they may be. So, this idea, this noble, societally valued idea of serving something other than yourself is common across all of these aspects. So, if some kind of a portal can be created that helps to communicate that message, and then I do like the idea then you can direct somebody where they might be inclined to serve. Military things, I think there is a concern about the over militarization of American society. It's always military and uniforms and vets and all those sorts of things. People tend to kind of reject that, so it's kind of a weird, unique community all of its own. But if you could link together these existing opportunities that are out there, and the government has to stay away from applying a value judgement. You know, there's going to be some kind of vetting criteria, right? But for the individual, if you're a U.S. citizen, happy to have you aboard, right? How do you define who gets to join in that pool, you know, whether it's a Match.com or cleaning up the wetlands or what have you? You know, what is the vetting criteria there? So, in the practical implementation, there are some details that have to be worked out, but I think the overall thrust of the message of service is certainly common and it's an appropriate role for government.

Mr. Edward Allard

Excellent; thank you.

General?



Brigadier General Derin Durham

I agree with what he said exactly in that there should be some system out there that points to all these opportunities. The biggest piece is the education piece that comes along with it. So somehow or another in the system, there has to be a way to frame expectations, especially for this generation that's coming up. The millennials want instant feedback. They want something to happen right now. I'm going to do this, and I expect something to happen right now. So, we have to temper that with some realistic expectations along with this registration process. If we don't, then it's doomed to fail. Because they're going to put stuff in, and nothing's going to happen for a while. And that's just the reality of the generation that we are dealing with now.

I think the proposed registration system should probably have avenues in it so that you could select full or part-time work, in or out of uniform, and then there'd be an education piece of what that looks like and what that means. I think that would be one step in making a successful system.

Mr. Edward Allard

Excellent; thank you.

Dr. Stoneman, do you have any observations?

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

No.

Mr. Edward Allard

Okay, thank you.

Any others?



Mr. Dakota Wood

You know, when the government gets involved, you're talking about a selective service system, right? These delays are because of the bureaucratic nature, and that's not bureaucracy in a negative sense. It's just the processes of going along with that. So, the response time is always going to lag, unless you quadruple the amount of our people involved. Then you're talking federal salaries, and, you know, oversight on all those sorts of things.

So, it's just going to be hard, and on that connection between the military and broader society, numerically, it will always be more difficult. Because as society grows, you don't grow the military in lockstep. So, it has to be derivative of the veteran's base. People going back out to the communities or a local engagement with a military organization sector with carrying this risk of an over-militarization of, you know, what we're talking about.

Mr. Edward Allard

Thank you very much. My time as expired.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you.

Mr. Barney.

Mr. Steve Barney

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to our superb panelists for your help on this.



Earlier on, Dr. Stoneman, in your testimony, you were describing and saying you would support the idea of a centralized -- I'm about to say website. Like, it's the Rosetta Stone through which people who have a desire to serve or explore service can go, and then be routed out to things with their needs. And certainly, any kind of a platform that the nation would do would want to have that kind of a capability included in it to do that type of matching.

But we're talking about government. And we're talking about the government which may have slightly different goals in mind; which could include the idea of how do we develop a strategic resource by which the nation can really understand where our talent is as a nation, and how we might be able to tap into talent when the nation needs it? I'm very curious, if we were to have a model like that where people had some kind of a login to this system, is there some way -- and I'm thinking of some of your environmental economics discussion, Dr. Ho, but also for you, Mr. Train, in terms of the marketing world. How do we get people to be incentivized to return to a system like that, to maintain the currency of their profile, if you will; their updated aspirations? Maybe they've earned new qualifications or new certificates that are part of it. Do you have any thoughts for us as to how that might be done in a government system?

Mr. Drew Train

I certainly do. Yes, I would say it's tricky to get people to continue to log back in for something. What you might want to consider doing is reaching out to the platforms that already exist, like Face Book or LinkedIn, and creating a system. Those platforms have open APIs where they share data with other systems. So, if you create a badge of honor, if you will, on LinkedIn that says, yup, I agree to just automatically feed my LinkedIn profile as it updates to the government, because I want to be part of the Emergency Services Corps. If all of the sudden you guys need propaganda experts to go in and do whatever, and you want to pick me, great. You could make it something that's cool and that people want to sign up for and want to have as a badge on their LinkedIn page, because employers look for employees who are willing to participate in the emergency service talent pool, whatever it is.



I think Face Book has a similar open API, and you might want to leverage those platforms if you can form effective partnerships with them.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Even if there were the website that I described, which is not like a registration system, but there was a place on there where somebody could be asked almost for a checklist of, “Would you like to be informed if there were new opportunities arising in the following areas?” Check if you want to be informed. You know, people might like that, and they might like getting an email saying, wow, national service is opening up. They’ve got a hundred new AmeriCorps opportunities in your community; are you interested? Or, you know, the military needs such and such. But if they don’t check that box, they’re not going to get that. That might work, and it could also be not even a registration; just this, “Let me know.”

Mr. Steve Barney

Sure.

Dr. Ho?

Dr. Ben Ho

I have the same first idea as Mr. Train; his whole literature on gamification. So kids these days, they’re really excited about earning this badge or beating the latest video game. Even at Vassar College, we’re offering online badges now for learning a programming skill or learning a data science skill. I worry if anything the government can do will ever be cool. And I also worry about I think these platforms like Face Book have gotten really good at getting people to come back over and over again. And I’ll just list a little bit of a pushback, where there’s recent papers showing that Face Book is almost an addiction. And that if we pay you \$3.00 to quit Face Book for a month, you wind up being happier and less depressed and all these other good things. So, I



worry a little bit about going too far in the direction of learning from these platforms that built these really great addictive system.

Mr. Steve Barney

Thank you.

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I don't want to be downer in this, but I guess being involved in this and trying to develop an app, I understand the legal restrictions that we have placed on us by Congress and the law in collecting data on U.S. citizens. So that would be an obstacle that we would have to overcome if you want to go down this road, especially linking in to Google or Face Book or something like that. Private companies are much more free to collect data than we are as the federal government.

Mr. Dakota Wood

Can I add something to it? Again, not to be the downer guy, but the military-government side, and I was 20 years in the Marine Corps, the whole bit. So, I'm all for it, but the care that has to be taken of overlapping altruistic perceptions of this kind of service-oriented side and an exploitive governmental role, right? You know, that you have big red crosses on the sides of ambulances, because it says this is a nonmilitary thing, and you allow them to do certain things. As soon as you militarize something, and somebody signs in and updates all this personal information, if the recruiter is knocking on their door the next day, does it damage the perception of all of the other things? You know, "The government was just using this as a way to get inside," right? And to use this personally identifiable information sort of thing; so, there's a risk there and in too tightly overlapping these things.

Mr. Steve Barney

Thank you.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Ms. James.

Ms. Jeanette James

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I also offer my thanks to all of you for spending your time with us today and your expertise. I want to continue to discuss the system, recognizing it's not a good word. Platform is better, but I'm going to keep with the system, because I understand what I'm talking about when I say system. But I want to draw our attention to the registration system model that we're talking about that's graphically depicted here and point out, because I want to continue in this discussion, that this is a system that includes as part of its registration for selective service or the military draft. So, when I think about it in those terms, and, Dr. Ho, I think about what you said. That the system sounds like a great thing, but there's a high chance of failure.

That gives me pause, because it's different if a registration system or a platform for people to put in their names and say we want to be part of military service, national service, public service from a recruiting aspect than something that fails that includes the part of it that is a selective service system.

So, my question then, and, Dr. Stoneman, it struck me when you were talking about making it just one big entry point, because there have been discussions about that. But it goes back to, because I'm assuming that even if we did it with one big entry system, there's still a high risk of failure. And so then how do we continue to meet the nation's needs if that's included with the selective service or the military draft system. So, I'm interested in your thoughts; from anyone on the panel.



Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

First, what I'm talking about isn't that we have one entry system and the rest of the entry points are eliminated. So, the selective service system should stay intact as it is, but there should be this overarching platform where somebody can be linked to the selective service system. But they can also go directly there. They know they want to sign up, and, as a matter of fact, they have to. So I think there's a way of doing both where things remain under the control of the people who need to create them, but then they're all linked together so the person searching can find what they want through one central place and could be attracted to it from this public relations campaign that unites them all as important and valued service, including, you know, the public employment, which is a really good and important sector that people should be encouraged to be going into.

I'll just say one other thing, because I don't know if I'll get a chance to say it anywhere else. On the selective service thing and about informing people about opportunities, the fact that people get penalized if they fail to sign up by, if I'm understanding correctly, they lose their college loans and they lose access to certain federal employment if they don't sign up between 18 and 26. I don't think most young men know that, and especially young people who have left high school without a diploma. I think the risks of punishing people for not signing up in the selective service system are really quite enormous, and it comes back to the piece about really making sure that our public relations communication is thorough and well done.

Ms. Jeanette James

Mr. Train, do you have any thoughts?

Mr. Drew Train

I do. I don't think you would want to even remove the requirements on the selective service system. I think you need to do whatever is necessary to improve it, but what you're



trying to do is create something that sits above it; that's like a select quote for insurance. I'm sure you've all heard of those, relatively, knowing commercials. But they're just a feeder to the insurance companies, right? Or a, "place for mom," which is just a feeder to the nursing home and long-term care facilities. And so that's kind of what you're creating with this new entity is basically a lead generation system for the rest of the service opportunities.

And to your point about the diagram, I would just make one general comment. I think it's missing a little bit of an arrow; that opt-in that connects the military draft registration system down to a service system. It should also go up. There's no reason why we can't encourage people who want to sign up to clean a marsh to also consider a military career. So that arrow, or it should have two arrows going both ways.

Ms. Jeanette James

Mr. Wood.

Mr. Dakota Wood

I just think it's critically important to understand, or for the Commission to clearly define in your final remarks or report the purpose for each of these things. So, the registration for a draft is not some altruistic thing. It's that you're at war, and the demand for manpower exceeds the immediately available supply in uniform. And so, you are compelling service by telling some youngster you have to report to some processing station under penalty of whatever, so that we're going to feed you into the grinder in some distant battlefield. I mean, I'm just being blunt about it, but that's the reason why you would have a draft. If you could meet the manpower requirement purely voluntarily, then you would use other mechanisms to do that. So, for the selective service system, it was designed and implemented for a reason. And if we forget about that core purpose for it and think that it's really more broadly this altruistic, volunteer, self-actualizing, you know, kind of opportunity, then we might be missing something.



Ms. Jeanette James

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Dr. Davidson.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

Well, I had some questions, but now my head is all spinning around a little bit from your comments. I do think this diagram is just, you're right. We're combining things as an idea potentially so that we can get more awareness. So, you've got the registration for the selective service for all the reasons you said, and I would say there may be other reasons as well in the 21st century. We'll put that aside for now. And then this whole idea that maybe this is an opportunity to also generate more awareness for all these other opportunities in government service. But I'm kind of keenly aware that we're all sort of not exactly the generation that this is all going to apply to, just looking around the tables here.

