



## 2017 Report to Yearly Meetings

Since the early days of the Religious Society of Friends, God's spirit has led Friends to take action in the world. As Friends, our faith and experience convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. FCNL has been bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation's capital for nearly 75 years.

The 2016 election manifested the deep political and social divisions in our country, revealing stark differences in voters' hopes for the future. Amidst these seismic political shifts, FCNL's grounding as a Quaker lobby and our presence on Capitol Hill as a nonpartisan voice for peace and justice are needed now more than ever. Friends remain the bedrock of FCNL's strong network, standing together in a nearly 370-year-old faith-based movement living its faith through action.

### Spirit-led Action

At FCNL's Annual Meeting in November, which convened just two days after the election, we gathered to worship, lobby and conduct the organization's business. FCNL's General Committee approved legislative priorities to guide our community's advocacy in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. These legislative priorities, available online at [fcnl.org/priorities](http://fcnl.org/priorities), were the result of widening circles of discernment that included input from hundreds of Quaker meetings and churches across the country, discernment by FCNL's Policy Committee, and consideration by the General Committee. We also renewed our commitment *as a community* to use the persistent, powerful, and prophetic voice that sustains our work.



Diane Randall, Executive Secretary  
Annual Meeting, November 2016.

There is no question that the divisions in the American electorate — so evident in the presidential campaign — make our lobbying tougher than ever, and we are under no illusions about the challenges ahead. The threats are real. But our relationships on Capitol Hill with both Republicans and Democrats, and the relationships that the FCNL network have established, will take on new significance. Those voices will become even more critical in the months ahead. We encourage all Friends to join us in advocacy. Find out how: [fcnl.org/advocacy](http://fcnl.org/advocacy).

In the weeks and months ahead, we will continue to be truth-tellers in the halls of power. We will uphold and move forward the priorities that our governing General Committee set for us when they met in November. We will recognize and affirm the many ways that people may be called to act for change — while remaining focused on our mission to work within our democratic system to influence national legislation.

## The World We Seek: Now Is the Time Capital Campaign

As FCNL nears 75 years of faithful witness, we are building a sustainable future through a five-year, \$15 million capital campaign that is strengthening the foundation of FCNL's lobbying and educational programs. The success of the campaign, however, rests in far more than meeting a specific financial goal. The most important impact of the campaign is the degree to which it is empowering FCNL to fulfill its mission and engage as many people as possible in our work. By the time the campaign ends on June 30, 2017, FCNL will have hosted 35 campaign events in 23 states and the District of Columbia. We have been fortunate to have a broad base of support in this campaign from our national community of supporters — individuals, meetings, and churches — who are helping to ensure the future of Quaker advocacy.

## Love Thy Neighbor (No Exceptions)

As our country struggles with deep divisions, it becomes even more urgent to highlight the value we place in one another. We invite Friends to help shift the narrative and spread a message of love by joining the #LoveThyNeighbor campaign: [fcnl.org/lovethyneighbor](http://fcnl.org/lovethyneighbor).

We are grateful to the 25 Yearly Meetings that have appointed members to serve on FCNL's General Committee. Thank you for sharing the nurturing gifts of these wise and committed Friends. With their guidance, we seek to remain open to where God's spirit leads us. Please hold us in the Light this year as we continue to work for the world we seek.



Eric Ginsburg  
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
Clerk, FCNL General Committee  
March 2017

## FCNL's Executive Committee and Education Fund Board

Eric Ginsburg, Clerk, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)  
Bridget Moix, Assistant Clerk, Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
David A. Bantz, Recording Clerk, Alaska Friends Conference  
Karen Treber, FCNL Treasurer, Baltimore Yearly Meeting  
Becky Steele, Education Fund Treasurer, New England Yearly Meeting  
Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, New England Yearly Meeting  
Mary Lou Hatcher, At-large member FCNL, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Mark Kharas, At-large member Education Fund, New England Yearly Meeting  
Constance Brookes, Finance Committee Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Scott Duncan, Development Committee Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Megan Fair, Field Committee Clerk, Wilmington Yearly Meeting  
Pam Ferguson, Annual Meeting Planning Committee Clerk, Winchester Friends Church (IN)  
Beth Henricks, Capital Campaign Committee Clerk, Western Yearly Meeting  
A.T. Miller, Personnel Committee Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting  
Karen Putney, Nominating Committee Clerk, Southeastern Yearly Meeting  
Kelly Schoolmeester, Policy Committee Clerk, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting

# Our Impact - March 2017

Many U.S. programs and policies that advance peace and justice are under threat today. FCNL leads work to protect the gains of the past decades, mitigate the most damaging proposals under consideration, and promote civil dialogue across political differences.

