

1 CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL & CONVENTION SERVICES
 2 PUBLIC HEARING
 3 FOR
 4 SERVE AMERICA ACT

5

6 This public hearing was held in connection
 7 with the above captioned matter in the New
 8 Orleans Center for Creative Arts, Loupin Hall,
 9 2800 Chartres Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, on
 10 Thursday, May 28, 2009, commencing at 1:00 p.m.

9

10 BEFORE:
 11 Tiffeny Suire Gallardo
 12 Certified Court Reporter
 In and For the State of
 Louisiana

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A P P E A R A N C E S

FOR THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL & CONVENTION SERVICES:

MS. KRISTIN MCSWAIN
Chief of Program Operations

MS. LORI NUMBAR
Acting Director of AmeriCorps

MS. HEATHER JOHNSON
Assistant General Counsel

MS. RENIQUE STRAUSER
Director of the Office of Public Affairs

ALSO PRESENT:

PAM OLSON
VICKIE SCHENK

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. RENIQUE STRAUSER: I'm Renique Strauser. I'm the Director of the Office of Public Affairs. And on behalf of Nikki Gordonour CEO, our acting CEO, I want to send her regrets for not being here. She was at the Salt Lake City Listening Tour yesterday and because of mechanical problems with planes, she was unable to make it here to New Orleans. So she does send her regrets

13 and it will be looking at the
14 transcript to see what was said and to
15 learn what happened here today.
16 Thanks everybody for coming,
17 especially in the middle of the day.
18 Thank you so much to our New Orleans
19 Center for Creative Arts for hosting
20 us. And also to the staff here on the
21 ground who has made this possible,
22 including our office staff from the
23 corporation, Pam Olsen and Vickie
24 Shank.
25 I just want to recognize a couple

1 of people who may be here today, Marsha
2 Kelly, the former Mississippi
3 Commission ED, Janet Pace, the LA
4 Commission, I'm sorry, the Louisiana
5 Commission ED, and Brook Smith from the
6 Lieutenant Governor's office. Thanks
7 so much for coming and participating.

8 Let me just introduce some people
9 who are on the stage this morning as
10 well. Kristin McSwain, who's the Chief
11 of Program Operations in the
12 Corporation; Lori Numbar, the acting
13 Director from AmeriCorps also from
14 Washington; Heather Johnson, the
15 Assistant General Counsel, who will
16 walk you through that PowerPoint in
17 just a few minutes. And as I said,
18 Vickie Shank from the Corporation's
19 office here in the state.

20 As you know, this is definitely a
21 historic time beginning really a new
22 era of national service. Thanks to a
23 strong and supportive President.
24 Bipartisan congressional majority and

1 the economy that service must be a part
2 of the solution to the great challenges
3 currently facing our nation. Service
4 in Louisiana and all states continues
5 to be very strong. We've had over \$100
6 million, invested over \$100 million in
7 support of national service across the
8 region. Since Hurricane Katrina, we've
9 had over 100,000 national service
10 participants serving more than 5.4
11 million hours and leveraging 400,000
12 volunteers, which is pretty tremendous.

13 And here in Louisiana alone, we had
14 215 national service projects and
15 approximately 9,500 older Americans in
16 Senior Corps and more than 2,000 in
17 AmeriCorps programs.

18 I just want to get a quick sense of
19 who's in the room if you could. Sort
20 of raise your hand as I call the
21 different programs. From the folks
22 from Learn & Service, Senior Corps,
23 AmeriCorps State and National, VISTA,
24 NCCC, State Commissions, Corporations

1 affiliated with any of the programs I
2 called out.

3 So as you know, we're here today to
4 talk about and get your input on the
5 implementation of the Serve America Act
6 as well as our upcoming strategic plan
7 for 2011 to 2015. Heather Johnson, as
8 I said, from our General Counsel's
9 office is going to start this off in
10 just a minute and give a quick overview
11 of the assisted provisions of the Bill
12 and Kristin McSwain will moderate the
13 discussion.

14 Generally speaking, the objectives
15 of the Act of five-fold: Expand
16 opportunities for Americans to serve,
17 break down silos between our current
18 programs, reduce unnecessary burdens
19 for our grantees, demonstrate outcomes
20 and impacts, and see or drive
21 innovation in the non-profit sector.

22 And as many of you may know, the Act
23 doesn't take effect until October 1 of
24 this year, the first day of 2010 fiscal

year. But obviously we need to work

1 hard now to get up and do what we need
2 to do to be ready to implement the Act
3 to hit the ground running next fall,
4 this coming fall.

5 The issues are obviously complex.
6 And they don't all lend themselves to
7 simple conclusions. And everybody is
8 not going to agree on everything. But
9 we do know that everyone here shares a
10 desire to make the most of this
11 fantastic opportunity in national
12 service. And that's why we're really
13 here. To hear your questions and get
14 your ideas. So thanks for taking the
15 time to participate.

16 In order to maintain focus and
17 effectively review the large volume of
18 information we expect both from folks
19 at the listening sessions but also
20 people around the country who are
21 sending comments on our website, we've
22 developed a series of five key issue
23 areas with specific sub-topics. I
24 think you may have gotten them and

distributed them. They're also on our

1 website. But let me quickly run
2 through them: One, is expanding
3 opportunities to serve; two, combining
4 assets to create an impact; three,
5 demonstrating impact; four, spurring
6 innovations in the non-profit sector;
7 and five, achieving growth through
8 simpler grant making.

9 If for some reason we can't get to
10 everyone today, we're also have new web
11 tools as I mentioned. And we'll be
12 back to explain more about it at the
13 end. But now I'm going to turn things
14 over to Heather to get started.

15 (OFF THE RECORD.)

16 (POWERPOINT PRESENTATION AT THIS TIME)

17 (BACK ON THE RECORD.)

18 (LISTENING SESSION)

19 MS. MCSWAIN:

20 This listening session is for you
21 all to tell us how we should do that
22 work. So in terms of ground rules,
23 we're going to do three minutes of
24 comments. When you come up, I will

1 other listening sessions. While we all
2 want to know who we are and what we do
3 and what our programs do, that takes up
4 two minutes of your three minutes. You
5 go "Oh my goodness, my time is up. Can
6 I have more?" "No, you only have three
7 minutes." So think about how long you
8 want to spend introducing yourself.

9 While it's all very important about who
10 you are, what we really want to hear is
11 how should we do this. What are the
12 things that you know that you bring to
13 the table that the Corporation should
14 hear. So keep that in mind.

15 Now, at the end of the table is
16 Vickie. Vickie was two folders. She
17 has a yellow folder. And she has a red
18 folder. When you see the yellow
19 folder, you have 30 seconds left. When
20 you see the red folder, you are done.

21 And I was a middle school teacher.
22 You're really done. So she's going to
23 keep us on track. I'm going to keep us
24 moving. Some of the things you may

give us as comments, we're going to say

1 thank you. Some of them we might have
2 follow-up questions. If there's a
3 factual question that we actually are
4 able to answer, we'll do that. Couple
5 of other things really quickly. Some
6 of you may have cell phones, you might
7 want to turn them off. I'm going to
8 call people down. The first three,
9 when the first two are finished and
10 we're on the third person, I'll call
11 the next three down so we can keep
12 moving along. So we won't lose time.
13 There are two microphones. There's one
14 on that side of the room and one on
15 this side of the room (indicating). If
16 I was a student here, I'd say stage
17 left and stage right. So feel free to
18 come to the microphone that's closest
19 to you. Any questions? All right.
20 Then let's begin our first three people
21 are Betty Ruth, Jennifer Hellburg, and
22 Stephanie Moniky.