And so, I'm curious especially, for Mr. Train, what are the ways in which the next generation is going to be receiving information? You made a very compelling argument about a counter narrative, but it's really hard today to get your narrative through the noise. What's sort of the state of research on what's happening? My students don't even answer email, so.

Mr. Drew Train

Yes, I would suggest using more direct pop culture. So why is there no reality show for AmeriCorps following eight kids around the country doing whatever they're doing; tweeting and sharing and posting and augmenting that on social media? Why wouldn't that be built into



whatever system we're using? I think also you're going to want to create more vehicles to promote the everyday service opportunities that people are doing. So, you know, having a centralized platform, simple things like hashtags or, you know, setting up social media campaigns where people can see the aggregation of their work. I don't know if there's an exhibit at the Smithsonian that's dedicated to service that people can come see and experience and see what's going on. The narrative doesn't have to come through the mainstream media. It doesn't have to come through *The New York Times* to get to folks. It's social media influencers. It's pop culture. It's movies. There's lots of ways to get folks involved that don't include pushing your message. And I think young people like to hear from young people. So, the more things that you can do to create some ambassadors, whether it's the eight people on the reality show or whatever format it takes. You know, you want to create some shining examples that other people are willing to follow. And you're right; they probably don't look like us.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

Dr. Ho, do you have any views on that.

Dr. Ben Ho

Yes. So, I'm a behavioral economist, so I believe very much in the messaging and narrative and psychological factors, but I'm also an economist. And economists are highly skeptical if any of this stuff works very well. We do lots of experiments on the effects of advertising. We did lots of effects; the effects of pop culture. We find that it has surprisingly little impact on how people behave. Even political advertising has surprisingly little impact on how people vote. And so, you know, as an economist, sometimes I think you just need some hard-core incentives, right? Maybe more money for AmeriCorps, a higher pay for federal government jobs; that may be the best way. I mean, it's worth trying all these narrative approaches and messaging approaches.



The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

But people have to know about it.

Mr. Drew Train

Advertising isn't all created equal. When you're trying to study the effects of campaigns on a broad scale, particularly political campaigns, you're including a lot of poor practitioner work. Good advertising really works really well. Lousy advertising is a great way to waste a lot of money. So, you got to do it right and that's not so easy. I don't want to make it sound like it's a slam dunk. He's right. There's a good chance you could waste a lot of money doing this the wrong way. But ultimately, if you're clever about how you execute it, you can do it right.

And he's not wrong about the incentives either. The offer; in marketing, 20 percent of the response is the creative message; 40 percent is the channel through which you deliver it in getting it to the person; and 40 percent is the offer, the product.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

Right, what's the product? Right.

Mr. Drew Train

What's the value I'm getting here? So, if you're looking to move things around, sure, 20 percent can be the message. But 40 percent is going to be what you're selling and what you're charging for it.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

So, in what time we have left, the platform was also what I'm talking about. And I feel like those are changing every day in terms of the things that break through.



Mr. Drew Train

That's right. And whatever you're building needs to be something that you don't want to keep. You need to be prepared to rebuild it every 18 months to 2 years or to refashion it or to renovate it. This is not a home that you can live in for 25 years. This is something that needs to be kept current with new generations. You know, Face Book is already losing traction in the younger market. Snapchat is already losing traction in the younger market. New stuff is coming out left and right. So, it needs to be much more adaptive than things in the government are presumed to be.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

Heard. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Kilgannon.

Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Where to begin; this has been fascinating. Thank you all very much. I guess let me pick up on a few themes you just mentioned, Mr. Train, and, Mr. Wood. On the selective service, and you spoke about the military draft; what we have here is, I guess in a sense, two systems in one integrated system. And with the selective service system, we are driving young people to that system under the force of law. And under a service registration system or platform, we are trying to drive people to that for the offer.

Let's take it, I guess, first from a marketing perspective and an ethics perspective. What are the challenges if, say, one agency or one government organization is trying to do two different things, or how should that be split out?



Mr. Drew Train

It can be very challenging, and people don't necessarily trust the government not to have ulterior motives from what's been stated. I do believe a private solution is probably more palatable for people. In terms of the selective service, it's okay to be honest about what that's for and what you're trying to achieve with this new offer being different. And, you know, as much connectivity as you can build between the system is good, but I don't think you have an ethical problem from taking people from the selective service system and transferring their data with their opt-in permission, and it can be the default, into a system for volunteer service.

I think if you're going to go the other way, you need to make that a proactive opt-in. I think where you lose the trust of people is when, "I think I signed up to volunteer for something," and then, like Mr. Wood said, the recruiters at the door. The, "what am I available for," which is something that even in LinkedIn, you can say I don't want to take emails from strangers. So, you need to give people the chance to guard themselves within the voluntary system, but I don't think you have a problem going from the selective service into the other system.

Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Well except that with the selective service currently and the current law, males 18 to 26 are required by law to go into that system. And then for them to be required by law and then that system making a decision for them to send their information to something else, are there any concerns you would have there?

Mr. Drew Train

I'm sure you'd get complaints about that. Am I concerned about it? Not really. I think whatever you guys do; people are going to complain about it. You need to be ready for that. I don't have an ethical problem if the government is taking what I think is a higher bar, which is



that potential military service, and then putting me up for some volunteer opportunities. I wouldn't want to be solicited all the time by those things, but I don't think you're crossing an ethical boundary there. But people will complain.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I disagree. I think that if someone goes to the selective service site because they are required by law to do it or they're going to be punished if they don't, and then they are, without their knowledge, transferred into another system, I think that doesn't make sense. They need to have an option to opt in. And they need to know the difference between that which is required and that which is optional, and that needs to be really clear, and then the other things about, you know, what are the requirements for all these different services. That's complicated to figure out. Am I eligible for this, this, this, or this? And that has to be really clear, but I think people need the right to opt in.

Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Okay.

Mr. Wood?

Mr. Dakota Wood

I think the doctor's been looking at my notes. I also agree with the opt-in portion, and that's why I wanted to define what's the purpose of the selective service system at its root, not what it's advertised for, right? We have great recruiting campaigns within the military that talk about, you know, join the Navy, see the world. Learn skills, trade, craft, get the lifetime of benefits; in one form or another, be part of something bigger than yourself, all those sorts of things. But the government has a requirement, a perceived requirement that they need some kind of a database of eligible manpower so when things go really bad, I know at least who to reach out to and grab. So, the unfairness that came up was as we were expanding opportunities for



women, they got the benefits of being able to go into any occupational field they wanted to and all the benefits they derive therefrom, but they didn't have the same obligation or potential penalty. If a young female doesn't sign up for selective service, she's not penalized in the same way that a young male would be. So how is that fair? I think that's what generated all of this, right? That if you're going to have equal opportunity, you should have equal obligation. The selective service, registering in a database available manpower within that demographic is a core function of that.

There are secondary values that, at least, at one point in somebody's life when you turn 18 or whatever that is, you have to take some kind of action to register in this system. And maybe for a moment it has you think about, you know, military and national security and service to country and those kinds of things. It might be very passing, but at least there's a bit of a connection. We've all talked about the erosion of those connections between military service and national identity and so forth.

So, the requirement to register; got that. But you would be able to opt in if you wanted that information shared more broadly with other activities and volunteer opportunities.

Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Great. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Ms. Haines.

The Honorable Avril Haines

Thank you. Thanks very much for all of you coming in and talking to us and your thoughtful testimony. So first of all, I just want to make a note really based on Dr. Stoneman's testimony to say that I absolutely, and I think everybody here agrees that whether we call it a



platform or a registration system or a participation that it's not intended as a substitute for the infrastructure that you would have to produce essentially in order to promote and facilitate the kind of opportunities for service that we think are useful and necessary, regardless of what an American's income is or their interest.

But it is the sort of link in the chain, and in large part motivated, I think, by how in our learning about what some of the barriers are to service that a really critical barrier is just a total lack of awareness of what the options are and let alone access to further information about the different options that are available. And so if we're looking at a proposal through that lens and I guess just coming on the heels of Commissioner Kilgannon's questions because I have sort of a variant on that theme; the proposal that we have on the table is a scenario in which you have your selective service system. And let's say that remains untouched in the sense that it continues to exist as it has. We have this opportunity for anybody who is registering in the selective service to opt in to then going to another website essentially that's very much like the centralized platform on service, let's call it, to learn about different service opportunities and to potentially sign up to get more information.

So, about that I have sort of a couple of questions, and, Dr. Ho, maybe I'll start with you. I think one thing you noted in your testimony, written and otherwise, was this idea that you're going to have more success essentially dragging people into that site in effect if you make it automatic. So, they have to kind of check the box off. They have to do something active in order to pull themselves out; almost an opt-out as opposed to an opt-in. And I guess given the conversation and the point that was just made about whether or not people have a concern ethically with your information being transferred without your consent to another site, do you see a similar ethical issue with the scenario in which you have the opportunity to say no, but it's, you know, basically done automatically unless you say no? Is that an ethical issue?

And that being one question; and really in that context, I think, how important is it from your perspective that it be that sort of default? And you also raised the point I think in the end of your written testimony that there's some pushback against this. Because if you're not selecting it



actively, then, you know, you may not feel as engaged in a sense in the opportunity. So, let me just put those forward.

Dr. Ben Ho

Yes. As an economist, I don't know if I'm qualified to speak about ethics. There's much research that economists are especially unethical; not me, of course. But I can say about the practical issues of this, in my own work you find that, like, what is the meaning of something, some action? Like registering for this system becomes associated with some group like the selective service, like the military; that changes the meaning for everybody else as well, and it might make it less appealing. And so, if suddenly this registration system becomes associated with young people or men or however it's set up, then it makes it less appealing for everyone else to join. Secondly, there's this idea from psychology, but also economics that how costly something is affects how engaged you are with it. There's some great work in cognitive dissonance in psychology, but also in economics. And so, if it just becomes too automatic and too default, then you're less likely to go back. You're less likely to use the system. You're less likely to use it to find jobs in the future, and that is something I worry about as well.

I think the idea of unifying this is great, because the hardest part of setting this step up is gaining that critical mass. So many of these networks languish with just a few people, and having this system, it would automatically generate a large, critical mass. And so, I think that's a big upside of doing this. But the downside of it is you might make the whole system less appealing as a result.

The Honorable Avril Haines

I see. Okay.

Dr. Stoneman, I know I only have a minute, but do you see the same ethical concern?



Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I don't know about the ethical thing. I just think the service opportunity recruitment system needs to be proactive in communicating to everyone what the opportunities are and letting them choose.

The Honorable Avril Haines

Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Ms. Skelly.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Wood, if I could, you mentioned being in agreeable with government having a light touch akin to the notion of people in service in other directly governmental lights. And it's been recommended that the private sector or other parts of society would probably be better served in facilitating a place for people to find service opportunities of all kind.