## Strengthening and Growing our Advocacy Community

Thousands of new advocates are turning to FCNL for action and skills. We're using our decades of experience in relationship-focused advocacy to train and empower people looking to influence and change U.S. policies. This work is bringing concerns for peace and justice to an increasing number of congressional offices. Our Advocacy Teams are thriving in more than 40 communities across the country, and we continue to launch new groups to build durable connections with members of Congress and persuade them to support key legislation. Last year, the number of FCNL community members lobbying in person grew by 50 percent. In combination with our Washington, DC lobby days and online resources and trainings to help people be effective advocates, we expect to exceed this growth in 2017.

## Immigration: Welcoming the Stranger

As the Trump administration emphasizes enforcement and militarized borders, FCNL is building bipartisan support in Congress for compassionate immigration policies. FCNL staff chair the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, leading lobbying among the faith community to ensure offices hear these voices strongly. We are working closely with Republican and Democratic senators, including Senators Lindsay Graham (SC) and Richard Durbin (IL), to advance the bipartisan BRIDGE Act to protect young immigrants. The 18 young adults in our Advocacy Corps are organizing in their respective communities and building the groundwork necessary to effect real and lasting policy change. In addition to bringing more than 180 people in to lobby in their local congressional offices, members of the Advocacy Corps are working to shape the media discourse, cultivating a local network of constituent advocates, and developing issue expertise to lend additional credibility to their advocacy moving forward.

## Peacebuilding: Promoting U.S. Leadership for Peace

The Trump administration's aggressive foreign policy stances and efforts to increase military spending threaten decades-long efforts on forward-looking prevention of deadly violence. FCNL is working to counteract this trend, and we're partnering with lawmakers like Senator Ben Cardin (MD) to advance peacebuilding initiatives. Administration and congressional decision-makers are reading the report of the bipartisan Experts Committee on Preventing Mass Violence, which we convened last year. The report recommends concrete steps to continue and expand U.S. leadership on preventing mass atrocities. Meanwhile, Republican and Democratic senators are working with us to ask hard questions of the administration and introduce legislation to support U.S. genocide and atrocities prevention efforts.

## Religious Freedom: Opposing a Muslim Ban

While President Trump's January executive order effectively banning travel from seven Muslim-majority countries has brought public attention to religious freedom issues, FCNL has been working steadily for nearly two years to raise concerns in Congress about this type of discrimination. We worked closely with Representative Don Beyer (VA) in 2016 and this year to introduce legislation prohibiting the U.S. from denying admission based on religious beliefs. Our professional lobbyists and a coalition of more than 100 organizations are building strong relationships and cultivating congressional leaders in efforts to make religious discrimination untenable as a policy of the U.S. government.

## Economic Justice: Meeting Human Needs

Congressional decisions in 2017 could lay the groundwork to transform the government's role in ensuring access to basic necessities for everyone in the U.S. Our lobbying is focused on stopping the policy changes that are steps along this path. As an organization and through our leadership in faith coalitions, we are part of a national mobilization to emphasize the detrimental effects of repealing the Affordable Care Act without a comparable replacement. At the moment that health care and funding for programs such as Medicaid and SNAP (food stamps) will be before Congress, our Spring Lobby Weekend is bringing more than 400 college students in March 2017 to Washington to lobby on these issues.

## Pentagon Spending: Opposing Massive Increases

The Pentagon already consumes nearly \$600 billion in government spending, a sum that is equal to what the next seven countries combined spend on their military forces. Now, President Trump is asking Congress for one of the largest increases in Pentagon spending in our country's history. In Washington, FCNL lobbyists are leaders in focusing attention on Pentagon spending in congressional offices, working directly with staff and through key coalitions. Our Advocacy Teams across the country are meeting with members of Congress to raise the moral choices that we are making as a nation when we increase Pentagon spending at the expense of programs that keep people from falling into poverty and promote peace and diplomacy around the world.

## Climate Change: Creating Space for Common Ground

Our moral call for action on climate change has opened a political space in Washington for lawmakers to acknowledge the danger of inaction and discuss positive solutions. In the 114th session of Congress, 17 Republicans cosponsored a resolution that FCNL developed with former Representative Chris Gibson (NY) calling on Congress to act on climate change. We are building support for similar legislation in 2017. Senators and representatives are increasingly interested in joining the bipartisan Climate Solutions Caucus, which brings members together across party lines to discuss ways to move forward on this issue.