MS. BETTY RUTH: I'm representing National Association of RSAP directors. And thank you guys for doing this. What our main concern is the competition of RSAP programs across the country. There's probably 430,000 seniors that are angry. RSAP serves an average \$140.00 a year per volunteer. There is no more cost effective

program in the corporation in RSAP. We're concerned that competition will disrupt the lives of senior volunteers in RSAP. It will disrupt the lives of hundreds of thousands of seniors who insult the loss of dollars in the communities that supports RSAP. And reduce the ability for local non-profits (inaudible) services. NARSAP has had one goal throughout this authorization process. To introduce competition while doing everything we can to protect volunteers, minimize disruption of their volunteer service and provide for open and transparent process that recognizes the need to hear from all the stakeholders to ensure their perspectives are heard. The Bill requires the Corporation have in place the regulations not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of the Serve America Act for October, 2011. We strongly encourage the Corporation to take time in implementing a time line source so that all participants to prepare for the rulemaking process. We expect this public process to involve stakeholders, such as RSAP directors, program directors, volunteers, partner organizations, and beneficiaries of volunteer service. We hope the Corporation will follow the long use in 2005 (inaudible) include regional appearance for all interested parties. It is our understanding that based on the discussion with Hill staff as long as RSAP programs meet their performance measures, that it will not be competing until 2016. That is, in 2013, only those programs that have not met their performance measures will be competing. We strongly disagree with the summary of the Serve America Act published in the Corporation's website of the evaluation process and result in non-renewal of underperforming grantees prior to 2013, except those that the procedures already been in place. The purpose of the evaluation to identify the underperforming programs and provide them the technical assistance. It is not to get a head start in the competition. In 2013, the Corporation has the option to renew the grants of those programs meeting their performance measures for another three years. We expect the corporation exercise that rule as a general rule. Those who evaluate programs and ensure that they have high quality volunteer opportunities and meet community needs not burdened unnecessarily. Thank you. MCSWAIN: I have a couple of follow-up questions. And your written comments remind me that those of you who brought written comments, please leave them at the back table and we'll put them into the Record. BETTY RUTH: I have another paper for you guys. It's not put out all like this. MCSWAIN: In terms of the rulemaking process or the competition, that is our plan. I think what we'll be looking for is what cities would be the best ones to go to and if you think about that in terms of - BETTY RUTH: Make it more accessible and more affordable for project directors to fly or travel to. MCSWAIN: And we're not planning to do the same cities we've done this time. So think about other places.

BETTY RUTH:

But you know that I did not finish. MCSWAIN: Yes, ma'am. Now, here's the other thing. I have only 18 people on this list. So when we're done with these 18 people, there may be things that you heard or questions or comments that are given that make you think of something you would like to say. There are still sign-up sheets in the back. Please fill them out. And she's got two more sheets for me. We've got 32 people. We'll still have time. Please as you think of things you'd like to say, go to the back and fill it out and I'll put your name on the list.

MS. JENNIFER HELLBURG: Hi, my name is Jennifer Hellburg. And I'm here with the Senior Corps Association of the State of Minnesota. Thank you for taking the time to hear our comments here today. We have seen that there are two provisions in particular that the Minnesota Senior Corps Association feel would be detrimental to the future success of the infrastructure of the National Senior Corps. The first one has to do with authorizing the CEO (inaudible) with stakeholders to assign state commissions specific programmatic functions to increase efficiency in operations or oversight of the national service programs. The current infrastructure whereby Corporation's state offices provides Senior Corps programs with oversight and guidance ensures that the President's goals in the Corporation's strategic plan is implemented successfully at the local level. The Corporation's state office has proven time and time again to be a critical component in transforming the Corporation's division into action at the local level. The Corporation's staff both instructs, inspires, as well as supports and regulates the Senior Corps projects in our efforts to meet critical needs with local input. Under the current system, the Corporation's state office oversight projects are well-positioned to support dramatic expansion of the senior service opportunities. Transitioning to either a regional corporation office in lieu of the state office or assigning the Senior Corps program functions to state commissions could readily except this integration of both national vision and action at the local level. State commission oversight

we believe while their direction and guidance gives you grass roots empowerment action actually produces a higher degree of volatilities that forces, includes things such as election results, political aspirations, and also priorities tied to them that have to funding sources. We believe the proposed change puts at risk the benefits that the system currently delivers. Secondly, the Silver Scholar Education Award. The authorization of \$1,000 Silver Scholar Education Awards for individuals who are 55 and older who served 350 hours of service is to these deserving individual will be honored with this award. But continued success of the national Senior Corps is dependent on the deeming Senior Corps members as eligible to receive this award. This Silver Scholar Education Award can be served as a catalyst for increased improvement into the Senior Corps programs expanding on our established expertise as individuals in service and meeting community needs. Additionally, the Silver Scholar Education Award lends itself to being administered by the Senior Corps programs under the direction of the Corporation's state offices.

MS. MCSWAIN:

18 As Stephanie comes up to speak, I

19 want to invite Chris Gorman, Janet

20 Pace, and Cole McMann.

21 MS. STEPHANIE MONIKY: Thank you very much. I'm Stephanie Moniky and I'm with the Mississippi Campus Compact. And I do want to burn up some of my time thanking you for the work you have done in the Gulf coast area since Katrina. It's a true inspiration. I'm not sure if the rest of the country understands just how critical AmeriCorps and all the Corporation programs work. So we thank you for that. Secondly, Mississippi, in particular, thanks you for \$40 million in tuition through Ed awards that have come back to Mississippi institutions. As you know, we struggle with economic issues in Mississippi. And that's really makes a difference to us. And finally, thanking you for the partnership that you have developed with Higher Ed. It's a real difference and commitment to that partnership and appreciate that and enjoy working with you. Obviously higher ed, we are very focused in education and want to encourage college access and dropout provision as one of the highest priorities for the Corporation. And also the higher ed campuses have the academic work for students. But also that community outreach in many of our programs. Finally, we would like the longitudinal study. I was glad to hear there was some money actually in the 2010 budget for the longitudinal study. I know it's just authorized and not mandated. So we'd like to encourage you. I think that something like that during this time of national service and commitment to national service would do for Learn & Serve what Katrina has done for AmeriCorps over the next few years. And finally, one other idea that turn into the frame of social innovation is looking at there is so many wonderful resources in this Bill. And helping states figure out how to build a Pre-K through 16 continuum of civic engagement. If you lay that out a continuum and start plugging that in different programs for kids all along the way, I think you'll be turning out very different students in the next 16 years and you will have a good look at that. And as such in Mississippi, I'm fortunate to have the leadership of Marsha Kelly and her team at the Commission. We have a very tight-nit state service plan committee that has been working. And we're going to be looking at how to build the capacity to take these new programs along because that's a real issue. And secondly, collaboration and finally strengthening our corps for that. There are some issues for higher ed. It's hard to understand from higher ed's perspective about how to manage AmeriCorps programs. The match is an issue often. And I have some solutions to that and I will go ahead and put them on the website. And finally if I could encourage that the new streams of service. I've seen the question: Do we put that under AmeriCorps or create their own branding? I would say to put it under AmeriCorps. Thank you.

25 MR. CHRIS GORMAN: Thank you very much for the opportunity to give comments today. My name is Chris Gorman. I am Executive Vice-President of the Tango Transport, a trucking company in Shreveport, Louisiana. I also represent as a Commissioner, the Louisiana Serve Commission. And it's my honor to speak to you today. We support the National and Community Services ongoing commitment

to service as a strategy to address impelling needs. And we applaud this Listening tour as a way to understand the impact that service has on local communities at the state level and to gather knowledge from those of us in the field. We also encourage CNCS to continue to reach out to state commissions like the Louisiana Serve Commission to be a valued partner and resource as the Serve America Act is fully implemented. The State Service Commission understands the importance of being accountable stewards of the resources entrusted to us. Listening to make strategic investments and demonstrating the impact that programs have on improving lives and strengthening the communities. And as several funding expands for national service programs, so much project public sector support to create a true public private partnership. By being accountable and being able to demonstrate a measurable impact state service commissions will play an even more critical role in ensuring the effective connection between federal and local investment. So as I ask you in closing, please don't forget that this is an important consideration going forward. Thank you very much.