Would that light-touching government, in your estimation, be amenable if it were something like a public-private partnership, or there was some element of governmental funding to ensure that there is sort of a readily available, common marketplace for folks to find opportunities in the way that I think Dr. Stoneman has described in the latter part of the conversation here that people can find things? Your thoughts on that.



Mr. Dakota Wood

Yes, my personal bias is toward a limited role of federal government. A government is absolutely important, but I think it works best and it's most responsive to people the closer it is to the communities that it's interacting with, right? So, whether it's education or schoolboards, town councils, those kinds of things; you start getting it further and further away, it becomes more, you know, just more distant, right?

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Yes. A thousand-mile screwdriver is probably a bad screwdriver.

Yes. Well I think that the people in high government office just have an amazing bully pulpit where they can talk about these sorts of things and they can champion stuff. So, you have a member of congress or somebody in the administration that can get before news cameras, and they can take to Twitter and all these other forums of communicating with the public. And they have a national audience. So, I think that's very important, and it's very valuable. You know, what are we championing as values? What are we championing as a cultural identity? Is America worth a hoot? You know, does it differ from some other country in the world and all that? So, this capturing the discussion, the narrative, all those sorts of things, I think is an appropriate role for people who are in these prominent positions. It's a bit different though than running programs, and I think that the marketplace, however you define that, is much more responsive. If it's effective, then it's successful. If it's ineffective, it dies. And it doesn't have an artificially expanded lifespan, because you're living off of taxpayer monies, when in oftentimes the organizations using those monies are not really accountable or responsive to the people who are paying into them, if that makes sense.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

In response, could I speak to your question?



Ms. Shawn Skelly

Please do, Doctor.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I want to make a distinction between, when you talk about the private sector, between the nonprofit sector and the for-profit sector. And I think oftentimes they get lumped together as if they're the same and they're really extremely different. I personally don't approve of using taxpayer dollars to profit from. I don't think they should go to people's pockets as profit. So, if we're talking about a nonprofit, national organization, like Service Year Alliance, as one of the entities which might implement parts of this that seems fine. If we're talking about a public sector entity, like the Corporation of National Community Service, to implement; they're part of that that seems fine. The question of who should have the overall; that's something to really look into. Who would be the best? But I would avoid having it be a for-profit entity.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Rest assured, Doctor, there's no misconceptions up here about that point.

Mr. Drew Train

Yes, I agree with that as well. And there are effective examples of programs just like this in local markets around the country, particularly in the veteran space. If you look at New York City, NYCserves.gov I believe is the right URL, it's a concierge service for veterans who are struggling to plug into all of the city's services and nonprofits organized for veterans. It was started by the Robin Hood Foundation. I think it's administered by a group called Services to the Underserved. And they're a nonprofit deeply imbedded in the community of New York City nonprofits, making them the right person to be the centralized hub and to refer people out to all these other services in an unbiased way. There's other examples of this in cities. Rochester has



another functioning example of the same program, and I think that is a model that should be looked at for how to do this well and how to do it right that's particularly effective in its person-to-person communication more so maybe than its digital platform. But the structure of the model, the incentives, the memos of understanding for participating in that system I think would serve as a useful place for you to jump off from. And it is supported by the New York City government and the mayor and the mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs, but it's not administered by that group, and I think that's the balance that you were talking about that works really well.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Thank you, and I hope to return to this conversation in the next round.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Khazei.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Thank you and thank you all for a very thoughtful conversation. I also have to build on what my fellow Commissioner, Mark Gearan, said about Dr. Dorothy Stoneman. I was a young person starting a service program, and you were one of the first national leaders to get behind me and my colleague to help us get going. And you've been a trusted, valued, inspiration, role model, and colleague ever since. So, I also want to acknowledge your particular leadership in this whole movement for all of us.

But I want to turn to General Durham. In your testimony, you wrote that you thought that we should change the selective service system to make it an all-inclusive system, not just for military registration, but for national service and public service; that we should move it from a



punitive system to one that's incentivized; that it should be a national service registration for all young people; and that you're supportive of an all-inclusive registration system. So, I was really interested in that. I'd love you to expound on that. So, you're in charge of recruiting. You're moving to an all-inclusive force recruiting model. Some people have said, well, we shouldn't touch selective service. That's for the military. And it's more solemn, and it's got a pertinent role in our society. But you're actually saying we should. That we should change it, and part of our mandate, actually, is to look at the selective service and should women register. I'm also interested in your opinion on that, if you can. Maybe you're not allowed to speak to that. But we should also modernize it for the 21st century, and you wrote passionately about the need to instill service in everybody. So how do you come to that conclusion that we should actually replace it with a more integrated system, and what do you think the benefits of that would be? Would it hurt the military if we did that?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Thank you for that question. So, my opinions here don't represent the views of the Air Force. I need to throw that disclaimer out there initially. So, the question was holistically, hey, what about selective service? You know, what's it for? So, doing a little bit of research and educating myself on selective service, realistically speaking, the law was passed in 1917, right? So, it was as the nation was gearing up for war, and all-out war potentially. We had no way to register the citizens that we had in this country. So, you spoke about updating and bringing it into the 21st century. I mean, are we kidding ourselves here? If we found ourselves in that situation again in an all-out total war, we're not just going to pick people from the selective service. We have this thing called the social security system now. So, I'm pretty sure the government knows when you were born and what sex you are and if you're a citizen or not. So, we're not going to ignore an entire segment of the population that just didn't register for selective service, if we find ourselves in total war. I think that's an unrealistic expectation.

So, if you go in with that premise, then what's selective service for? And that's where I get into a whole of government, a whole of nation idea. And some of the Commissioners have



said it, and some of us have said it. Selective service, a pool for the draft, I think we should separate that out and go, you know what? Selective service is for voluntary service for the military or for any of these other nonprofits or USAID or Department of the Treasury or FBI or any other governmental, nonprofit agency that wants to use it. I think if you changed the mantra of selective service to voluntary selective service and that's it and understanding that if there were a draft, we're going to look at the total part of the population, not just those few who registered for selective service. That was kind of my going-in supposition when I started thinking about what the Commission is actually looking at and what information we're trying to give congress back, as they make decisions about law moving forward.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Thank you. That's very helpful.

I want to give Dr. Stoneman a chance. You mentioned before about federal funding and how to make sure that it's used in an accountable way, et cetera. Can you expound on that?

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Thanks for the question. It's not exactly related to what you were just speaking on. It's really going back to the earlier panel, where as we make bold proposals, we're always saying put a lot of federal money into it. And then the question is, well, how do we make sure that that's not wasted or that it's accounted for locally? So, this is a little bit of a, you know, step away from this, but what I had seen work is a public-private partnership with the nonprofit sector that has a stake in the implementation, just as the public sector has a stake in the implementation. And that a lot of it circles back to there being a system for, a provision for and built into the law funding for training and technical assistance and bringing people together in the way that the gentleman this morning, the Teacher of the Year, was talking about; training with teachers. Anything that the government is going to expect to be well-implemented across the country has to somehow design fidelity to the philosophy. And so, the people, the practitioners as he called them, need to



be trained and they need to be engaged in the learning community. And the people on the ground who are receiving those services, the constituents, need to be able to participate in setting the standards and setting the program design an expectations and implementations. So, you have to create a system, and in response to Dr. Wood, to connect the grassroots with the nonprofit support center, with the federal government's standards. And it has both the data, the compliance side of it, but really has the inspiration and the philosophy side of it balanced through collaboration and through creating a context.

And I see somebody's time is up, so I'll stop. But thank you for asking.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

So that concludes our first round. So, if everybody's doing okay, we'll move briskly into the second round. I'll defer my question at this time and recognize Vice Chair Wada.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm sitting here kind of shocked, because the Commission came away from a year of going out to talk to people. And what we found was, especially in young Americans, the lack of knowledge; whether it's selective service registration, whether it's service opportunities. All these opportunities that are out there, the majority of young Americans are not aware of.

So how do we get that knowledge to them is what we've been looking into; what sort of mechanism? And so my question to you, the panel, is if we set aside the selective service system and we went to just a sort of voluntary website that people could get all this information, since



we can't even get them to the selective service website, what do you believe is the actual success of such a program?

Dr. Ho? Mr. Train?

Dr. Ben Ho

Yes, I actually worry that a mandatory program, like forcing you to this website, may not work. I think there's been a lot of research in recent years on this problem of unawareness, and I think a lot of economists realize we're just unaware of our choices. There's been quite a few experiments on how do we increase that awareness. So, one experiment that I mentioned in my testimony was picking health insurance plans is really hard. And people often pick the wrong one. And so, these economists went to them and said, hey, we're going to do the research for you and tell you if you just switch to this other health insurance plan, you'll save \$600.00. And they told them, and still no one changed healthcare plans. It was just inertia was too powerful. And there's examples like that all over, so I think it's not just awareness. I think a volunteer website that you have to go to voluntarily will almost never work. And I think, on top of that, you're going to need some incentive; maybe a social incentive, maybe some kind of social pressure to get them to actually do something. Because awareness by itself has been shown not to work very well.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Mr. Train, do you have any other comments?

Mr. Drew Train

Sure. So again, I think it's how you go about building that awareness. But, you know, one thing that we haven't really talked about at all is the school systems are where this stuff should be taught. We don't teach civics to anywhere near the degree that we used to or that I would personally prefer. And, you know, I have three children in elementary school, or two in



elementary, one in preschool. The school is dedicated to teaching them STEM, and it's dedicated to creating service opportunities. There are fundraisers. There are charitable opportunities. There are fieldtrips for service, but none of them are public service. And this is a public school. I understand that we don't want to force federal requirements into education, or that that could be a complicated issue. But the idea that public schools teach people about how our government works and how you can get involved with it seems like a fundamental survival element that any society needs to educate its public on, and I don't think it's immoral to teach people how our government works and how you can participate in it. I mean, it should start in kindergarten and continue all the way through. And then you should advertise.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

You'll be happy to know the last panel said start in kindergarten.

The Honorable Debra Wada

I have some time. So, having sat now through some of the questions and answers that we've had, I've written down sort of what would, based on your answers to some of the questions we've had, what would a system look like? And let me see if I got this correct. So, setting aside if we were to keep selective service as it currently stands, as a mandatory registration, I'm hearing more in support for we should allow someone to opt in. So, if they come to the selective registration process because they have to because of law because of draft, then we have an opt-in system that people can go to. And that opt-in system should have all the opportunities from all the services, whether it's military, national, or public service. And that should be provided to individuals. Is that sort of what I'm hearing? And we should have a communication strategy that includes pop culture that the government should not be responsible for, and that we should leverage the private sector to be able to do that, whether it's through a local or a government owned-contracted-run operation? Is that sort of what I'm hearing? Is that a yes or no? Yes?



Mr. Drew Train

That's what I think. And I'll just say yes. That is what it should be. It should be supported by a nonprofit. It should be operated, maybe administered, not by the government. But, yes, you want to create a single point of access where you could get to anything. The reason people don't participate in government is because you have to go to every different branch independently. It's the same reason veterans often don't seek service if they need it. It's because it's complicated to administer five applications at five different agencies with five different points of contact who don't talk to you. You need a single point of access, a concierge. You know, it works.

