



Friends Committee on National Legislation

A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest

2016 Report to Yearly Meetings

As Friends, our faith and experience convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. Above all, we seek to remain open to where God leads us. The Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) has carried on this witness of the Spirit through action on Capitol Hill for nearly 75 years.

FCNL is strengthening our civil dialogue and lobbying by our community. We are investing in programs to expand our work with young adults and local lobby leadership. We are seeing results such as the introduction of bipartisan proposals to address climate change (H. Res 424) and build peace through the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act (S.2551). Our expanded programs to train and support Friends and others building relationships with their members of Congress have helped grow the power of our Quaker lobbying community. This broadening and deepening of our outreach is made possible by our capital campaign, “The World We Seek: Now Is the Time.”

FCNL brings the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation's capital. We are governed by a General Committee of 178 Quakers, representing 25 Yearly Meetings and four Quaker organizations. We are sustained by the advocacy, prayers, and financial support of tens of thousands of Friends and like-minded people across the country, in every state and nearly every congressional district. Thank you for your support and leadership.



Students from Moses Brown School lobby Senator Jack Reed (RI) for the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act.

Living our Faith through Action

FCNL's 17 registered lobbyists meet on Capitol Hill with lawmakers and their staff, and we work as partners with citizen advocates across the country. In 2015, 1,314 Friends and supporters of FCNL made more than 593 personal visits to congressional offices, in Washington and in local districts, on FCNL priority issues. Our network also sent 120,516 issue-related messages to Congress and had 101 letters to the editor published that support our advocacy priorities.

In November, we welcomed more than 400 Quakers and other friends in the FCNL network to Washington for our annual Quaker Public Policy Institute, focused on the importance of the Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act. Delegations from 38 states lobbied more than 200 congressional offices over the course of two days. As a direct result of FCNL constituent lobbying, three key members of Congress joined as co-sponsors and this legislation (S.2551) was introduced to the Senate on February 12, 2016.

The World We Seek: Now is the Time Capital Campaign

FCNL is building a sustainable future through our capital campaign, which will strengthen the foundation for FCNL's lobbying and programs. FCNL and the FCNL Education Fund are undertaking an effort to build the capacity of our programs and our financial health by raising \$15 million to secure future advocacy. The capital campaign is supporting the next generation of advocates, creating a Quaker Welcome Center on Capitol Hill, re-vitalizing the Friend in Washington Program, and expanding FCNL's lobbying and grassroots network.

Thank you

Thanks to the General Committee, appointed by Yearly Meetings, and our close network of Friends and supporters, FCNL continues to make progress in Washington.

Our faith and experience convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. Above all, we seek to remain open to where God's spirit leads us. We greatly appreciate and acknowledge the significant impact of the financial support and activism of individuals and Quaker meetings, churches and yearly meetings. Please keep us in your prayers.



Eric Ginsburg
North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Clerk, FCNL General Committee
March 2016

FCNL's Executive Committee and Education Fund Board

Eric Ginsburg, Clerk, North Carolina Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
DeAnne Butterfield, Assistant Clerk, Intermountain Yearly Meeting
David A. Bantz, Recording Clerk, Alaska Friends Conference
Constance Brookes, FCNL Treasurer, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Becky Steele, Ed Fund Treasurer, New England Yearly Meeting
A. T. Miller, Personnel Clerk, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Diane Randall, Executive Secretary, New England Yearly Meeting
Scott Duncan, Clerk of the Development Committee, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Deborah Fink, Clerk of the Field Committee, Iowa Yearly Meeting (Conservative)
Mary Lou Hatcher, At-large member, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
Mark Kharas, At-large member Ed Fund, New England Yearly Meeting
Beth Henricks, Clerk of the Capital Campaign Committee, Western Yearly Meeting
Karen Putney, Clerk of the Nominating Committee, Southeastern Yearly Meeting
Kelly Schoolmeester, Clerk of the Policy Committee, Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting
David Snyder, Clerk of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
John Wilkin, Clerk of the Finance Committee, Northwest Yearly Meeting

What We Achieve Together:

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war

We seek a society with equity and justice for all

We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled

We seek an earth restored

Iran: Diplomacy Works

FCNL was a leader in mobilizing congressional support for the diplomatic agreement with Iran, which is keeping Iran from developing nuclear weapons and preventing war. Our lobbying intensified as Congress prepared to vote on the agreement. We helped organize faith parties in Washington, D.C. to lobby for the Iran deal. Our powerful combination of Hill lobbying, grassroots advocacy, organization of other faith groups, letters to the editor in all 50 states, and media outreach helped achieve results: 42 senators supported the deal, enough to block the vote. *Congressional Quarterly* called FCNL's Kate Gould "the Quaker lobbyist behind the Iran deal fight," joining the *Wall Street Journal*, *CNN*, and *U.S. News and World Report* in recognizing FCNL's pro-diplomacy leadership. fcnl.org/iran