MS. JANET PACE: Good afternoon. I'm Janet Pace. I'm the Director of the Louisiana Serve Commission. We would like to take this opportunity to address two of the topics: Expanding opportunities to serve and demonstrating impact. The State Service Commissions like ours, like Louisiana Serve are a positive resource of best practices in (inaudible). Louisiana Serve has had extensive experience managing resources. Experience that has allowed us to go from 12 to 24 programs in the space of a year after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. And what we learned from that is that expansion must be thoughtful and it must be strategic. More money doesn't necessarily mean better outcomes without a plan on the front-end. Expansion requires investments in administrative costs, oversight in training. Investments need to be at a state commission level to ensure that there's adequate staff and resources to support programs on the local level. Investments must also be programs, at the local level to ensure realistic growth and intangible, measurable outcomes. This means adequate funding for administrative capacity for them and also staff and member training that ensures that our grantees or sub-grantees will have the ability to manage more members. Beyond the programs themselves, we never forget that the member experience is very, very important. We don't want to lose that in all of this. I've only served as experienced sub-grantees which expanded quickly to accommodate a large number of (inaudible) after the storms. And the challenges of providing the quality experience for the members proved to be a difficult and timely consuming task. Some of our most successful programs tells us and admit that they'd think twice before expanding that quickly again. And so as you consider expansion, think about that. State service commissions like ours also know how to leverage assets for greater impact. We create and nurture local and state partnerships in collaborations to ensure that service is part of the solution in our communities. Louisiana Serve consistently collaborated all streams of national service, NCCC, VISTA, Senior Corps, Learn & Serve. Our commission team meets with our state office and even our NCCC Campus in Vicksburg. We work closely with Ruth White, the Louisiana Association of Volunteer Centers Directors, Louisiana (inaudible), Louisiana Association of non-profit organizations, and Louisiana Campus Compact. We believe in tapping into strengths of partner organizations, so that everyone is part of the solution in bringing their own particular expertise to our problems. We would hope that the Corporation uses our model of collaboration as an example of how we can work together for the greater good. MCSWAIN: You talked about thinking about performance efforts and one of the questions on there is what kind of performance efforts that we should be looking at. PACE: I probably don't know the exact answer and people standing up here with some experience and I came from the non-profit world before I'm here at the state world. But I think we need to have performance measures that are, kind of, look the same across programs maybe. You can't have apples to oranges all the time. And so allowing every program or every community, they have different performance measures. And I think one of the strengths of the recovery stimulus money is that they are going to set performance measures that we're all going to report to. I think it tells a stronger story. I don't know what those are particularly. It can depend on your focus areas. But I do think more standardization of those would help us all tell that story better and measure that impact better.

MS. MCSWAIN: So one of the things that everybody

3 about is that the Corporation does have
4 to chose focus areas every year. So
5 we're looking for feedback on what
6 those areas are. Should they change
7 every year? Should we have them for a
8 set number of years? And within those
9 areas, what the performance measures
10 should be? So if you don't have time
11 to sort of get your thoughts around
12 that today, I encourage you to let us
13 know in writing what your thoughts are
14 around that. Because that's one of the
15 things we're really thinking about
16 right now.

17 As Cole comes up, I would like to
18 invite Marsha Kelly, Brook Smith, and
19 Kate Berdgrath.

20 MR. COLE MCMANN: Hi everybody. My name is Cole McMann and I'm with Equal Justice Works. And I represent a National Direct AmeriCorps program. First of all, I want to thank you for this opportunity. I want to thank you for AmeriCorps. Working with AmeriCorps is the defining privilege in my life. It means so much to me to be part of it. Four years ago, Equal Justice Works placed and created legal initiatives that placed lawyers and law students to address the needs of people in Louisiana in the Gulf coast area. And we're privileged to have with us two AmeriCorps (inaudible) in Southeast Louisiana who will be part of the recovery next year. Very excited to have him here. You can clap. I understand I'm wasting my time but it's important for us to acknowledge him. Anything we can do to make it easier to ease the burdens on individuals and organizations to be part of the national service field we want to do. We hear again and again from organizations that have EOJ funding, that have LOC funding, and HUD funding. And the AmeriCorps staff, the corporation staff, are the easiest federal employees to work with. Corporation money is is proportionately difficult for (inaudible). Three quick ideas to work on that. One, I know it's a concern for you personally. Fixed priced grants need to be implemented across the board with mix- modeled programs, full-time, part-time programs. There are simple ways to do that I'd be happy to discuss with you. The second thing. Janet mentioned the performance measures. I think we all believe that we need to demonstrate national impact that national service is having. I'm concerned that standardization crushes innovation. Everything else in this Bill, gets us to a place where there's (inaudible) entrepreneurship and innovation. And to tell you what our members are doing. One is helping people have access to healthcare. In the same program, another

AmeriCorps legal fellow is helping people preserve their housing. I have 36 people across the country. We can't come up with performance measures. How we going to do it with 75,000. We've got to be smart about that. Finally, I believe it is - the Serve America Act is remarkable and we're so proud of it and so many innovations. I think the people who lost out, who we didn't do enough for are the members themselves. AmeriCorps members, I think, is transformational that the education word is going to be put to the program. But tiny little (inaudible) to poverty line. I think places people who serve (inaudible) longevity. We all believe in a modest living allowance. We all believe in sacrifice for service. So we can do that for \$5,000 or more a year. I know that's difficult. I know that there's no money in the federal budget. But it's important that we have to do better by the people who serve.

24

MS. MCSWAIN:

We definitely are seeking input on the fixed amount grants. I think the issue you've just raised in the common performance measures is what we're struggling with, which is why we need to have comments on all sides of that issue. So I would encourage you to send them to us because that's what we're looking for.

9

MS. MARSHA KELLY: I've had the unique pleasure of working with this program since January of 1994. And so over the past 16 years, we've actually looked at what we would change given the opportunity. And we've worked on change those. So it feels like a huge accomplishment that we've actually had re- authorization. There are a number of real issues that we filed out and chewed on. And I'm going to submit those in writing. But I'd like to yield my time to Kristin and what I'd like to ask Kristin to do is, Kristin, if you would like to help state commissions and state corporations prepare for this next body of work, would you suggest things like an in- state listening tour. What are some things that you would give as advice to state commissions and state corporations so that we are better prepared to help implement, what is going to happen very quickly. MCSWAIN: So I think two things. One is that out of these listening sessions, we are going to be putting out what we heard. Along with that, we are doing, well, our legal offices, I would never attempt this. Doing a scrub of the statute to say what are the things required we're making? What are the things that we can do to the policy? What is the time line? Realizing that the time line for all us those things is not going to be the same time line. So, for example, there are things that we could do by policy immediately for Senior Corps. We issue dities through our programs every year. We might want to have (inaudible) running on October 1, but we can certainly send out policy memos that says as of this date, we're implementing what's in the statute around the age and the income eligibility. Immediately putting stuff like that into play. There are things that we can be doing. So that time line is going to be coming and that should be coming before the nationalconference on June 22. Once that time line is out, I think that all of our constituents who want to be reaching out to their constituents around creating a state service plan around figuring out how we are going to recruit new organizations to apply for programs. How we are going to recruit individuals who are over 55 given all the emphasis on engaging older adults in service. And there are many ways you can to that. Part of the challenge is going to be that as Heather said at the beginning, this act is dependent on the implementation of the 2010 budget. Now, I'm hopeful that October 1 we'll have a budget. However, it's been a number of years since we've had a federal budget on October 1. So if we have a continuing resolution, nothing in the act goes into effect that requires money until we actually have funding. That is 2010 funding. I think right now participating by getting lots of input, asking lots of questions is the role that most of our stakeholders can play. Thinking about the things that we're asking questions about. If you want, holding sessions with your guarantees around those issues would be helpful. But I really think that following these listening sessions, looking at all comments will help people figure out where to go next.

MS. BROOK SMITH:

Good afternoon, I'm Brook Smith with the Office of the Lieutenant Governor here in Louisiana. Thank you all for being here and Kyle, thanks for trying to give us credit in bringing you here. But we know it was the food. I just want to make two brief comments on breaking down silos and stirring innovation. One thing that I think we see in our state, particularly since the hurricanes of 2005, is that and we were encouraged by the Corporation to do so, that we look at working in a more multi-stream fashion. So AmeriCorps State, National, VISTA, NCCC. And I think what we see in our state since that time is a wonderful marriage. I venture to say

that most of our grantees, certainly in the state portfolio are in one way or another accessing from all of those different shrudes. So the first point is just in terms of bringing down silos, as the vision increases to the extent we can streamline application processes around accessing those various types of service, I think will become very important for our grantees. But taking that to the next step, as the Serve America Act increases its vision and includes other things like volunteer generation fund, social innovation fund, I have the feeling that we're going to see our very smart grantees also access or want to access those not only pots of money, but those resources and those opportunities to grow within the state and to serve their communities. And so my plea here today is really to be an advocate for marrying to the possible, the new vision, with the national service movement. So that our grantees that we often treat in separate silos as non-profit and faith-based and AmeriCorps State and VISTA, all start to blend into action roots who are accessing national service, social innovation funding, volunteer generation resources and we can really make a difference on the front.