The Honorable Debra Wada

Right.

I yield.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Okay.

Mr. Gearan.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

So, let me build on that. So, this registration system, this opportunity platform, however it is as Commissioner Wada described to us, and whether it's run by a nonprofit or it's run by something.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Or the government.



The Honorable Mark Gearan

Are you available to run this? Just kidding.

Mr. Drew Train

Yes, I am.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

But it would have an enormous amount of other organizations across government, across different streams of service, across the regions that would want to be a part. How would you vet them? How would you vet those organizations that didn't allow it to be so -- we're creating another large governmental image that may detract.

Mr. Drew Train

We addressed this when we did it with the NYC service thing and with Robin Hood. So, Robin Hood's an organization in New York City that funds some of the best. They have a rigorous screening process. And they have money. So, if you want the money, you got to play ball. And that was a really powerful incentive. The federal government has those criteria already. There are criteria to get federal grants. It's difficult. They're vetted. Start there and attach strings to those grants. If you want money, then you need to participate in this, and you need to do it thoroughly and accurately and well. But, again, the government funds nonprofits. It's hard to get funding. I think using some of those screens and some of those organizations that have already been vetted, start there, define the process, and others will come through. But I do think you need people controlling that and enforcing the participation from the seller side, from the organizational side. You need somebody, you know, cracking heads on what's in there, and Amazon's a great example. If you try to be a retailer selling things on Amazon, they are all over



you about how you're marketing it, how you're doing it, and what you're putting on there. And that's a great place to look for an example.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Dorothy, do you have something?

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Nope. Go ahead.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Dakota?

Mr. Dakota Wood

Just to emphasize some points, if we go back to what the general was talking about, is that there are alternative databases to the selective service system. So, if that proves to be a stumbling block, there's no requirement to keep it in place. I was trying to emphasize why it's in place in its current function, but driver's license registration, voter registration, social security, birth records, payroll records, you know, at the IRS, et cetera; the data is out there. And you can see some sort of a national finding or presidential finding or something that says we have an emergency; it authorizes legal access to that database, and you can pick up however many people you want. So, there are alternatives that could be considered.

I do think that school is the best place. It is a captive population for at least 12 years. They're there 5 days a week for, you know, 9 months out of the year, and so some element of that they are exposed to service opportunities, right? And exposed during career counseling days, whatever that might be; these are the things that are out there. Those things that are out there would then be vetted in some way. Combine federal campaign on the federal side for, you know,



I don't know if they still have that anymore. But, you know, you could do a little thing out of your paycheck every month to send to something. To get registered in the CFC process, you had to meet certain criteria. FAFSA, and I have no idea what that stands for, but I know you apply to one site; your family income and all that stuff. And then that's the site that schools go to, to see whether you qualify for some kind of financial subsidy. So, there are models out there. It's probably a combination of those things that would work. But, again, it's making it available, not necessarily running something.

Dr. Ben Ho

Can I say I really worry about having some federal bureaucrat vetting these things? I'd actually want to make it as easy as possible for organizations to join the system, and then have some kind of maybe social system. Like, you know, people can vote on the organizations they think are best, instead of having some bureaucrat do it.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Just out of curiosity, what's wrong with the federal bureaucrat?

Dr. Ben Ho

I was a federal bureaucrat, all right? For, you know, two good administrations.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Do you have a college professor do it, or?

Dr. Ben Ho

Let the people do it. Let the market do it.



Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

But I personally wouldn't rule out the government. The CNCS does a good job on their website. But I would be inclined to think that a government plus a nonprofit partnership of some kind, but you got to vet who they are, and your question was how do you vet all the organizations on there. That's a more complicated question that we really have to think about.

The Honorable Mark Gearan

Right. Thank you all.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Allard.

Mr. Edward Allard

Thank you, Mr. Chair. As an engineer, I was struck by your comment, Mr. Train. I've been in and out of the federal government since the early '60s, and your statement that you had to revamp and improve and renew every 18 months that will never happen in the federal government. The question I do have for Dr. Ho and Mr. Train is, as an engineer, I'm very interested in how do you measure the effectiveness of something? So, what measures or statistics have you gentlemen employed or would recommend that we employ to make sure we are using the taxpayer money effectively with whatever registration system?

Mr. Drew Train

I think you, obviously, would look at volume metrics, right? How many people sign up? How many people who start finish the process; how many people you're touching. I think you're also going to want to look at what the match rate is and what the overall satisfaction is. So,



you're going to want to do -- there's a concept in marketing called net promoter score, which is based on how likely you are to recommend this to a friend. And it's one question. It's scored one to ten. And if you're in the top two, if you're nine or ten, that's considered positive. Anything eight is neutral. Anything less than seven is not good. And you add them up and subtract them and you get a score and take the average and that's your net promoter score.

So, I think in a system like this, you're going to look at the volume. You're going to look at the conversion rates and all that kind of stuff, but at the end of the day, to know if your service engine is working properly, you're going to want to look at that net promoter score. And you're going to want to look at repeat opportunities. Somebody may not volunteer for more than a year of service, if they're doing one of the more committed opportunities. But there will undoubtedly be weekends of service or smalltime opportunities, and you're going to want to look at frequency of engagement as important metrics for what you're looking at in terms of success.

And then, you know, overall, if you're looking at the brand level of things, do people perceive government employment more positively than before? There's market research agencies that you could employ to do baseline testing and then track it over time. You know, we call it a brand tracker in the marketing business. But I do think it's worthwhile tracking what the public opinion is and the social currency around these things. I think that, you know, when we talk about things being cool, social clout is a form of currency. And in a system like this that can imbue that into somebody will provide them value. So, if you see the value of people's opinions of public service and public participation rising over time that's going to give the system itself more currency and make it more attractive to people.

Mr. Edward Allard

Excellent. Thank you, Mr. Train.



Dr. Ben Ho

So, there's a principle in economics that you get what you measure. So, one worry is that if you measure customer satisfaction, you get really good at creating customer satisfaction and not really good at actually matching people. So, I would focus the measurement on things, what you actually want, which is more volunteering, longer term volunteering. Like, a good match suggests that people have likely found the match they want as opposed to, you know, like maybe you might get more volunteering, but more turnover. That would also be a bad thing. So, figure out what you want and measuring that instead.

I also think one nice thing about this program is this idea of we need more unifying institutions. I think there's too much division, and one possible thing that we could get out of this is maybe more trust between different people and sort of lessen distrust. And that may be a measure and a possible outcome of this that's worth measuring that you may not have thought of.

Mr. Drew Train

That's a really, really important point; division. And, you know, service is one of the great equalizers where a poor person and a rich person can get to know each other. A black person and a white person can get to know each other. And there are fewer and fewer of those opportunities available to people in the normal course of life now, and to create something that can equalize people and put them on equal footing and give them neutral exposure to each other can do a lot to heal some of the social tension that we all probably feel.

Mr. Edward Allard

I totally agree, and I think one of the great equalizers is the military service. You suffer together. There's no other better binding source.



General, I do have one quick question. I'm at the orange. I imagine recruiters have goals; how many people they get. So, what popped in my head is, okay, if they weren't qualified to be going into military service, is there any way that you envision that they could be given credit, even a partial credit, if somebody goes into national or public service as a referral?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Yes, and we are actually working through the system right now to create that. So that if an active duty recruiter finds somebody that's better suited to go in the guard or the reserves or civil service, we're trying to work out a system of what that means and how much that counts toward that particular recruiter's goal. So that is part of the total force recruiting effort that we're kind of walking down right now.

Mr. Edward Allard

Excellent. Thank you.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

Could I speak to this? There's another place where the government could give people credit for their service, and that is in loan forgiveness. And I understand, we need to take a look at it, but I understand for instance, if you serve in the Peace Corps, you don't necessarily get loan forgiveness. And I haven't read the details yet, but I think it's also true for national service. You know, the burden of loans is why so many people are not going into service. So, if we want to recruit people into service, into national service, there needs to be a loan forgiveness aspect of that.

Mr. Edward Allard

Thank you. My time is up.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Barney.

Mr. Steve Barney

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the end of my first round question, talking about how to you incentivize and motivate people to keep their information updated, General Durham, you brought up the very important point that we do have in the federal government certain privacy requirements and things that are set in law. And it seems to me that the major e-retailers that are out there would go out the business the first day that they would be required to comply with the Privacy Act of 1974 or HIPAA or things like that. It also occurs to me that online privacy is probably one of the, you know, emerging oxymorons, if you will. There's this idea that we've got young people who share and occasionally overshare information about themselves online. They're living in a very visible way through social media and things, which would suggest to some that they have a diminished expectation of privacy when it comes to dealing with online things. But as we're thinking about this model, we are somewhat constrained by the idea of some of the federal privacy laws and things that exist out there.

So my question to you, Dr. Ho, to you, General Durham; do we need to have a different way of looking at privacy as it relates to the federal government in a system like this in order to really make it the kind of viable process that it would allow for some matching and other things?

General, would you like to take a stab at that?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Yes.



Mr. Steve Barney

All right. Excellent.

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I mean, realistically speaking, the more detailed information we can get on any individual, the better matching opportunities we're going to have. When you start talking about fiscal responsibility and doing more with less that's where we end up making our money. If we can prescreen someone down to the nth degree to know, hey, this person wants to be an intel analyst. They speak two languages. They're physically fit. They don't have any medical issues. I mean, that's a very easy place.

Mr. Steve Barney

Are your recruiters currently constrained by privacy requirements, from being able to gather that kind of information to do effective matching?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Once the individual comes in and sits down and starts actually filling out the paperwork with the recruiter and they sign saying that they want to join, then we have the ability to start collecting that. To randomly collect that or to gamify it so that, you know, kids are playing games and they're entering data and input and then us collecting that sort of information without a commitment up front; no, there's absolutely no way we can do that.

Mr. Steve Barney

Dr. Ho, what do you think about this idea of, you know, there's a certain appeal to gamifying certain parts of this thing to allow for easy opportunities to explore different types of



opportunities. How might we consider those, kind of balancing things of requirements for privacy versus the flexibility of entering into a system?

Dr. Ben Ho

Yes, you hit on this question I've been researching, actually, for the past few years, which is this paradox of privacy. Which is that we all talk about how we're so concerned about privacy, but then we actually just don't care when we go online. And running some experiments, we find that, yes. Most people are happy to give up information. And they say they care, but they don't really. And so, I've been thinking about why do we say we care, but it doesn't affect how we actually act. I think it's because, you know, we're actually happy to share our information. We don't really care. We're just worried about how it's going to be used. And we're worried about limiting our autonomy. So, if we could find some way to collect the information, but make people feel comfortable with how the information's going to be used and make them feel comfortable that it's being watched all the time. It's not limiting their autonomy. Then I think, you know, people will be okay with that.