Climate Change: A Bipartisan Way Forward

Breaking the partisan gridlock that is blocking action on climate change is a central focus of FCNL's advocacy. Our work has directly led to the introduction of a Republican-sponsored resolution committing members to discuss and address climate change. FCNL worked with Rep. Chris Gibson (NY) and other sponsors to build support for the resolution. Speaking at the Climate Justice Rally on the National Mall in September, FCNL's Jose Aguto called it "a crack in the partisan dam, behind which lies a great river of climate solutions." Our lobbying in Washington is supported and reinforced by the members of FCNL's Advocacy Corps, who are organizing in districts across the country for bipartisan climate action. fcnl.org/climate

Mass Incarceration: Ease Harsh, Discriminatory Sentencing

As a result of harsh sentencing laws, the U.S. is the world's leader in incarceration, with 2.2 million people behind bars. FCNL is building support for federal legislation to reduce mandatory sentencing lengths, give judges more sentencing discretion, and limit solitary confinement. This effort was the focus of our Spring Lobby Weekend in March 2016 that brought a record 400 young adults to Washington, D.C. to lobby for bi-partisan legislation. fcnl.org/incarceration

De-Militarizing U.S. Police Forces

President Obama announced that the federal government will stop giving certain military equipment to local police departments. Even before the highly publicized killings by police in Ferguson, New York and Baltimore focused national attention on U.S. policing, FCNL was laying the groundwork to get military equipment off Main Street. We collaborated closely with Rep. Hank Johnson (GA) on the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act, legislation that includes many of the provisions in the president's executive order. fcnl.org/militarism

Ending Endless War

The 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) has given two presidents a blank check to justify new wars, deadly drone attacks around the world, detentions at Guantanamo Bay and U.S. airstrikes in Iraq and Syria. FCNL lobbyists in Washington and around the country continue to lead efforts to repeal this law and insist that Congress debate and vote on every war. Last year, we convinced more than 200 members of Congress to vote (at different times) for repeal of the AUMF. As Congress considers a new authorization against the Islamic State, we continue to press members to first repeal the existing law, which allows the president to act virtually without limit. fcnl.org/endlesswar

Building Structures for Peace

FCNL has led efforts to persuade the U.S. government to invest in diplomacy, peacebuilding, and other means to prevent wars before they start. U.S. support for peacebuilding efforts in Kenya, the Central African Republic and elsewhere show the power of nonviolent approaches to problem-solving. Yet the U.S. infrastructure to carry out this work is precarious and underfunded. U.S. foreign policy needs to pivot to peace. FCNL is helping to secure funding for peacebuilding and build support for permanent authorization of these programs. fcnl.org/peacebuilding

Cutting the Pentagon and Nuclear Weapons Budgets

While Pentagon spending has declined from its height during the Iraq War, the U.S. government still spends almost as much on the military as it did during the Cold War and Vietnam War. FCNL's current lobbying focuses in two areas: eliminating the loophole that lets the Pentagon avoid spending caps and opposing congressional efforts to fund the Pentagon by cutting domestic spending. We are working to close the loophole that lets the Pentagon avoid spending restrictions and to cut nuclear weapons spending through the SANE Act. This legislation would eliminate \$100 billion in nuclear weapons spending over the next decade. fcnl.org/budget & fcnl.org/nuclear

Building Life-Long Lobbyists

People of all ages work for change with FCNL. Through advocacy events in Washington, D.C. and programs to sustain and support grassroots organizers in their local communities, we are making change together. In 2014 we began a dramatic expansion of our work with young people. We launched the Advocacy Corps to cultivate young adult leadership and to promote grassroots engagement. We visited more than 60 colleges and universities around the country to build diversity and recruit social justice advocates. We're seeing the results in advances on climate action and ending endless wars, and we are well on our way to raising the money to endow these programs through our Capital Campaign. fcnl.org/advocate

There's More!

Check out our website to find out why Americans for Indian Opportunity gave their "Spirit of Indigeneity Award" to FCNL, how our lobbyists organize congressional visits and participate in the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, why our staff are working with a coalition of faith groups on a constitutional amendment to address campaign finance reform, the details on an interfaith initiative to stop lethal drones, and more. fcnl.org/successes