

TITLE IV
RELATED AGENCIES

COMMITTEE FOR PURCHASE FROM PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND OR
SEVERELY DISABLED

Appropriations, 2007	\$4,652,000
Budget estimate, 2008	4,994,000
Committee recommendation	4,994,000

The Committee recommends \$4,994,000 for fiscal year 2008 for the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled.

The Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled was established by the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act of 1938 as amended. Its primary objective is to increase the employment opportunities for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities and, whenever possible, to prepare them to engage in competitive employment.

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Appropriations, 2007	\$884,547,000
Budget estimate, 2008	828,680,000
Committee recommendation	880,909,000

The Committee recommends \$880,909,000 for the Corporation for National and Community Service in fiscal year 2008.

The Corporation for National and Community Service, a Corporation owned by the Federal Government, was established by the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-982) to enhance opportunities for national and community service and provide national service education awards. The Corporation makes grants to States, institutions of higher education, public and private nonprofit organizations, and others to create service opportunities for students, out-of-school youth, and adults.

DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROGRAMS

The Committee recommends \$313,054,000 for fiscal year 2008 for the domestic volunteer service programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The comparable level for fiscal year 2007 is \$316,554,000 and \$294,226,000 is the administration request for fiscal year 2008. Programs authorized under the Domestic Volunteer Service Act include: the Volunteers in Service to America Program [VISTA]; the Foster Grandparent Program; the Senior Companion Program; and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

VISTA

The Committee recommends \$95,468,000 for the Volunteers in Service to America [VISTA] Program. This amount is equal to the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2007. The budget request for fiscal year 2008 is \$89,734,000.

VISTA, created in 1964 under the Economic Opportunity Act, provides capacity building for small community-based organizations. VISTA volunteers raise resources for local projects, recruit and organize volunteers, and establish and expand local community-based programs in housing, employment, health, and economic development activities.

National Senior Volunteer Corps

The Committee recommends \$217,586,000 for the National Senior Volunteer Corps programs, compared to \$217,586,000 in fiscal year 2007 and \$204,492,000 in the fiscal year 2008 budget request.

In accordance with the Domestic Volunteer Service Act [DVSA], the Committee intends that at least one-third of each program's increase over the fiscal year 2007 level shall be used to fund Programs of National Significance [PNS] expansion grants to allow existing FGP, RSVP, and SCP programs to expand the number of volunteers serving in areas of critical need as identified by Congress in the DVSA. All remaining funds shall be used to fund an administrative cost increase for each existing program nationwide. The amount to be allocated to individual grantees shall be calculated based on a percentage of the entire Federal grant award in fiscal year 2007, including the amount specified for payment of non-taxable stipends. The Committee directs that the Corporation shall comply with the directive that use of PNS funding increases in the FGP, RSVP, SCP, and VISTA shall not be restricted to any particular activity. The Committee further directs that the Corporation shall not stipulate a minimum or maximum for PNS grant augmentation.

The maximum total dollars which may be used in fiscal year 2008 for Grants.gov/eGrants support, Training and Technical Assistance, and Recruitment and Retention activities shall not exceed the amount enacted for these activities in fiscal year 2007.

Further, funds appropriated for fiscal year 2008 may not be used to implement or support service collaboration agreements or any other changes in the administration and/or governance of national service programs prior to passage of a bill by the authorizing committee of jurisdiction specifying such changes.

The CNCS shall comply with the directive that use of funds appropriated for FGP, RSVP, SCP, and VISTA shall not be used to fund demonstration activities. The Committee has not included funding for senior demonstration activities.

Foster Grandparent Program

The Committee recommends \$110,937,000 for fiscal year 2008 for the Foster Grandparent Program, which is equal to the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2007. The budget request for fiscal year 2008 was \$97,550,000. This program provides volunteer opportunities to low-income seniors age 60 and over who serve at-risk youth.

This program not only involves seniors in their communities, but also provides a host of services to children.

Senior Companion Program

The Committee recommends \$46,964,000 for fiscal year 2008 for the Senior Companion Program. This amount is the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2007. The budget request for fiscal year 2008 was \$41,299,000.