Mr. Steve Barney

Dr. Stoneman, when you think about the wonderful organizations out there in national service and how they are involved in recruiting and providing information to folks, do you have concerns about the privacy aspects of this kind of next online exploration system to do matching.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I'm not sure, and my mind keeps wanting to ask the young people in the room these questions, because I can't speak for the younger generation. I'm not sure.



Mr. Drew Train

I think privacy is kind of a myth. If the government wants to find me, they're going to find me. I'd be almost scared if they couldn't. I don't think any 18-year-old has any expectation the government doesn't know who they are or where they are or where they live or all these things. So, the idea, the concept that these things are somehow maintained and separated, if it hit the fan, like the general said, they'd find me. If they wanted to draft me, they could track me down. And I don't think anybody has any misconceptions that that privacy statute which, assuredly, people are less aware of than the service opportunities that it's preventing -- I would recommend the committee look at that piece of legislation and modernize it; 1974 sounds like an awful long time ago.

Mr. Steve Barney

Mr. Wood, any comment at all?

Mr. Dakota Wood

Well I know we're always against my view of the government, right? So -- and I love the government. Where the government differs from all of these other sectors, it really has to do with what can the entity do with that information? So, if I feel that Target or Walmart, you know, I don't like their product anymore; I can go shop someplace else. The government has the coercive powers of government. So, you can come and arrest me. You can imprison me. You can penalize me, and I have very little recourse. I mean, I can kind of go to court and defend myself, but the private sector doesn't have those same kinds of powers. I mean, I get that once data or information is out there, you know, what can be done with that? We're certainly seeing a maturation of the surveillance state in China with social credit scores and what they do with facial recognition, et cetera, et cetera. So, it's really who has access to the information, and what can they do with that, right? Amazon can't prohibit me from getting on an airplane and flying



some place. The federal government can. So, there are two roles being played here, and my willingness to give up personal information, I think, is informed by that.

Mr. Steve Barney

Thank you.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I was just influenced.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Ms. James.

Ms. Jeanette James

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hopefully this will be a quick question. Dr. Stoneman, I want to go back to the discussion that we were having or that was had about vetting the organizations that would be part of this platform, and something you talked about, for-profit organizations; that you didn't support for-profit being part of this or getting any of the taxpayer dollars, the government monies. Dr. Ho, something struck me when you said that there's benefit to unifying organizations when organizations are getting together on a platform like this, and that there's a trust-building aspect of it. So the question that I have is what about for-profit organizations that have a strong, philanthropic history; that have, perhaps, a unique capability that's needed in a particular community or a particular sector that are willing to adhere to very strict rules and regulations, like you were talking about Amazon; would a system like that, if that was in place, would that have an effect on your thought about it? And I'll start with Dr. Stoneman, Dr. Ho, Mr. Train, if you have any thoughts on that.



Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I'm not trying to draw an absolute line, but I do think there has been a trend over the past, you know, 30 to 50 years to the privatization of the public sector. And I think that that is damaging in various ways, and I also think it's unfair to the taxpayer. So that's sort of a bigger political position which I hold, which influences my thoughts about it. So, I want to look very closely at that. There are a lot of, you know, for-profit companies, which have wonderful philanthropic arms, who've done great things. I wouldn't rule that out, but I would be extremely careful. And if I could find the non-profit that was, you know, competent and committed and easily in this space, the right one, well then, you know, I would be glad. Or I might want to limit the profit to be made on this at the for-profit company, if they have the skills to do it and they wanted to use a philanthropic arm to do it or, you know, however it works out. I'd look deeply at who is benefitting from this effort, which is for public service, not for private benefit.

Mr. Drew Train

I think there are different types of private corporations that you might want to look at, particularly public benefit corporations, which beyond just a philanthropic arm, but literally written into the charter of the corporation is a requirement of some kind to create a public good. So, doing that changes the governing dynamics for the board of directors or for the leadership, because their goal isn't strictly profit. So, you might want to look into an organization like that, or a social enterprise that is allowed to generate positive revenue but doesn't pay dividends to anybody. And this organization that's housing this data that's going to become a platform where other companies are going to want to market services, there's a monetary aspect that this platform will be able to be self-funding potentially, or at least revenue generating. And so you may not want that distributed into somebody's personal bank account, but the idea that this entity should be able to take in money and spend it and reinvest in itself constantly, to the other Commissioner's point about not being re-inventible every 2 years, you're not in the easy business. This is going to be really hard, and it's going to require a lot of cash. So, creating an



enterprise that can accept money, but maybe not distribute it and make other people rich is a good balance to find.

Dr. Ben Ho

So, I'm just going to say, yes, matching markets work better when they're bigger. And platforms work better when they're bigger. And that's why we have this winner-take-all market where Amazon just wins, and Apple just wins, and Google just wins. And it will work better if it's bigger, but I also agree with Mr. Wood, who's very worried that, you know, these things are very different. For-profits and nonprofits and government and military are all very different. And it is also worrisome to me when you combine them, because the incentives are very different in each case. And having a system that tries to look at all them may have, you know, potentially adverse consequences.

Ms. Jeanette James

Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I would also add that most for-profit companies have so much access to so much big data right now, I doubt that they would want to look at what we have, because they aren't constrained by the same laws that we're constrained by. So, they know where we go, what we do, and what our habits are already.

Mr. Drew Train

That's right. I mean, this information is available for sale. You can just go buy every American's credit information, purchase history, preferences, address, email address, phone



number. You can call Acxiom and buy it if you have enough money. So those companies already have the data. If you've got to earn it, it's going to be a little harder.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Dr. Davidson.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

That's a little scary. The government can't hire them.

Mr. Drew Train

I know. That was one of the problems with the veterans system was, "just buy it from Acxiom." You actually have to get the data from the Department of Defense by individually requesting it, and then match it to Acxiom. It's a mess.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

So, while we're on the topic of blurring all these lines, I wanted to pull the string a little bit more on this chart and how far you'd be willing to go depending on what it is that you're trying to accomplish. I'm looking at Dakota and also General Durham in particular. You know, our mentality about that selective service is really based on, you know, sort of D-Day replacement troops. We need these young 18-year olds to storm the beach, we need a lot of extra people. And that's what the system is still sort of designed for, but the nature of conflict has changed. The nature of emergencies have changed. I think it was one of y'all who mentioned maybe people would get badges for signing up for an emergency corps of some sort.

In 2016 at the Warsaw Summit for NATO, the NATO members, including ourselves, signed up for resiliency as a planning concept, with the idea that the current, unpredictable



security environment has led a renewed focus on civil preparedness for NATO and its member states to be ready for a wide range of contingencies, which could severely impact society and their critical infrastructure. They're talking about things like cyber security, food security, infrastructure, energy securities. So now we're talking about all hands, everybody, wildfires, hurricanes, terrorist attacks. I don't want to scare everybody, but this is our job to think about all the bad things that could happen.

And with that sort of in mind, would that change the way you think about how we have people sign up, what types of people sign up? You were already blurring all the lines with your total force thing over there in the Air Force; and ages even, and having people sign up for what sort of skillsets that they have.

Dakota?

Mr. Dakota Wood

Yes, there's actually a lot riding on this, right? There's speculation as to what future conflict would be like, but until we see it in practice, we don't really know. So, when you're talking hypersonics, cyberspace-based systems, directed energy, robotics, manned-unmanned teaming sorts of things, they're all really cool. The question is, is does my cyber cancel out your cyber, you know? Can you operate in a GPS denied environment? So, I think that in the early days of a major conflict, and a lot of these new, cool tools are quite out there, they could very well cancel each other out and you're left with an analog force. So, what does conflict with China look like 3 months into it or a year into it? Is it really, you know, 5.56 rounds and fighting knives?

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

And is it really in Asia, or is it at home?

Mr. Dakota Wood



Yes. Well, I'm just saying, you know, that we really don't know, and I think that as war evolves, the urgencies or the requirements of the moment create really innovative solutions. At the beginning of U.S. entry into World War II, nobody was talking about firebombing civilian cities. And yet, later on into the war, the risks and the odds and the requirements were so great, they were firebombing Dresden and firebombing Tokyo. So, you find yourself doing things and you develop the legal authorities to do those sorts of things based on the urgency of that particular moment, right? So, it's very hard to kind of predict where warfare takes us.

But back to what you're talking about, about skillsets, I absolutely need cyber. How does the Army or the Air Force compete in terms of compensation with a Google or an Apple or a Microsoft or Amazon? What are we appealing to when we try to get in new requirements? Can I use a 45-year-old software engineer who writes some wicked good code if they're not going to be carrying a 60-pound pack up and down hills and valleys in Afghanistan, right? So, it's really getting into the details, to your point, what are you trying to accomplish with a particular skillset in a specific environment in a specific environment? And it's kind of hard to know up front where all that might go 10 or 15 years from now.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

So, since we don't know, what do we have people register for, General?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

So currently, 18 to 26-year olds for the selective service is a volunteer force. You can volunteer to be in the Air Force up to age 39 across the board. And then for highly educated skillsets like doctors, physicians, there's waivers. You can volunteer up into your '60s if you want. We'll take you, because we need those skillsets. So, when you start talking about the people that you need and the population that you have, it all becomes very dependent on the situation that you find yourself in at that time.



Mr. Drew Train

As a civilian, let's also think about what we're going to need to rebuild after those first 30 days of cyberwar with China before it goes back to the fighting bags. We need people who can repair the electrical grid after it gets turned off, who can rebuild the civil functions here. So, I think it's not just enough to fight and win. We need those people too, but what does it mean to recreate a new society after a conflict, and who do you need on the civil side to pick up the mess while the troops are out fighting?

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

Yes, that's the point of the resilience.

Mr. Dakota Wood

I really think that's where resiliency comes in, absolutely. I mean, you look at major cities in the U.S. that are now paying ransom because somebody clicked on a bad link and you've got malware in there that held hostage tax records, right? So how do you rebuild after that; taking down electrical power grids in the Ukraine, cyber-attacks on the Estonian government, you know, 3 years ago and stuff. So, these skillsets in the private civilian sector really are where resilience for a nation is.

The Honorable Dr. Janine Davidson

I yield my time. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Kilgannon.



Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Thank you. I want to continue the conversation that Ms. Davidson just added, along with Mr. Khazei's previous question. So, General, and, Mr. Wood, are you advocating that we eliminate selective service as we know it and should there be a need for conscription, we use alternative databases like social security and others?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Advocate is a strong term. I don't think I would go that far and say I'm advocating for it. I'm saying that if we are exploring the opportunities to create something that is potentially more useful and more cost effective, then I think there are probably better ways to go about it. Because right now, we are, I think, duplicating data that already exists out there. And in looking to the future, it's only become more so, because we have moved on as a country and as a nation, as a culture, and we are all interconnected via these things; cellphones and technology today. So, I think, initially, like you said, the selective service as a concept was required, because there was just no other way to do it. But now, we have a much, I think there's a much more efficient way to do it.

Mr. Dakota Wood

But I would not let it go without knowing what replaces it. So, I don't forget, if the United States says we're getting rid of our selective service system that will be interpreted by potential competitors and even allies as to how serious the United States is to having some kind of competent military force. So, you would have to be able to say that we have something that replaces that in the emergency when you needed a lot of manpower to fill out these sorts of potential things.