MCSWAIN: One of the things that the Act does is it allows us to set a single advocacy for the organization for all preparation programs. We have no idea what that's going to look like. BROOK SMITH: We'll be happy to review it for you. MCSWAIN: I'd be happy to accept suggestions. When we talk about the fact that much of this is unknown, that's not loosely said. Much of this is unknown and many of you have multiple streams of funding. You have local foundations who asks certain questions. You have engagements with other people who give you money and their allocation looks a certain way. You know how the those practices from all those places is one of your suggestions. We may not take all of them. But I think that the more you have to think about it, the better off we'll be.

As Kate comes up, Rita Massy,

1 Heather Denny, and Judy Stein are next.

2 We'll take Rita Massy off. So that

3 would make the next person Van Johnson.

MS. KATE BERDGRATH: Hello, my name is Kate Berdgrath. And I am also a person from Minnesota. And I am also an AmeriCorps VISTA alumni. So I'm happy to be part of this process as well. Currently I'm serving as the president of the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration. Also called MAVA. And we're a state-wide professional association for leaders and volunteers in Minnesota representing over 835 members from a range of community sectors. And that does include AmeriCorps VISTA members as well. MAVA believes that to engage individuals in meaningful volunteering, we must have strong volunteer programs led by professionals trained in the best practices of volunteering resource management. And so there really are two issues that we would like to share in this listening session. One of them is that we really encourage appropriation to support the call to serve by capacity building, building capacity over volunteer programs and volunteer resource leadership. And so in Minnesota, we've been experiencing more than a 30 percent increase in interest in volunteering because of publicity around the Serve America Act, as well as the economic conditions themselves. And many of our organizations across the state are struggling to try to commit the right fit for those volunteers. And if we're not thinking about volunteering programs and how they support current infrastructure and building capacity in agencies across the states and across the country, then we're going to have some frustrated volunteers and some frustrated agencies. And so we really encourage the best practices in volunteer resource management would be specifically mentioned in the non-profit capacity building program. And that we are definitely agree with the volunteer generation funds should be distributed to agencies statewide organizations across improvement, expertise, and volunteer resources. And that they should be distributed at the state level. The other point we'd like to make is that we want to support our current state structures and that they are able to efficiently respond to needs at the local level. MAVA currently partners with our Corporation's state office as well as our state commission, Serve Minnesota. And that has been a very efficient structure for us to figure out how to support volunteers in Minnesota. So we would like to - you see that value goal as maintaining both of those. And lastly, we would like to see representation from experienced volunteer resources leaders significantly increased in the Serve America Act implementation. So that we can add their expertise to the conversation. Thank you.

MS. HEATHER DODY: Hi, I'm Heather Dody. And I'm from an organization called (inaudible) in Slidell, Louisiana. And I'm originally here from New Orleans, Louisiana. I wanted to go ahead and give a perspective of someone who's almost done with the term of service with AmeriCorps VISTA. And what I've learned with that service and what I would like to see for future VISTAs. Overall, I think it's been a great experience for me. I graduated from college with a double major in English and Political Science with honors. And then couldn't find a decent job. It was a hard situation. And so I signed up for AmeriCorps VISTA thinking that, well, truthfully, it was one of the things that they responded positively to me and said, yeah, we'd love to have you. And that was a good feeling after getting your resumes rejected. And so at the PSO, I found it was a great experience with that too. We learned a lot of skills. We did a lot of bonding. And I felt that there was a lot of idea generation. The PSO was great. And then the organization I've been working with, it's been great. I've been able to get a lot of hands on experience doing work that probably I would not of otherwise gotten an opportunity to do. And it feels great to be able to work and work towards the community that I live in and know I'm building my skills. And I'll be able to go on and use these skills to work toward for the future. So I think that the idea that national service is being extended is excellent. I'm very happy about this whole thing. And as far as programs and sustainability measures being included for VISTA, I think there's nothing bad about that. I know some of us have mentioned social entrepreneurship. And I really think that the programs we're working with can help out with that. I know I feel inspired by the work I've done to go on and do future things like this in my career and whatever else I chose to do after this. Those are all the really great things. Then I have like two complaints. Okay. Let's see. I wrote them down. Well, I know I was the very one at my organization that ever had that when you think of AmeriCorps, they think of NCCC. They think of all the people who rebuilt after the hurricane because that's where they made a big impact on our community. They didn't really know what I was going to do. Anyway, the big problems that I have is the poverty stipend. I think I wouldn't of been able to do this program if my husband didn't have a decent job and I didn't have (inaudible). So I think that that's an issue. And, also, lack of training on money. I think a lot of people don't have training on how to live on such a small amount of money. We really didn't do that at the PSO. And (inaudible) I'm glad y'all brought it up. It's something you might want to change because I think it sends a better message for higher education. Thank you.

MS. MCSWAIN:

12 Thank you and thank you for your

13 service.

14 MS. JUDY STEIN: I'm Judy Stein. I'm the State Director of the Mississippi AmeriCorps programs and I'm really curious. I've been with National Service since 1996. Marsha's been there since 1994. Does anyone have us beat? Or are we the senior citizens here? Thank you. That was 15 seconds. Everything I've heard today is great and about being here for 13 years, this is the most exciting time I've experienced in this job. And thank y'all so much. It has been an adventure, a roller coaster, and this has been the best year yet and I expect loads more. This Act is really great. I agree with everything that Paul said that it is about the member. It is about the AmeriCorps member and everything that's been said here. I would like, if I could, NCCC members, any current AmeriCorps or VISTA members, I would like to use 10 seconds of my time to give y'all a hand. These are my heroes in an integral sense. But getting to the performance measures, also, I want to add since (inaudible) was established, performance measures for each grantee. So then training technical assistance will be provided. I would like a little bit more clarification to training technical assistance provided by the Corporation? And I for one, I'm against the standard performance measures because of what Cole said. It's not apples to oranges. Everybody is a little different. And it is a nightmare when I as state commission or AmeriCorps Director, I'm trying to pull together all the data from all the programs. Everybody is doing something different for one report. I myself could use some help in being able to do that to evaluate. But I for one on the state commission and that performance measure should not be standard. And then I have a question to the Corporation (inaudible) for the two or more service corps? You said to give some ideas about what those

service corps would be. I'm just wondering what percentage of funds is going to be designated for these two service corps. And finally, I know it says in here to increase the commission is adding (inaudible).

21 MS. MCSWAIN:

I think one of the things that we want folks to think about understanding struggle for standardizing performance measures is there's a strong appetite, not only in the Act, but also across government for being able to show results. One of the ways to do that is by demonstrating to the performance measures what the outcomes were. That

6 does not mean that every single grant
7 we fund has to be using a set of
8 aggregated performance measures. When
9 the Corporation instituted our last
10 strategic plan, there were
11 organizations that we funded that
12 weren't in the priority areas. So I
13 think we need to think broadly about
14 performance measurement in that way.
15 And one of the things that we want to
16 go deep on and show a service as an
17 actually has a value in that particular
18 area that produces a tangible results.
19 So those are the kinds of things we
20 want you to be thinking about.
21 Starting with AmeriCorps and then
22 perhaps going from there in the future.

23 I would like to invite Suzanne
24 Prator. And I apologize if I butcher

1 Liz (inaudible).

2 VAN JOHNSON: Good afternoon. Thank you. Again, I want to echo some of the things that have been said in thanking the Corporation for their support of the Serve America Act and all the work that went into it. We know there's a long way to go. But there's one question, not comments. Just a simple question. And I think it was stated up here. And I just want clarification. Are we allowed at this time with Senior Corps to start recruiting and training individuals age 55 and 200 percent below the poverty level at the present time before October 1st? So that on that day comes, we can place to start doing their services. Or do they have to start waiting until October 1? MCSWAIN: I have to get back to you on that. I don't know the answer to the question. Heather, make sure we get back on that. We'll make sure we get back to all you as soon as possible.

2 SUZANNE PRATOR: My name is Suzanne Prator. And I've been with Senior Corps 22 years, over 22 years. And with all due respect, I have no written notes. In all due respect in raising the seat for AmeriCorps and Vista, I do feel that there needs to be more emphasis on Senior Corps in this Act. We are feeling competition. I would like to read to you a letter which I received last week from the school where our foster grandparents served for many years. "Mrs. Prator, I'm writing to you to inform you that due to staffing changes at Bermon School, we are unable to host the foster grandparent program for the next school year. We thank you for all of your support during the years." The staffing changes are AmeriCorps and VISTA workers. They don't need us anymore because they're getting educated volunteers who can go right into the classroom and assist the teacher educationally. However, they're not thinking of the generational exposure and nurturing that the foster grandparents do. It's just a different type of work that I feel like we're kind of being left in the cloud of dust from AmeriCorps and VISTA. When I first came to work with foster grandparents 22 < years ago, no one knew what AmeriCorps was. But they've come a long way. And I must tell you our daughter met her dear husband to be, our wonderful son-in-law, in AmeriCorps. So I love it too. And I am prejudice and I'm being a little defensive about what I perceive to be the lack of attention to Senior Corps.