This program enables senior citizens to provide personal assistance and companionship to adults with physical, mental, or emotional difficulties. Senior companions provide vital in-home services to elderly Americans who would otherwise have to enter nursing homes. The volunteers also provide respite care to relieve care givers.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

The Committee recommends \$59,685,000 for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. The comparable level for fiscal year 2007 is \$59,685,000 and the administration request for fiscal year 2008 is 65,643,000.

This program involves persons age 55 and over in volunteer opportunities in their communities such as tutoring youth, responding to natural disasters, teaching parenting skills to teen parents, and mentoring troubled youth. Funding was not included for a baby boomer initiative that would compete and be administered separately from the current program.

NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMS

(INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

The Committee recommends \$491,435,000 for the programs authorized under the National Community Service Act of 1990. The comparable level for fiscal year 2007 is \$494,066,000 and the administration request for fiscal year 2008 is \$459,422,000.

The National and Community Service Programs of the Corporation for National and Community Service include: the AmeriCorps program (including AmeriCorps State and National and the National Civilian Community Corps); Learn and Serve America, Innovation, Demonstration, Assistance and Evaluation activities; State Commission Administration grants; and the National Service Trust.

The Committee recommendation includes \$288,291,000 for AmeriCorps State and National operating grants (including \$12,516,000 for State administrative expenses); \$117,720,000 for the National Service Trust; \$10,550,000 for subtitle H fund activities; \$31,789,000 for AmeriCorps NCCC; \$39,125,000 for Learn and Serve; and \$3,960,000 for audits and evaluations.

The Committee has deleted long-standing statutory language urging the Corporation to reduce the cost-per-member of service. The Committee appreciates the Corporation's attempt to drive down costs, however, the Committee believes that there is much merit to the variety of volunteer opportunities that the Corporation offers. In particular, the Committee strongly supports full-time and residential service models which cost the Government more per

unit but also provide a strong branding effort for Americorps. Part-time service and education award-only models are an important component of AmeriCorps but should not become the sole means of service.

In addition, the Committee was disappointed to note inconsistencies in the calculation of cost-per-member in the Corporation's 2008 budget justification with respect to the education award. Those inconsistencies unfairly disadvantaged residential service programs and were used to justify cuts to the National Civilian Community Corps. The Committee expects future calculations of cost-per-member to treat the education award equally across all programs.

AmeriCorps Grants Program (not including NCCC)

Within the amount provided for AmeriCorps grants, the Committee is providing \$65,000,000 for national direct grantees.

The Committee is concerned that national direct funding is awarded in a way that disadvantages rural areas of this country. The Committee urges the Corporation to put a priority on national direct applications that serve rural areas and report to the Committee within 30 days after the end of the fiscal year on the proportion of awards given to rural and urban serving areas.

The Committee requests that the Corporation provide annual reports to the Committee on Appropriations and the Corporation's Inspector General on the actual and projected year-end level of AmeriCorps membership enrollment, usage, and earnings, and the financial status of the Trust fund (revenue, expenses, outstanding liabilities, reserve, etc.).

The Committee recognizes that, even with recent improvements, a small lapse is to be expected in AmeriCorps grants due to member turnover. Therefore, the Committee has included bill language allowing the Corporation to transfer any funds deobligated from closed out AmeriCorps grants to the National Service Trust, offsetting the need for new budget authority in that account in the future. The Committee expects the Corporation to track re-fill rates and include that information in the annual budget justification.

The Committee requests a report from AmeriCorps that provides candidate selection and non-selection statistics for each of their three programs (AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps VISTA and AmeriCorps NCCC) based on the following demographics: ethnicity, gender and educational preparation.

Innovation, Assistance and Other Activities

Within the amount recommended for innovation, demonstration, and assistance activities, the Committee recommendation includes no funding for Presidentially requested earmarks such as Points of Light Foundation or America's Promise. The Committee has increased the cap on the national direct competition funding to encourage these and other previously earmarked entities to compete for the funding.

The Committee has not provided any funding in this account for Teach for America; these funds were requested by the administration within the Department of Education.

The Committee expects a spending plan for innovation activities 60 days after enactment of this act.

