

April 2007

Corporation for National and Community Service

Answers to Frequently-asked Questions about Reauthorization

**Is reauthorization necessary?**

The authorization for appropriations under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 and the National and Community Service Act of 1990 expired in 1997. Fortunately, Congress has extended authority for national service programs through annual appropriations statutes. Congress may continue this practice even if the authorizing statutes themselves are not updated.

**Does the Corporation support reauthorization?**

The Corporation generally prefers that Congress meet its authorization obligations. The Corporation would support reauthorization within the context of the principles.

**Is the Administration proposing a specific bill?**

Rather than proposing a specific bill, the Administration has developed a set of principles to inform deliberations on a reauthorization bill. Those principles are (1) Mobilize citizen volunteers to meet the most pressing challenges of our communities; (2) Make Federal funds more responsive to state and local needs; (3) Provide flexibility to leverage Federal resources, make federal support more accountable and cost-effective, and increase the effectiveness of the Corporation and its programs; and (4) Meet the immediate and long-term needs of communities facing a large-scale disaster.

**What is the purpose of the Principles document?**

The Principles articulate the Administration's general priorities as we enter into discussions about reauthorization. They are intended to assist our authorizing committees as they develop legislation.

**Is the 2002 House-committee passed bill the starting point for this year's reauthorization process?**

H.R. 4854 passed the House Committee on Education and the Workforce in 2002 on a bi-partisan basis and includes provisions that will likely be the subject of discussion this year. But there have been several other bills introduced since 2002 that will also likely be reviewed during this year's process. In any event, we are hopeful that both Houses and both political parties will find common ground on improvements to the national service legislation.

### **Why are the Administration's Principles different from those issued in 2002?**

The 2007 Principles are informed by several important developments, including completion of AmeriCorps rulemaking in 2005, approval of the Corporation's five-year strategic plan in 2006, and government-wide budgetary constraints. The 2007 Principles are intended to provide a basis to engage with the Congress on reauthorization rather than a comprehensive, detailed roadmap.

### **Why do this year's Principles not include specific proposals previously supported by the Administration, such as making the education award tax-free and expanding age and income eligibility for the stipended Senior Corps programs?**

The Principles are designed to provide a general framework for strengthening all of the national and community service programs; however, they are not intended to be a comprehensive list of particular items that we might support or oppose.

### **What are the next steps in the legislative process?**

We expect that each House of Congress will be developing legislative proposals. In the House of Representatives, the Committee on Education and Labor chaired by George Miller and the House Subcommittee on Healthy Families and Communities chaired by Carolyn McCarthy have jurisdiction. In the Senate, the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions chaired by Edward Kennedy has jurisdiction.

### **What is the Corporation's role in the process?**

We plan to work with our authorizing committees throughout the legislative process, providing technical assistance, advocating for proposals in line with the Principles, and otherwise engaging in a collaborative process.