19 CHRIS MONFORTIN: I've got some pages of notes that I'll leave to the back and keep my comments short. To the last speaker's comments, that I would like to state that beyond harnessing the markets for financial capital, we need to ensure that all branches of financial service embrace the transfer of experiential capital and technical capital along with the educational that run innovation. Let me back up. I worked with Habitat for Humanity. I'm a former AmeriCorps member. That really relying on our impact. I believe we really look at duplication of services. That not that duplication of services is a bad thing, but looking at where are we duplicating services in a specific geographic area. And having the Corporation and state commissions to really serve as how (inaudible) to bring collaboration together in those agencies that are excelling these specific outcomes. Outcomes that puts (inaudible) the meaning of those with strength in much success in most specific geographic areas. That they service this agent detains that bring together agencies, sub-grantees, and grantees together to work more collaboratively. Again, that spirit of competition is beginning to hinder us. That impact is more than just expanding programs and services. It's more than organizational shifts. And it's more than just status quos. That we really have to find a cap stone to rally behind both the Corporation, the city commissions and the grantees. That we need to find these agencies in partners in collaborations that we put upon a pedestal. Lastly, before I leave, as an alumni, that I've served in 1998 and 1999. That I believe would really embrace a single or at least one alumni network that is promoted through the Corporation or whoever, Serve America - just in the last two years, I've seen seven or eight different groups come together. It is very difficult to find some synergy and energy to mobilize not only large groups and networks as members we establish but to be able to rally all the forces of our agencies of our programs to make a significant difference. With that, I'll leave you.

MS. MCSWAIN:

Your points are well taken. Particularly, on collaboration of all of our state offices and state commissions. So that people, like Suzanne, don't get more letters like that. We are all making sure that we are doing a stream of service support, allowing our schools and people understand the difference of the programs. Thank you. The next people are Camille Lopez, Jim Hornsby, and Eric Schwartz.

LIZ: First, I want to say thank you. My organization is the St. Bernard Project helping rebuild homes in the New Orleans area. We couldn't do it without support from the state. We get America State and VISTA and NCCC, all working together within our organization to solve problems down here. So thank you guys. I have three quick points. The first is we did a lot of progress in the New Orleans area. There's still a lot of work to be done. There are 15,000 families in the region who are still living in trailers. So when you think about decisions that need to be made, state to state, please remember that Louisiana and the New Orleans area and in the western side of the state still needs help recovering and rebuilding over the long term. Second thing is that I encourage you guys as much as possible, at the state level, we talk about this all the time is to be flexible within our organizations and help us solve some of the challenges that we face. So, for example, we have people that are in our community that are serving within our organizations. And I know that there's a rule that they can't serve three times in a row in the same organization. But to me, it seems a little bit there on the ground that know what the problems are, but yet after three years, we have to say sorry. We have problems to face, you have to leave. We'd love to see some flexibility. And the third is I will continue to ask you to get feedback from members. I think they have a very good sense about what works well and what doesn't. They know the ins and outs of the program on the ground pretty well.

11 CAMILLE LOPEZ:

I'm Camille Lopez with Rebuilding Together New Orleans. And I have a comment and one question. My first comment is our program focuses on rebuilding communities. Obviously this is AmeriCorps and NCCC and the majority of our clients are African American. And we'd very much love to have our AmeriCorps, NCCC and businesses be a little bit more represented from the population we serve. And that's a huge challenge. Pretty much all the burden of recruitment has fallen on us and we've had very difficult time making headway with colleges and other ways to get members of African American communities to come and work with us. We feel that would make our program more stronger. I would like to put that out there. I have something that's a burden that perhaps to be taken on by y'all a bit. My question is, it's sort of following up on what Liz said to put out to you that obviously everyone here is this community and in this room recognizes how much you have Corps and NCCC and Senior Corps and all the other programs have done to provide in this community and the Gulf and how important it's been to New Orleans and in the recovery efforts. So I'm just wondering if there is going to be a sustained effort to focus on this geographic region. If there is any kind of quota set aside, a dollar amount, that is going to be focused on making sure that y'all are committed here for the long haul, as apposed to sort of spreading the wealth across the country, making sure that you do focus on here for another few years. MS. MCSWAIN: There's three answers to that question. One is that we've got Senior Corps programs who have been here and will continue to be here. You also have NCCC Campus that's going to open this summer in Vicksburg, Mississippi. And it is going to be serve the entire region. And lastly, one of the things that we rely on our state commissions for is to be the local entity that received usually a third, with this Act will be 35.3 percent of the money. Someone else can figure out the math. That funding will always come here, unless there is something that happens in the authorization to change it. And the commissions also compete nationally for additional grants that are going to be here. Outside of that, is there an additional investment, not this present time. But I think we've built a series of institutions that I don't believe

are going to go away.

3 JIM HORNSBY:

My name is Jim Hornsby. I'm the Director of (inaudible) at New Orleans. We are a site partner of Christian Communities AmeriCorps program. In terms of recruitment in the programs, we started out basically with myself and some membership and we were fortunate enough to team up with TCC to have an existing medical program before the storm. I think the model of having TCC being the main grantees of the Louisiana Serve Commission and bringing in site partners. It worked out well and allowed us to exist, essentially. We recruited (inaudible) people. We currently have 11 AmeriCorps members, which the last two years. And that's due entirely to our partnership with TCC. So we encourage existing programs to envision themselves as an entity that can allocate numbers to other partner groups is a very strong concept. And one of the other really good benefits of that is our onsite partners with Habitat and a lot of energy larger than there are. We get to kind of mooch off their resources, which is great. So we usually go grab it from Habitat. I would encourage that in terms of in trying to develop a program. Obviously it's more difficult to make grants directly to the organizations, development process being sort of paired up with a set partner with an organization. In terms of member recruitment, I'm doing it right now. I think one of the most difficult things is obviously getting (inaudible). But one really sort of lacking area is a sense of mobility in AmeriCorps. Where it may be two years and out. You may a job with that organization, but there's definitely, you know, there's a huge disparity between doing one year with AmeriCorps and becoming an actual staffer with the organization you're working with. I'm not aware of any really good transitional models where you sort of take your top AmeriCorps people and sort of learn the program that they're in and help organizations hold onto that and you don't have a sense of a (inaudible). MCSWAIN: So there's a couple of organizations that you should talk to. One is Habitat for Humanity. They actually built a significant career ladder within their organization. The Boys and Girls Club is beginning to build the same kind of pack because they have a huge investment in not only having spent a year or two training people, that they have individuals who are going to be working there know their program and are ready to work to expand. So those are just two. I think that any of the national service programs or institutions that use natural service to grow their infrastructure are the ones you should look at in terms of models. As we expand to 250,000 AmeriCorps members. We are going to need a tank of multiple ways to do that. Some of that is going to be organizations, which is why we're looking at fixed rate grants. We're looking at this pilot to do a number of verification things, things that simplify what is an incredibly complex program. However, the other way that people can grow is by using organizations and funding partners. So to the extent that you show experience with AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps programs with your fellow non-profits, you will have an easy time of doing that.