Mr. Tom Kilgannon

And so if we could eliminate it, but at the same time put forth a structure that says when the need arises, we will use social security and drivers' licenses and a few million bucks for Axiom and whoever it is, then you might find that a favorable alternative?

Mr. Dakota Wood

Yes, when you go and address something and it just kind of exists in the background, it's not controversial. As soon as you come out and say we're getting rid of selective service because it's this archaic kind of thing, but the United States government is now going to give itself the authority to access everybody's personal information. That's going to generate a firestorm. So, I'm just saying that's what's going to happen.

You had mentioned a potential for conscription, if you want more people involved and to kind of level the playing field and all that sort of thing. The problem we had in earlier days pre-all-volunteer force; was you're bringing somebody in who doesn't want to be there. Are they now a discipline problem? What is the compelling or the term of service? Is it 2 years, 3 year, 4 years? How do you compel somebody to serve, let's say, 4 years? They don't want to be there to begin with. So now you look at skillsets, unit cohesion. Am I spending more time in my command structure dealing with problem children than really focusing on the mission? So, the all-volunteer force has been hugely successful. It's a model that's very expensive, because now you have to be concerned about quality of life, pay and benefits, all the things that come along with that, right? So, it's an expensive way, but you get people who have joined up for some reason. They want to be there. And so, it's just things that you would need to consider if you decide to change the current model.



Mr. Tom Kilgannon

And as we're considering this, General and Dakota, if we have to choose and we have to prioritize what we think of as the traditional military conscription model versus what Ms. Davidson was just talking about, a system from which we can draw a more diverse skillset and more diverse people for homeland security-type issues; which is the higher priority for this Commission?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I mean, I think force projection is ultimately how the nation exists and how we exercise our influence in the world. So, I think that has to be the priority initially. And then there are so many other agencies and so much government that exists here at home that I think that there are other avenues to get to civil resilience in the end.

Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Okay.

Mr. Dakota Wood

So, there's this frustrating aspect of historical experience that tends to frustrate new ideas. And it's not to dismiss any new idea, it's just the nature of warfare continues to circle back and say that certain ways of going about doing things prove to be more effective than others. So, you could radically re-envision the U.S. military, and you could say that the actual Combat Arms pieces are a conventional -- thinking about uniformed military members, if you're driving a tank, flying a plane, shooting a rifle, whatever it might be that's kind of conventional. All the other support functions, why can't they be different terms of service; a non-uniformed or an ancillary-type capability? You know, in the battlespace today, a vast majority of that is contracted out anyway. I mean, you've got, you know, techs from Raytheon and Lockheed Martin and



everybody else out there dealing with some very technical aspects of equipment that's being used. But that's a different way of thinking about it, and it would give rise to two dramatically different cultures. I'm the Combat Arms person, and you're this kind of weenie over there that provides support and, you know, an A-team and an everything else team.

So again, there are consequences to any alternative path that you go down, and it would be thinking through are those consequences worthwhile, those potential outcomes?

Mr. Tom Kilgannon

Sure. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Ms. Haines.

The Honorable Avril Haines

Thank you. So, I've got two questions. My first one is for General Durham. Commissioner Gearan mentioned how unique it is that we have a Commission that looks across the board at military, national, and public service, and we've seen how some of the challenges that each of these areas are facing in a way can be in part addressed integrating some of these efforts. And one of the questions I think I've just had, particularly given your experience in recruiting and knowledge in this area, is just that it's one thing to create a platform that promotes access to everything in one space, right? That's not really integration in a sense. And in trying to think about how you do recruit in a way that's integrated will, I think, require the knowledge of the recruiters themselves to really understand what are in these other spaces. And I guess my question is how much do military recruiters know about civilian public service, about national service opportunities? How would you approach that to try to integrate across these different spaces?



Brigadier General Derin Durham

So, we started down this road our last, I think, two classes. We have started with total force recruiting education. So, as all recruiters that we bring into the Air Force go through their initial recruiter training at Lackland, they're getting a total force curriculum. And that's kind of, to get to for the population in general, why it's so important to have a civic education program. It has to be out there at the state level and mandated. Many states or most states have a state history curriculum that, you know, you have to have it before you can graduate from high school. And there probably should be a piece in there about civic participation. And it shouldn't just be about, you know, how many branches of the military there are. It should be a whole of government type education course or civic education. So, I think there's two pieces. The individuals have to be educated on what's available, and then those recruiters that are going out there need to be educated across the spectrum of what's available.

The Honorable Avril Haines

So, your recruiters are learning about Service Alliance, about AmeriCorps, about Peace Corps opportunities, about public service opportunities in civilian?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I don't think we've gotten that deep. I don't think we've gotten that deep. We're crawl, walk, running this idea, and we are in the very crawl stages of it. So previously, active duty recruiters were just taught active duty. They had no idea what the guard and the reserve offered or the civil service. Now those recruiters are being taught across all the spectrum in the Air Force of what's available. Whether we roll in the rest of what's available out there that's probably in the walk or run phase.



The Honorable Avril Haines

But that is something you recommend over the long run from your perspective?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Yes, sure. I think so. I mean, each recruiter has to talk to a hundred individuals to get one. And those 99 people that aren't joining the military could do something else, and it could be in any organization that serves the nation.

The Honorable Avril Haines

Yes. All right. Thank you very much.

My other question is really if we do a platform like this, how can we promote, essentially, the kind of integration that addresses some of the issues. Frankly, Ms. Train, you noted some of them, but I think we're all kind of aware of the morale and the public service issues, the bifurcation, the sort of complexity of national service and the lack of branding in some spaces, so that people don't have awareness and knowledge. And then for the military too, I think getting to a more diverse population geographically and otherwise is a critical aspect of seeing it survive.

What recommendations would you make to try to enhance or support that?

Mr. Drew Train

One of the things that Vice Chair Wada raised and other panelists; how do you normalize service in parts of the country where there isn't military? And idea struck me. The VA incentivizes home ownership. What if it extra incentivized home ownership in the Northeast if our military is being recruited from the South and out West, or in certain communities to get veterans on a volunteer basis who may not need to return to the community they came from, but may be willing to travel? Get them out there. Have them coach a soccer team. Just put them in



communities where there aren't other people. I live in Westchester, not far from here. I hardly ever see military folks. It would be great to have a few more with more presence in the community. That might be one incentive that's already kind of out there that could just be tweaked a little bit.

Mr. Dakota Wood

It's going to be hard to get past the primary function of the military as being war. And all that that means in terms of the social discussion, how people view the military and military service. You just don't see a lot of commercials. You see some about humanitarian aid, responding to in the wake of a typhoon and those sorts of things, but most of the popular culture is shoot'em up games and, you know, folks going off to war in movies; that sort of thing, right? So, the Marine Corps, what it does, it's recruiting looking for very self-confident, kind of type-A, I don't want to say aggressive, but people who are really wanting to grip a challenge. And if you recall Marine Corps recruiting commercials, it's slaying dragons and overcoming obstacles.

Mr. Drew Train

That's a tremendous point. I worked at J. Walter Thompson for a long time, which is the agency that services the MCRC, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command. They very much over the years built the Marine proposition on if you're going to join the Marines that you fight. It is purpose driven. It is not ever transactional in the way that the other branches of service have been, at other times, focused on see the world, college programs, job training, technical schools. And it's why the Marine Corps, you know, I don't know how true this is, but they always used to brag that they never missed their recruiting goals during combat when other service branches struggled, because that transactional value proposition gets negatively impacted every time we call on the troops. Whereas because that's set as the expectation for the Marine Corps, you're joining to fight, now there's somewhere to go. I'm not going to be the one.



You know, I have a dear friend who ran that account. He says he was the one Marine that never got to do anything, because he served in that peacetime period in the late '90s and he got out before Iraq and Afghanistan. So, you know, positioning military service honestly, I think ultimately will yield better outcomes.

The Honorable Avril Haines

Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Ms. Skelly.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Thank you. This one is for, to start, General Durham and Dr. Stoneman both. In the course of the conversation we've had today, your preparation for it, is there anything that you've come across that you've heard, seen that lends itself to, "I could do better in my recruiting challenge if we started doing something like that or had a tool like that?"

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I think that if we had a national database that was able to collect more data, we would be more effective. Right now, we are hampered by current law and legislation. I'm not sure how many leads we get out of the selective service program as it stands. Probably not enough to warrant us not having our own system. So, we have Airforce.com. We're building an "Aim High" app right now that will help our recruiters. Our recruiters have their own programs and systems that they use. So, there are a multitude of systems out there across all branches of service that do these type things, to try to get a recruiter in front of a potential youth that is, you know, motivated and propensed to serve in the military. So, I think this conversation, the selective service, what this evolves into is there's benefit from it. And I think that the more that



we talk about it, the more awareness it's created. I mean, when the majority of the youth out there today can't name all the services, there's a problem. There's a basic level of understanding that doesn't exist that needs to be there. And I think with this, no matter what shape it takes, it will be a step forward.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

For YouthBuild and national service, and especially from low-income communities, I don't see that this would be helpful, because we don't have a recruitment problem. We have a funding problem. We have a lack of opportunity problem. And so, if I were going to say, well, where should we put our resources, I would say put it into expanding the number of opportunities at the grassroots for low-income young people to step into the service world. We don't spend a lot of money on recruitment, and we turn away way more young people than we can take. And we're turning away young people who some of them desperately need these opportunities. Some of them, maybe they don't really read at a fifth grade level, so what they need is to come into something which will give them the pride of the service at the same time as they're getting their high school diploma or getting ready to go to college because they missed something along the way. So, it's having a sufficient number of opportunities to welcome them.

Now, I do think though, I'll say that there is also a need for more integration between the different networks. Our graduates are actually quite interested in going into the military if they thought that they were eligible after they've gotten their high school diploma, after they've done service if their service was valued. And a lot of graduates have gone into military and then have come back much stronger and ready to provide lifelong service back in their communities.

So, there is a need to collaborate among and with public entities too. The collaboration is important. The information is important, but we don't have a recruitment problem that we need to solve through spending a lot of money and creating a different system. And I don't know. Allen may know more, or Sandy Scott would know more. I mean, there are years when there are



800,000 people applying for AmeriCorps, and there's only 75,000 opportunities. The same in YouthBuild; turning away four times as many people as come in many locations.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

And not having any data to back this up, but if the price of such a system or something like this were only a couple of thousand national service seats, you'd rather see those being created then?

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I doubt if it would be that little, so I don't know. I mean, I have to think about the pros and cons.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Can I ask you to expound a little bit?

Mr. Drew Train

It's important; turning people away from opportunities will really send a lasting message and disincentivize them from coming back. So, before you turn on the machine and turn on the spending, make sure you're ready for success and that you have a place to put people.

Ms. Shawn Skelly

Catastrophic success is one of the greatest risks there is.