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps

The Committee is deeply disappointed that the Corporation has moved forward with a consolidation of the National Civilian Community Corps [NCCC] despite clear guidance to the contrary from this Committee in the last 3 years of appropriations bills and reports. The Committee has included funding and statutory direction to restore the two centers closed by the Corporation in sites identified and evaluated by the Corporation in its geographic assessment in 2005 and its more specific site evaluation in October 2006. The Committee expects a class to be operating out of each facility by the end of fiscal year 2008.

SALARIES AND EXPENSES

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$69,520,000 for the Corporation's salaries and expenses. The comparable level for fiscal year 2007 was \$68,964,000 and the administration request for fiscal year 2008 was \$69,520,000. The Committee reiterates the directive under the program account that the Corporation must fund all staffing needs from the salaries and expenses account.

The salaries and expenses appropriation provides funds for staff salaries, benefits, travel, training, rent, advisory and assistance services, communications and utilities expenses, supplies, equipment, and other operating expenses necessary for management of the Corporation's activities under the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

The Committee recommends an appropriation of \$6,900,000 for the Office of Inspector General [OIG]. The comparable level for fiscal year 2007 was \$4,963,000 and the administration request for fiscal year 2008 was \$5,512,000.

The goals of the Office of Inspector General are to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness and to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse. The Office of Inspector General within the Corporation for National and Community Service was transferred to the Corporation from the former ACTION agency when ACTION was abolished and merged into the Corporation in April 1994.

The Committee continues to direct the OIG to review the Corporation's management of the National Service Trust fund. The Committee directs the OIG to continue reviewing the annual Trust reports and to notify the Committees on Appropriations on the accuracy of the reports.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

The Committee has included five administrative provisions carried in prior year appropriations acts as follows: language regarding qualified student loans eligible for education awards; the availability of funds for the placement of volunteers with disabilities; the Inspector General to levy sanctions in accordance with stand-

ard Inspector General audit resolutions procedures; language regarding the Corporation to make significant changes to program requirements or policy through public rulemaking and public notice and grant selection process; and language limiting the Corporation's authority to transfer funds between programs.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Appropriations, 2008	\$400,000,000
Appropriations, 2009	400,000,000
Budget estimate, 2010	
Committee recommendation	420,000,000

The Committee recommends \$420,000,000 be made available for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting [CPB], as an advance appropriation for fiscal year 2010. The comparable funding level provided last year was \$400,000,000 for fiscal year 2009. The budget request does not include advance funds for this program.

In addition, the Committee recommends \$29,700,000 be made available in fiscal year 2008 for the conversion to digital broadcasting, the same as the comparable funding level for fiscal year 2007. The budget request included authority to permit CPB to spend up to \$30,600,000 in previously appropriated fiscal year 2008 funds for digital conversion activities.

The Committee has strongly supported the conversion of public broadcasting stations to digital formats and continues to do so in this act. However, the Committee recognizes that this conversion to digital transmission leaves a great number of stations with limited programming and makes a substantial proportion of the public broadcasting library unusable. The Committee believes that this archive of material is a valuable asset to the public and to historians. Therefore, the Committee intends that CPB may spend a portion of the digital conversion funds to develop a digital public broadcasting archive pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 396(g)(2)(D). The Committee directs CPB to notify the Committee of the proposed level of funding for this activity before making any funds available.

In addition, the Committee recommends \$26,750,000 be made available in fiscal year 2008 for the initial stage in the replacement project of the radio interconnection system. In fiscal year 2007, \$34,650,000 was appropriated for this purpose. The budget request for fiscal year 2008 included authority to permit CPB to spend up to \$26,750,000 in previously appropriated fiscal year 2008 funds for the radio interconnection system.

FEDERAL MEDIATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

Appropriations, 2007	\$42,849,000
Budget estimate, 2008	43,800,000
Committee recommendation	44,450,000

The Committee recommends \$44,450,000 for fiscal year 2008 for the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service [FMCS]. The comparable funding level for fiscal year 2007 was \$42,849,000 and the budget request for fiscal year 2008 includes \$43,800,000 for this program.

The FMCS was established by Congress in 1947 to provide mediation, conciliation, and arbitration services to labor and manage-