Reed Dixon, Michael Barr and Kevin Brown. Please say your name for our

20 Court Reporter.

21 GENEVA MAURY: It's Geneva Maury. I am here in New Orleans. And we are from the programs that Brook was talking about. We use every facet possible in AmeriCorps and have. We're an organization locally after the storm from a national organization, we would not exist in the capacity we do without AmeriCorps. There is absolutely no way. Thank you for that. Thank you for dedication that was put in after the storm. I would like to take an opportunity to really thank and the LA Serve Commission. There was a suggestion to learn a lot from Janet and her team and what they've learned in the last incredible three years. I spent a lot of time with them. And I'm sure from Mississippi and Texas and everybody else that has had to deal in this capacity and what this tremendous growth and there were a lot of growing pains but a lot of really great things that came out of it. Not to beat the same drum, I would like to say really briefly. It was disheartening this year to here that our company was cut drastically and that we were considered out of disaster or out of the time to need those funds. As we all know on the ground that that is in no way true. And this commission has worked very hard as all of our organizations to find creative ways to be competitive on the national and to keep going for those funds. And to keep our programs at the capacity that we are. But I can

really looking at disasters looking at them individually, being prepared for all kinds and being prepared. It was a long haul for us at least. Lastly, on a completely different track. I want to say to the same people have said about this alumni guy and I brought two members with me. And I think that, you know, reassessing VISTA, reassessing the stipend and upping it to do nothing to the viability of it, the quality, how vital it is to non-profit organizations. In my day, \$600.00 bucks and then it's \$800.00 bucks. And that's huge. So it's such a vital program for non-profits and new non-profits, it's so important to the sustainability to grow from all sorts of things. So really having an opportunity with that program would be commended. MCSWAIN: I have a question. So the stipend itself is set in the statutes, an average of the poverty rates. So that won't change. It didn't change in the re-authorization. But you said reassessing other things about VISTA. What would those be? MAURY: I think, like, ways to if you can't change the award basing it to a grant organizations money to support them more with housing or to give them more of a - I know that we can't offer them housing support in that way. But you know there is limited budget everywhere. So we try in ways that we can. I think if there are other creative ways to help them more as this members was talking about, more education about living with that. We can't get the food stamps. This is how to get them. Even helping them in that process. If there are any other resources, pulling them together at PSO, trying to find housing together. I think some of those things would be good. I'm a huge proponent of the program and I think it's started so many careers and really teaches you of the inner workings of non-profit. And you have tremendous numbers. But I definitely think there are ways to support them more. And get more people involved.

MS. MCSWAIN:

We've had comments from those at other listening sessions that they should be allowed to work outside of those areas.

22 REED DIXON: My name is Reed Dixon. I'm with Corps network and Director here at the Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans and formerly the Director of (inaudible) in the inner city. Kristin, I have a few questions as usual. I'll start with how to put the themes and the procedures. Specifically, there's a theme asking us to extend opportunities to all service. Not just the affluent youth and baby boomers. But those who might not be able to afford to serve. I think somebody mentioned they needed their husband or wife's salary in order to serve and that's a challenge. But on a different level, there's a procedure relating to require FBI fingerprint checks. And to be honest, I would encourage CNCS to do would be to encourage programs across the board to recruit according to all people as part, maybe an aspect already. I don't know. But if we could encourage as a Corporation. Really take on that charge that made a difference, locally, I think, everybody in the room knows this state has the highest incarceration and arrests rates in a city that's also is the same. So I think the goal should be to encourage those who most need to serve by, you know, giving them the opportunity in affirmative recruiting. I'm just going to put that out there. Second piece. I'm thrilled about the Summer of Service. Youth really need a lot of opportunities to (inaudible) and related to that would be I hope that the Corporation would encourage youth in a cognitive, you're doing a cognitive work service rather than letting people tell them what to do it. So they can take ownership in their work and take pride in it. There's a lot of research about what makes quality service versus regular and I hope the Corporation will take that seriously. Third point. September 11, I'm a former New Yorker. And was there for about eight years. And I know this is part of the Bill. But I personally think we need to let it rest. So for the Record, I want to say if it must go on as to the Corporation, I take an approach that encourages this tragedy is not (inaudible). Specifically, this was done in 2003, explicitly in the 2003 guidelines. Just to call that back to memory, it explicitly said that (inaudible) not only support more efforts but to fulfill (inaudible) communities and home. And that's a direct quote. The concern that an event like this could unfortunately be exploited. A tragedy like this would be exploited to support something not everyone believes in. So I hope Corporation actively discourage (inaudible). That's it. That's still going to happen. If you can discourage that, that would be great. In terms of performance methods, I hope we can (inaudible). I agree synergy can crush innovation but also accountability can create quality. So I just would warn that effective methods are costly and longitudinal.

And if we're really want quality, we should go for quality. If we just want assurances about how many volunteers we've recruited, we should let go of that. I have the red card. I was going to say some positive things, but I'll stop there. Thank you. MCSWAIN: Before you go, I want to say one thing about the FBI background checks. That does not take place for two years. So we won't we moving on that. Before then, the Act requires that the Attorney General does a review around costs, around effectiveness, before implementation. There will be more on the background check piece. The other thing that we've had a lot of feedback on is not necessarily the background check itself, but people needing training in order to be able to interpret those results that they get. To see whether or not they can serve. Can I see hands of people who agree with that? That would be helpful.

MICHAEL BARR: Hello. I'm with AmeriCorps VISTA and I work at the Augentine (inaudible) home affiliated with Tulane University Service. I did AmeriCorps 10 years ago in Boston. Had a great experience there. I was project first since I did technology in the elementary school. So I want to talk about three things. One thing that is in common with my experience there is I'm also on a team here. It's a loosely affiliated team. Because we're all in different organizations in the city, but we meet on Fridays and probably because in one sense our job is to bring (inaudible) into our organizations. And so we are liaisons for organizations with public service at Tulane. I think that that's really helpful that I have that kind of feedback and support and just that network, especially in the second year. I finished my AmeriCorps VISTA for one year and second year. And I work at a museum. And I also want to say that it's great that AmeriCorps is directing funding to Louisiana that does work with its community. And with VISTA, I work a lot more behind the scenes than I did with AmeriCorps Direct. But I can see (inaudible) every single day and in terms of what it allows me to do to create some stability in coming back after the storm. And thirdly, I guess I would just echo some comments about the stipend. The stipend is not as much the problem as the housing. Because the housing eats up two-thirds easily of the stipend. And one thing I already suggested about that would be more of a public campaign that AmeriCorps is not so well-known. But people who know it, really love it. The people who don't know it and that seems to be the majority of people. They still think that "Corps" is "C-o-r-e." They have no conception of what the community is that we're serving. And so the public campaign, what I think the public campaign could do would be to find people in the community who could assist the housing. Who could create discounts. I have somebody generous from my church who is actually helping me this year. And it's about time. Thank you.

9 MS. MCSWAIN:

10 Kevin Brown is next. And following

11 Kevin Brown is Hamilton Jones, Michael

12 Pizzolata, and Kishawn Webster.

13 KEVIN BROWN: I just want to say if 9-1-1 doesn't want a day of service, I suspect the New Orleans will accept the Katrina day of service. It's been a real privilege to serve with the Corporation, especially post Katrina. Because we've dealt with - when look around and link people up to the economy, I'll reference the power of that relationship in our collaborative relationship habitats. There's something to be said for small grass roots community and faith-based organizations with a strong local knowledge. After Katrina, we watched as a lot of national organizations with affiliations to the Corporation descended upon New Orleans and became involved. For which we are on the one hand very grateful, but on the other hand, somewhat awestruck by it. Because the large national directs are able to descend into a market. That makes it very difficult for grass roots organizations with a hands on feel for the community to become the kind of organizations that we believe we can be. The future of AmeriCorps in terms of the 50 percent match to grant match is going to make it difficult for grass roots organizations, I believe. And my fear is that down the road, the organization won't be able to stand and to compete for the awards. It will be the larger national organizations that have a breath of reach across the community. Not just in New Orleans. Not just in Minneapolis. Not just in Chicago, but organizations that have large reaches and deeper pockets. I

really believe that we have the potential through the Corporation and through service to change neighborhoods, communities, and cities. If we don't get sucked into this cookie cutter national models. That frightens me a bit. And I have seen how AmeriCorps, VISTA, NCCC, and America state and local has been able to reach into communities and really bring about great change. And we've done 2,500 homes together since the storm. That's huge post Katrina. So I want to encourage you as a Corporation as you anticipate changes and you think through these changes, to remember that the local faith-based community based grass roots organizations have an amazing ability to both reach into the community and to network people in a way that large national directs will struggle to do. Thank you.

MS. MCSWAIN:

Before you go away, one of the things that we have not gotten much feedback on that we need more input on is that the right amount for our fixed amount grants. The reason I raise that is because the 50 percent match will go away once we implement a fixed amount grant program. And so what we're trying to identify is what's the way now. We did fixed amount grants with our AmeriCorps promise village programs. It's very easy. We gave each program \$13,000.00. They paid the members they're \$13,000.00 stipend. You could prove as long as they were paid, money was well spent. And then obviously you had other income that ran in the program it was matched but you didn't have to keep your receipts, all those things. That's what makes it a fixed amount grant. So one of the things we're looking for is what is the amount for a fixed amount grant for full-time program or a part-time program? So as you think about that, that would be helpful.