Mr. Drew Train

I don't think this is a trade-off. I'm sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt you. I don't think its trade-off about this system, and I just want to say the most important thing for you to do is boldly expand the service opportunities that exist if the goal is to create an ethos of service and to unify our country. The most important thing isn't the technology of the system; I don't believe.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Mr. Khazei, bring us home.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Thank you. I want to come back again to you, General Durham. I was struck by what you said to my colleague about your moving to total force. So, you're training your recruiters to go beyond just, you know, active duty or reserves or civilian or whatever; crawl, walk, run. But you'd also be open to, once you did that, well why not, for those 99 that aren't eligible or whatever, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, YouthBuild, et cetera. And then I assume you would also then provide incentives for them the way you're providing incentives for your recruiters that they get some kind of credit. Is that right?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I think in a perfect situation, yes. I would hope that we would be able to do that. As I think about it thought, I don't know how we could do that. But that, you know, there is benefit for the nation no matter where they're placed. And so, when you talk about recruiter goaling and what they're actually recruiting for and the needs of the nation and the service that's what the goal is tied to right now. How we would wrap that in, you know, I'm not sure. Whether it's a tangible goaling benefit for the individual or if it's come ancillary piece that's handled at a lower level, I could envision that as well.



Mr. Alan Khazei

So, coming back to what my colleagues had mentioned, this is an interesting Commission, because we are the first time that military, civilian, and public have all been combined. So, if Congress came back and said, you know what? We have the same view you have, which is needs of the nation. And obviously military's a need of the nation, but civilian service, YouthBuild, AmeriCorps, et cetera. Public service is a need for the nation, and we do have this recruiting force and we are turning away 99 out of a 100. If Congress sort of put that mandate in and then also gave the resources to make it possible and maybe some connections between Peace Corps and AmeriCorps, the military could respond to that?

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I think absolutely it could. The example that we use is for everyone person that an active duty recruiter refers to a reserve or guard recruiter, they get six leads back. So, for everyone person that we send to AmeriCorps or we send to USAID, we could get six leads back. So, I think there is goodness in the idea of sharing information and sharing those leads across the whole government.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Right. Well as Dorothy just said, I've seen this too with City Year folks, AmeriCorps. They do service. They get into the military. They have the opportunity, and they get the access. So, like I said, that's great.

Brigadier General Derin Durham

Well it's amazing to me the number of people you said you turned away because of lack of funding. You know, are you turning them away and saying, hey, maybe you should go join the military? Because we can probably fund them.



Mr. Alan Khazei

That's the value of panels like this. So, I guess my wrap-up for all of you, this has been really great, and you've all spoken passionately in your testimony about the need to instill a culture of service. So, beyond the registration stuff we've been talking about, one last opportunity for each of you. What big idea do you have for us to make that culture of service a reality? And I'm happy to start with anybody who wants to go first.

Dr. Ben Ho

Well just one idea for the registration system. We've been talking a lot about the left-hand side of the picture, but not so much on the right-hand side of the picture. Instead of thinking about registering people to serve, why not register organizations to serve? This goes back to Commissioner Davidson's question about what should this be for. I think if war happens and we need a cybersecurity team, we're not going to go draft individual programmers. We need to find the organizations and nonprofits; there's like tens of thousands of nonprofits out there. And if we could think of organizations serving that already have the infrastructure to do something that might actually be more effective than drafting individual people.

Brigadier General Derin Durham

I would say inspire, inspire at a very young age. I mean in how we invest and how we do that, I know how a bill is made into law because of School House Rock, and I was inundated with that as a kid, you know? So that level of information and inspiration needs to be applied at that very critical age group if you're going to get service across the spectrum.

Dr. Dorothy Stoneman

I would say invest in inspiration and opportunity and go big with the vision of society that you have.



Mr. Drew Train

I would start with civic education in kindergarten, and I wouldn't be afraid to require a minimal commitment to some form of national service for every citizen. There's nothing wrong with asking people to spend a year in the volunteer service as opposed to a military service. We all take something from this country to some degree, and some take more than others. Some get more than others. It's not exactly fair, but it's reasonable to ask people to participate and to require it.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Mr. Wood?

Mr. Dakota Wood

I just echo that school is a place where this really occurs. You've got this captive audience, and so the nobility, the idealism, the value of serving the community in a variety of ways that's really where you need that repetitive message. And it has to be a message of pride that this is a good thing and not viewed negatively as some kind of propaganda; you know, some kind of nationalist fervor sort of thing. That there's a wholesomeness to this idea; being part of something larger than you and giving back in some way. So, if we can craft that message in some way and maybe provide supportive materials or go to site or something, I think that's all good.

Mr. Alan Khazei

Thank you. Thank you all.



PUBLIC COMMENT

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Great. Well, General Durham, Dr. Ho, Dr. Stoneman, Mr. Train, Mr. Wood, thank you so much for taking time to be with us this afternoon. We greatly appreciate the time that you took to be here today and for providing the valuable information to the Commission. So, at this time, we will conclude our questioning. We'll dismiss the panelists but invite you to take seats in the front row if you'd like to stay for the remainder of the hearing. And we'll start the opportunity for public comment.

The Commission is committed to transparency and openness with the public. In keeping with these principles, the Commission intends to provide the public with an opportunity to deliver public comments during our hearings. As a reminder, in order to provide the greatest opportunity for as many participants to offer a comment as possible, public comment is limited here to a 2-minute period per person. Again, I will remind you of the lights that we have. The light will turn yellow when you have 30 seconds remaining and red when your time has expired.

As is noted on our website, sign up for public comment took place between the opening of registration and the start of the hearing. When you signed up, you received a numbered ticket. To ensure fairness, tickets were randomly drawn. We will call out five ticket numbers at a time and ask that when your number is called, please come forward and make a line behind the microphone in the center aisle and provide your comment. Additionally, if you would like to provide a written comment, please provide those to the staff at the registration desk. I will now ask numbers 97, 102, 95, 101, and 105 to come to the microphone. Please introduce yourself to the Commission with your name and affiliation before starting your comment. And again, we do have several folks that wish to provide comment, so I will strictly enforce the 2-minute rule.

Sir, you are recognized for 2 minutes.



Public Speaker #1

All right. Hi, my name is Bill Galvin. I'm from the Center on Conscience and War. And if you want my opinion on how the best way to work on that track you have, illuminate that hot blue box. Okay? We need to get rid of the selective service system. I've talked about this before with you. I don't think I need to repeat what I said, but I want to say that the notion that we have a selective service system is an important part of who we are as a nation is actually a false one. We'd been a country for almost 250 years. Our first national draft was for World War I. That was like a little over 100 years ago. Total time we've had an active draft in our history is around 40 years, and then we've had the draft registration since 1980 until now, so that's another 30 years. Thirty-nine years almost where we've had registration without a draft. The notion that if we eliminate this, we're sending a message to our enemies is kind of ludicrous. I mean, our military budget is, I forget exactly how many, but like seven or eight countries combined have a budget that equals ours, and most of them are our allies.

So, I think we need to just think about our priorities. And so selective service should be eliminated. If it's going to be retained, it must remain a civilian agency. It's funny that you were hearing testimony today about the ethics of giving and sharing information. People who register with selective service have their information turned over to military recruiters. Those who register at the post office, on the registration card, it's on the Privacy Act Statement. The people who get registered through drivers' licenses and FAFSA, I'm not sure they even know that. So, we really need to totally change our national priorities I think, and if we really want to get young folks that I know inspired to serve, we need to disassociate service from militarism. Service needs to come from the heart about trying to improve the country.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Great. Thank you so much.



Thank you, sir. Please identify yourself and then proceed with your comment.

Public Speaker #2

Sure. My name's Andy Major. I'm from Syracuse, New York. I work there for a small publisher, and I'm a longtime community organizer. I'm also here in large part to say that a draft registration has never served a meaningful purpose since it was reinstated in 1980. We had, as the general described, many, many wars since then. We're involved in several right now, and because people know that were a draft to be imposed that that would significantly increase opposition, it has never been utilized. So, it's a waste of now \$24 million dollars a year. As someone who strongly supports community service, supports the idea of people, all of us, feeling committed to make our communities and our world a better place for all who live here, for the national realm that supports us that \$24 million dollars could well be utilized for the kinds of things that Dr. Stoneman talked about; all the programs that are underfunded currently.

I was in college in 1980 when draft registration was re-imposed under President Carter. And as a conscientious person, it caused me to think about what were my beliefs about war, about the idea of killing other people, about what the role of our nation was in the world. And I came to believe that I did not believe in war and shouldn't participate in it and should be honest about that. So I chose to publicly speak out against registration, and when I was tried 5 years later in federal court in Syracuse, as part of my sentencing, the judge said, "I'm not going to sentence you to community service, because I know you'll keep doing that." So instead, he sentenced me to prison.

So, there are significant consequences from this. Let's encourage participation in our community and the broader world voluntarily based on people's understanding that we're all in this together. Thank you.



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you, sir.

Public Speaker #3

Good afternoon. My name is Edward Russell, from Pleasantville, New York. I want to first thank our Congress and the members of this panel today and the members of the

Commission for taking on this really important public task of helping us focus on public, national, and military service. I believe in the value of example. My wife and I were both Peace Corps volunteers. In our parents' generation, seven of our fathers and uncles served during the war, and two of my uncles were in the Civilian Conservation Corps. And I still go hike in the parks and the public spaces that they worked on. I have two grandchildren who are in the YN, YWCA programs, volunteering this summer.

I would like to make two comments. First of all, to really endorse and support the comments that you heard this morning from the panelists about trying to have a one concept or a linked program that ties together all kinds of public service. Secondly, I want to endorse and support the comments that were made about funding such a program in a substantial, bold way and particularly one that really encourages and helps people from all economic and social backgrounds to participate.

I did not hear much discussion of the idea of phase-in or pilot-type of programs to build off the good examples we already have and to carry those forward without having to bite or chew on the whole apple at one time. And my final comment would be I hope every official or person running for elective office this year engages in this debate and supports it. Thank you.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you, sir.



Public Speaker #4

My name is Dante Artis. I'm 19 years old, and I am a part of the YouthBuild Community, the AmeriCorps program. Basically, our job is to provide service. So, when we provide service, it's to the people that are in need in our community, not only to ourselves. So of course, the program is to help us, youth, those who came up from the lower class. It's to help others as well. So, there's obviously a lot of people in our community that need a lot of help, and it's hard for it to go unnoticed. So that's where we step in and different branches of Nubian Directions is what helps us better the community. There's a learning program to make the gardens individually much better. There's another program where we provide food for the homeless; breakfast, lunch, and dinner. There's another program where we perform construction on houses in the community, and those houses become livable spaces after the projects are done. So, I just wanted to say that.

[Persons in the room clapped.]

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

I'd now like to call up numbers 100, 107, 106, 109, 98, and 99.

Public Speaker #5

Cole Kleicht, Walking Civics; I will pay attention to the light. Quick points, Commissioner James, you had asked a few times about teaching. When I was going through, I've been public-private sector, when I decided to go into teaching some years ago, the thought was that perhaps if you got the colleges educating people to be teachers, you have to use a content area to teach them with; in effect, choose a clay. Civics education and civics curriculum might be an ideal one to use as opposed to math I was assigned when I was learning to be a teacher. If civics curriculum is the clay with which people are learning to be teachers, one would assume it imbues them with that sensibility going forward. It's, I would hope, delivered in a nonpartisan



way, which is a critical element to this. But that was a suggestion too is use civics as the clay, if you will, that people learn to teach with. There'll be a lot of rewards for that.

Dr. Stoneman made mention of a voice, so thank you for standing up and doing so, because it can't be old folks my age.

One of the students last year, a young lady named Madeline Johnson did provide feedback to our program. Now of course, I'm banging the drum on my program, but if you listen to what she's talking about, this could apply everywhere. And the part I would leave you with is, whatever we come up with, please find a role for our military veterans to play a role in that. Because these Padawans are going to need Obi-Wans, and they're the best answer I've got. So, Madeline had this to say, and she did work at the election by the way.

“Recently I had the amazing opportunity to become a certified election judge. People may think that sounds boring, but I actually enjoyed it. Since I was young, I have valued those who served our country to protect the Constitution for our rights. Both my grandfathers served in the military, and they made me want to help my community in any way possible. I wanted to join the Army to help protect the Constitution, but recently found out it wasn't possible due to some health conditions I have. When Mr. Kleicht spoke to the class, I was in about this opportunity of becoming a certified election judge, I was intrigued immediately. This was an opportunity to serve my country in another way other than the military. I went through a 2-hour class to become a certified election judge. I honestly thought that beforehand, this was going to be the most boring training I've gone through. Turns out I was wrong. It was definitely in driver's training. When I got to the training, we were side by side with the veteran, which I thought was pretty cool, because they're serving our country again following the same criteria to become an election judge. And we were all different ages; an experience I will never forget.”

Thanks for your time.



Public Speaker #6

Good afternoon, Panel. My name is William Artis. I'm a veteran and also a construction manager for the YouthBuild of Poughkeepsie. My son just spoke earlier and he's kind of nervous but I'm going to fill it in where he didn't. We have not enough advertisement. There's not enough publicity on AmeriCorps and volunteering. What Mr. Train and Dr. Stoneman was talking about earlier, to me, when I was sitting there listening, I was like, damn. Ms. Stoneman originated her first YouthBuild program across the street from my family meat market. As a young boy, I never knew about that. I never knew about AmeriCorps service. I heard about Peace Corps and stuff like that growing up, and I always wanted to volunteer into that, but never did. I came to say that with more advertisement, more knowledge of AmeriCorps and incorporating that into the public-school system as a curriculum or part of a requirement, we all can serve our country in one way or another. Do you know what I'm saying? It sounds really good and easy, a simple way to incorporate AmeriCorps or giving back to our country, volunteering into our program, our schooling program, where people all can help out each other in some form or fashion.

A lot of people, like I heard in another testimony, someone said something about a lot of people take more than they give. In our community, in the YouthBuild, we give more than we could ever take. And I think a lot of funding that was cut this year, a lot of programs didn't get funding, and it's a doggone shame. Because our program, for instance, I've been with our program for 9 years. I could be making much more money doing anything else, but my heart is to giving back, like Ms. Stoneman's. And I'm sure there are a lot more people in this country that feel like that, as we do. I know for another fact that if the programs were given the funding to continue to operate, you'd have a much better country. We all would. And I think we all know that. And thank you for your time.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you.



[Persons in the room clapped.]

Public Speaker #7

Hi, my name is Ellie Crocket, and I just want to first say I work for a Robin Hood based social enterprise that brings low income and diverse adults become software engineers. So, if you're looking for people to make your website cool and your mobile apps cool, I've got some people.

So, I want to start with that, but I'm actually here to testify on behalf of my dad, Doug Crocket. He lives in Tuscan, Arizona, and yesterday was his 73rd birthday. And he asked for this to be his birthday present. So, these are his words.

"I am a U.S. Army veteran, a retired energy manager with over 30 years of public service in nonprofits, cooperatives, schools, and local government, and a recently returned Peace Corps response volunteer. I was inspired by this Commission, and I want to support an infrastructure that can both serve and rebuild America. I appreciated reading your interim report, and I've already recorded general comments online.

Today, I want to add comment about your staff memorandum on creating an expectation of service. I believe that a mandatory service registration system for both men and women is a more effective policy option and easier to implement than the proposed voluntary service registration system. Although I was accepted into the Peace Corps in 1969, I was still drafted during the Vietnam War. I value that military experience, and I believe there are better ways to encourage service. Given the wide range of critical challenges currently facing our country, we need a public policy solution that encourages, supports, and mobilizes Americans to contribute at least 2 years of military, national, or public service.

In regard to issues to consider, service has definitely provided a value and purpose for my career. I believe that a 2-year service commitment is the key to help all young Americans begin their lives as productive U.S. citizens and to help rebuild our country in the process. Changing



the selective service system to include women and the legal registrations requirement and giving both men and women a choice in how to serve will create much more participation.”

So happy birthday, Dad.

[Persons in the room clapped.]

Public Speaker #8

Good afternoon. Thank you for hosting this hearing. I’m the director of community impact at United Way in the Dutchess-Orange Region. Service has made both a profound impact on my personal and professional life. I have had the privilege to serve as an AmeriCorps VISTA for 2 years, working to empower students at Poughkeepsie High School to graduate and pursue careers. I’ve been at United Way for 6 years. I was able to bring the AmeriCorps Program to our organization. To date, we have hosted seven, dedicated, passionate, and amazing AmeriCorps members, who have built the capacity of our organization and community at large. They established anti-poverty, veteran, and economic mobility program in Dutchess and Orange counties.

AmeriCorps served as an inroad for that. Many have all gone on, like myself, to pursue a career in public and nonprofit service. I think this serves as a prime example of how AmeriCorps service has made a long-term impact in our community and does so for communities all across the nation. I am a strong believer in AmeriCorps service and hope to see its expansion. AmeriCorps builds communities and empowers people to make their world a better place, and like Dr. Stoneman said, definitely more coming. Thank you.

[Persons in the room clapped.]



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you and, ma'am, can I just have you say your name for the record please?

Public Speaker #9

Oh, I'm so sorry. Melissa Clark, United Way.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you.

I'll now call up 103, 104, and 96. Please introduce yourself and then proceed to comment.

Public Speaker #10

My name is Jamiel Alexander. I'm going to be here. I am class of 2002, YouthBuild. So good to see you all. Long story short, I work for Exodus, two forms for Community Solutions and a river of opportunity involving years of service. So, with that being said, long story short, broken home, poverty, whatever they say, it's been done. Domestic violence, shooting violence, it is what it is. Thank God I'm here, but on the flipside, I'm here to kind of share my heart in a way where the young people talk about the fact that in front of them there is nothing. I'm one of those young persons that actually got laid off because there wasn't funding. Long story short, 2013, went back and got my degree. It is what it is. I started doing some work with consulting.

Wanted to come to the Department of Labor, the Department of Justice, or serving my community in a way where I still serve on the board at my old organization. And no hard feelings. I was challenged even more. And with your funding, I was the youngest to have a degree. So, with that being said, we continued to serve, and then what happened was we started realizing, and I want to kind of share to some of these big ideas that the panel said, right?



They're talking about an organization's challenge and organizations. We challenge the organizations, the young people themselves; City Year, Core Network, Public Allies, YouthBuild, we all came together and created the National Council of Young Leaders, Opportunity Youth United, and even the young lady that spoke this morning. We became that force of young people. Not even as young anymore, but we're still here. That was 2002, this is 17 years later, part of Lighthouse or Community Solutions. And then they say they inspire you, but then as far as K-12. When it comes to K-12, we volunteer within our school; peer-to-peer support, but at the same time, we don't want the young people coming behind us going what we went through when it comes to this one must be pushed out, disproportionately.

So, go big. We have to go big. I'm getting old. And I respect my elders here, but at the same time, we young people have to be more equipped and more advanced than what we are when our younger generation departs. It's supposed to go beyond our flag, but now it's because of the two more things, civic education. We actually came up with the white people as far. How will we engage our people; our black and brown people who do not care about what's going on. Let's just be real. Because what happened is there's a level of mistrust, because I've been a part of every pilot program. Franklin, Ambassador, South, and General McChrystal; I did 2 weeks in D.C. He had us running. Talking about the team of teams. If you want to know General McChrystal, he's a thorough -- I respect him, but at the same time, we have to do more schools than places, when it comes to the relationship, when it comes to military, national service.

Long story short, and I'm going to end on this, because I had no champion at home. Congressman Perry, when it's all said and done, him and Congressman Lewis, they fight for me. They fight for us, because of their personal relationship that we had on a grassroots level that led the state to approving an appropriation bill, because what we do locally and our relationship. He had me and my wife driving a tractor, and this is not because he's a conservative, it's because he's a human. And we go serve our country and our city. Thank you so much.

[People in the room clapped.]



The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Please introduce yourself and then proceed with your comment.

Public Speaker #11

Good afternoon. My name is Meg Roth, and I am 14 years old. My mom and dad both serve in the U.S. Navy, and my mom heard of this Commission. That's help me learn more about civic responsibility. I think this is especially important during times of war. We can serve in times of peace by voting or actually working for the government or marching if we want change. But during war, we need sailors, pilots, soldiers, nurses, engineers, and many more people. During times of war, it's both men and women's duty to serve, and that's why I think that if the government really needed to issue a draft as a last resort, it's both men and women's responsibility to register for it.

If qualified women aren't allowed to register for the draft, then it's unfair, first of all. And it's also not completely fulfilling its purpose. The draft is supposed to be like a random lottery, and it's unfair to the men right now that can be drafted. It's also unfair to women who are willing to serve. The main purpose of the draft is to supply the military with more soldiers if needed, but if we need more soldiers why is only part of the population asked to register? If eligible women were required to register, they could contribute their personal skills and talents to the war effort, as well as the men. And they can work together.

Women in uniform who serve currently, and those who have served as nurses, submariners, and fighter pilots in the war have already proven that they're strong, smart, and capable of serving our country. Hopefully there won't be a need to use the draft in the future, but we never really know. If there is a draft, it needs to be as effective as possible, so the civilians know that they can make a difference to improve their country. That they're not just being drafted for a lost cause. We need to take action in order to do this. We need to require eligible



women and men to register for the draft, so that the country and the people can live in a safer world. Thank you for your time.

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

Thank you.

[Persons in the room clapped.]

The Honorable Dr. Joseph Heck

That was the last public comment that we had. So, I again want to thank our panelists for providing their testimony today, all those in the audience who took the time to attend today's proceedings, and the management and staff here at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Presidential Library for their hospitality. It's only with your help and your input that the Commission will achieve its vision of every American inspired and eager to serve.

There being no further business before the Commission, this hearing is adjourned.

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