4 HAMILTON JONES: My name is Hamilton Jones and I work with Operation Reach. First, I'm a proud AmeriCorps Alumni and second, I'm a proud locally based fairly new National Direct organization. We also work with AmeriCorps, NCCC, VISTA, and Louisiana Serve. And one of the things I want encourage is when we first applied for National Direct that made a huge difference for us in the organization. To put some capacity in place. And as we look at expanding AmeriCorps up to a quarter million, I would encourage you to look at some of your current grantees and put in some planning and demonstration as a strategy to expanding both the member spots and some of the new areas (inaudible) things of that sort. And then you really look at some of the current grantees and some of the best advocates in the community. And investigating ways to invest in them to be able to help train up. We have a lot of partner organizations that don't otherwise have the capacity to compete for those sorts of dollars. And I think a gentlemen said over there to really look at how you can invest in some of those organizations and some of those that have been in AmeriCorps organizations to kind of learn the complicated world and language and all of the AmeriCorps. To help them train up, mesh generations. Because it's clear we're going to need more organizations to be AmeriCorps partners. So the final thing is that I know some of the funding was cut in the Bush administration in terms of the ability to invest in some of the new grantees. And to look at restoring some of those funds for

new National Directs to be able to, you know, we kind of been operating without the full funding to do it and been doing it anyway. So look at restoring some of those dollars as well. MCSWAIN: I think what you're referring to is what we affectionately call the JONES: Yes. MCSWAIN: The new competition that's split between different funding should take care of that issue. It's part of what Heather referred to in the beginning. So in the new legislation we anticipate that.

Michael.

16 MICHAEL PIZZALOTO: I'd like to briefly speak about the role that higher education can and should be playing in (inaudible) movement. Over the past 10 years, the Center for Public Service and previous Office of Service, we were able to leverage corporation funding through Learn & Service America and AmeriCorps VISTA to create programs that collaboratively bringing communities together. Through Learn & Service America, we were able to create service training programs from universities. And through AmeriCorps VISTA, we worked to build long term sustaining partnerships with the community. Both of these types of programs bring more resources into our resource communities locally and create more engaged citizenry through service learning, volunteers. These are citizens that are volunteers for life or become leaders in non-profit world or in policy making. So the more that we can bring them in to these programs to actually support the work that non- profits are doing and able to do and we're not doing (inaudible) as much as possible. But we'd like to ensure that the Corporation realizes that more and more universities have engagement programs, serious engagement programs that are part of their core curriculum. And that as you look at funding, we'd like you to encourage the fun, innovative partnerships between communities and higher education that's going to lead to more resources, better programs that serves our communities, and build long term volunteer populations. And I know you spoke earlier about reassessing the role of the Corporation state offices. But I would really like to commend the state office we have here. They made our grant process as easy as possible. I don't know if we'll be able to get as much work with you done. And most important have been able to be done in the past three years to accomplish that. So we'd like to let you know on the national level how much they support our work. And I'm sure that the Corporation will do the same. But as you consider (inaudible) that they have strong backgrounds working in the field. They understand our needs. We build strong working relationships with them.

MS. MCSWAIN: 2 I have nine names left. If my math

3 is correct, that means we have 27
4 minutes worth of comments, unless I run
5 my mouth too much. So that means that
6 some of you who have had the
7 opportunity to sit and think, might
8 want to sign up because that means we
9 have 45 minutes more left to fill. And
10 the goal is to make sure everyone has
11 something they want to say has an
12 opportunity to speak. So think about

13 it because I'm going to call on you.

14 The next three people are Malike

15 Rahim, Daryl Blatcher, and Sara Haley.

16 KISHAWN WEBSTER: First of all, I'm Kishawn and I work with Operation Reach. We are a proud local national grantee of AmeriCorps and it's been great to be a partner with the AmeriCorps family. One thing that I wanted to highlight as that you were talking about the stirring of the innovation fund. And this is an effort that I applaud and I think that it is (inaudible) better government to support social entrepreneurship. However, it seems sort of an oxymoron to say that your looking at innovation and evidence based programs. And I say as a researcher that when we talk about evidence based and research, sometimes it clouds the opportunity for innovation. And if we are looking for innovation, there is a level of discretion when we have to be able to discern those knee-jerking, great opportunities to invest in. In the research we found that. So I would just caution not to connect the two. I know that there are some innovative knowledge that exists nationally that have research and stats to back it up, but there are still those things contextually that make sense that can take the step that may not have the normal resume of longitudinal studies. So just one caution and that actually came from a friend from the Ford Foundation that heard about the fund. She said please caution the folks don't do that. Another thing is just making sure that they are risk-taking organizations with entrepreneurial ideas. There's a lot of talk involved in the sector about social enterprise and social enterprise development. Very little capital available to access that. So that means they may have national scope, there should be a trickle down effect whether some capacity investment for organizations that may only look at some involvement in the state or the city and should be able to access that fund. MCSWAIN: So great comments. Couple of things I'd love for you to think about is the social innovation fund in the statute says "to receive new activities and to scale proven activities." One of the things I know more bureaucrats will think about is: is there a percentage of one time versus another? Is there a percentage of national versus small state? I need feedback on what you think about those percentages. What they should be. If we should have any at all would be helpful to us.

I'm missing No. 26. Since you're here 8 please go ahead.

9 DARYL BLATCHER: My name is Daryl Blatcher. I'm the Director of Community Outreach and the volunteer manager for the AARP Louisiana State Office in Baton Rouge. I would like to say that our state office is going to be one of the first of 53 state offices to become a Vista PSO and we're especially pleased and thankful to Pam Olsen for that. I have some comments that I'd like to bring to you on behalf of our national office from our Office of Volunteer Engagement. AARP is delighted that the authorization of the Edward Kennedy Service America Act designed to engage millions more Americans of all ages to come together to help solve many of America's most pressing challenges. As part of this, it will enhance opportunities for boomers and older Americans to apply their lifetime of acquired skills to help remedy of range of identified needs. Volunteers have always been a part of AARP. And since 2001, we have initiated and implemented what we call our National Day of Service. More than 15,000 have served annually. We're a national membership organization that just celebrated its 50th Anniversary last year. And today, we are extending these efforts with our Celebrate the Good, Create the Good initiative, that is, by engaging many more boomers and older Americans to help others improve their health, save money, return to work as they watch their 401K accounts become one of four K accounts, weatherize their homes and stay safe in these homes by including universal design features, which allows them to feel more secure as they age in their homes. We look forward to doing this in concert with others as we support the goals and objectives of the Serve America Act. As Serve America is implemented, we hope that there will be a strong focus on efforts and leverage additional volunteers to maximize the reach of this legislation. Indeed the needs are substantial and I call for more hands on deck. By making more volunteers, we can leverage our federal resources most effectively. The legislation includes provisions that focus on improving the capacity of non- profit, service, and philanthropic organizations to recruit, manage, and apply volunteered skills to identify service needs in this period of economic recession

and global charitable givings. There is a lot more that I can say. But the bottom line is AARP stands ready to work with the Corporation for National and Community Service. Kristin, you mentioned that there's a challenge in recruiting persons that are older, but we're not the government, but we're getting help. Thank you.

5 MS. MCSWAIN:

6 Angela Easter, Gina Silk, and

7 Robert Cogerdy.

8 SARA: I'm a America VISTA volunteer currently. And this is my second tour of service. I'm in a state position in New Orleans. I'm speaking from the perspective of the recent college graduates who are interested in the VISTA program. (Inaudible) huge spike in recruitment. I have concerns about the quality of the grantal placements. The quality of experience for the volunteers has been (inaudible) by the people. Basically, I feel as though, for example, I have a partner of mine who recently finished the Peace Corps and there tends to be an outside reputation and an internal reputation. And there's an external reputation of "Oh, you're a volunteer. Great, wonderful." And then there's an internal reputation that gets communicated among the people through college peers and things like that. I personally am an avid (inaudible) Peace Corps as a result of my good friend's experience there. And I'd hate to see that happen in the AmeriCorps program. I have a lot of friends in college who are considering Vista and they're going to come to me and ask me about my experience and that is going to be their greatest source of information when they consider the program. And that's where the recruiting comes in. So I want this to be the No. 1 opportunity for college graduates. I don't want it to be Plan B or Plan C. I would hate to see interest in volunteers decline as a result of "Oh, well, six of my friends said and only two of them really gained any significant career development and felt that their experience was valuable so I might do that if other things don't work out." And finally, I don't know different options for enhancing the experience. Perhaps more contact with the VISTA volunteers. Also, more training for the grantees. Some grantees have multiple sites. So perhaps construing that supervisors at those sites all get training as well, could be helpful. Thank you.

11

ANGELA EASTLER: Hi, I'm Angela Eastler. I'm an AmeriCorps Alumni for two years. AmeriCorps means that congratulations to all of the AmeriCorps members that are here, NCCC, Senior Corps, RSAP. I was going to talk about AmeriCorps and I heard some lady talk about Senior Corps and it's placement. My tours were in 1998 and 1999. Senior Corps was an organization that was doing great things and should continue to. We should not displace these workers, and these are seniors who are giving up their time, in order to because of their funding, have AmeriCorps move in. I'm not saying that AmeriCorps isn't great, because I'm an alumni. I love AmeriCorps. But I heard and I'm not sure where she is when she said that the Senior Corps members was losing her job. When you look at all the programs and work together to ensure that there's a (inaudible) once a disaster is over in New Orleans, I would hope that the service members or the people will want to do service, not because of the stipend. When I did the stipend, I did it, it was the same. It wasn't a lot of money, but it's giving of yourself. So we need to focus on that and I might be getting off track. Camille Lopez mentioned recruitment efforts. I think that we need to get into the schools because of minorities. We need to be out there. A lot of the AmeriCorps members right now are working where they don't see themselves like the individuals that live in those areas do not see themselves. So if we can get into the schools. Right now, the schools are implementing community service, as part as a curriculum. If we can get into colleges and promote that, community service. Not specifically volunteering, but community involvement. It is community involvement. And I remember when I was a member, we didn't say that we were volunteering. We said that we were members of this movement. So we need to stress that. And the other thing is Jonathon (inaudible) and I think it's great people here are from different organizations. But when they talk about the housing rent. Maybe a housing rent can be implemented because there is a need. If you trying to get rent and you're going to work, you're not going to be as successful if you're worried about not having somewhere to live. Last thing I wanted to mention. Not losing site of the faith-based and grass roots organizations. We are a movement that is grass

roots. And so we have to focus on that. I work for the United Way of Great New Orleans area. Last thing, we need to focus on that because they will sustain the community.

GINA SILF: Hi, I'm Gina Silf with New Orleans area Habitat for Humanity. First of all, thank you very much. We have an excellent relationship with all the AmeriCorps members and the national service programs. Our main point, which has already been spoken of, is that as we see a decrease of volunteers coming through at the community level, the importance of NCCC is more vital now than ever. They have been an incredible support to our program with gutting houses and rebuilding houses in the New Orleans area. And we would just like to urge that the Gulf coast is still a focus with the service work. Thank you.

24 MS. MCSWAIN:

25 CAROL Bebell, 38, and Ellen W., 39.

ROBERT COGERDY: My name is Robert Cogerty. I'm a two-year VISTA alumni down in New Orleans for public service. I'll be brief. The biggest question I have doing this for two years is taking a step back and counting the amount of times I'd have to say "I'm with AmeriCorps, you know, the domestic Peace Corps." And I think we all get that. So we're on the right step with the Kennedy Act with a Kennedy, like, figure and Barack Obama is our President to elevate AmeriCorps to the branding structure that Peace Corps has had for the last 40 years. So as you guys look at this and we're talking a lot about the X's and O's today. Really think about the branding of this program. And of recent grads and of people who are taking a year of their time. And I think some of the most flattering experiences when they're branding this thing out on this little stipends is to feel like they have just the towns and friends in Teach for America or overseas in Peace Corps. And they may feel like they've been marginalized a little bit. It's really just a matter of perception. It's really just a matter of getting a great PR firm and great branding campaign to change some things that, I think, are a little ambiguous. Like a slogan of "Getting Things Done." When there really is no first reference on what those things are. So that's all I have. It's been a great journey. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to have it none-the-less.

16 CAROL BEBELL: I'm Carol Bebell. (Inaudible) So we're a community based cultural center and we have probably for the last seven or eight years been working with volunteers in one capacity or another. I see Hamilton here, Michael, Jim. I want to talk first about the issue of who serves and who wants to serve and how do we organize so that everyone who wants to serve has the capacity to make a choice to be part of one of the Corps. We've talked a little bit of the server is looking more like the served. And I think that stipend is something we run into that really creates an area there. We've had three VISTA workers. We're on our third one now. And these last two have been ones that had to struggle mightily with the issue of the income. So if we're going to have a small income for them as they server, then you've got to make some space for them somewhere, either with housing or - I know we don't have to stay with others, we're open six days a week and 12 hours a day and we have different kinds of work that people do. So we've had people who were talented and working for us as VISTA's not be paid while they're helping us to do things in a capacity other than the one they're doing as a VISTA, while we pay someone else. Because there is no ability to pay them to do, like to be an artist. We didn't hire them to be an artist. They were doing something different. So that really doesn't feel good. It feels "yucky" to have them struggling and to have to pay someone else, rather than to be able to pay them because we're limited in our ability to do that. So I think that there's got to be some space made somewhere in here so that we can better have the hosting organizations in a position to be able to really help our service providers. And I think that's the biggest thing how to manage to fix it so that everyone who wants to serve, needs to serve, has the ability to serve. Thank you.

19 MS. MCSWAIN:

20 As Ellen comes up, I want to invite

22 ELLEN W.: Thanks for your valiant effort with my last name. Ellen W. usually works fine. Once again, I would like to say thank you to all of you for - I know you're working great doing listening sessions, putting stimulus money out there to various communities so that they can use it. Thank you to everyone here who has served and will continue to serve. Just a couple of quick comments. My service stands back to the 1992, 1993 years when we did Summer of Service, when we first came out of the blocks. And it's seen within the community in a variety of different capacities and left the community and came back to the community. And I find myself on the technical assistance side. So speaking to that, the work that we do is one of the most incredible things that sets us apart as a nation in this world. And at this point, this particular Act has the opportunity to continue to set us apart as a nation in our non-profit or civic sector or civil sector and whatever you want to call that sector. Non-profit doesn't quite do it right for me. In how we do this work and infusing the sector firmly and economic drivers of our economy. And also potentially infusing the connection between this sector and the market sector or the business sector. And that continues to set us apart as an economy. And we really need to work that piece of measuring what we do but also seeding things that will continue to move this part forward. Because this is a unique way in which we fund how we do what we do. The rest of the world tends to fund the youth through fee for service or through other government funding, which we know doesn't exist right now. So this sector is suffering across the world. So in that realm, I lobby for moving forward on that. But to think about performance measures that actually measure us in what we're doing in a unique way in how we implement. And I'm not exactly sure I know what that is, but I know there are a lot of experts in this country who can lend into that dialogue and that discussion. And I encourage you to go out and do that, and I will as well. To the other performance measures, I really think that our diversity is our strength. If we go like "No child left behind" to completely standardized measures, and I know we're talking about children there. Then we are not telling our story well. We have to look at the variety of places that we put our money. Find out what we're doing well and ask people to measure those well in all of the variety of sectors education, the environment, youth development, aging, legal services, work force. And last but not least, we can't do this unless we have support at the numbers you're talking about. So continue that technical assistance support using the existing communities and don't forget to include leadership and cultural because we're not done with those yet.

102

1 ASHLEY SLOAN: Hi, I'm Ashley Sloan. I'm in the AmeriCorps program at the St. Bernard Project. And I first want to thank you for coming down and listening the questions and comments that all of the organizations that realize AmeriCorps, as well as having representatives from our Lieutenant Governor or our state commission, like Janet, who are always listening to us on the ground level. I am a former NCCC member. I served one term as a Corps member and another term as a team leader. I did tap into the corporate world where I served as an advertising copywriter and then went back into a tour of service as a third term with AmeriCorps State, St. Bernard Project. And my comment with that is that in reviewing the grants, I would make sure that organizations such as St. Bernard Project or other organizations that recruit from other AmeriCorps programs, like NCCC, aren't, I guess, judged for using third term members, because I feel that's a valuable resource with the experience I gained and I also received a service award in my third term of service. So I think that organizations should be able to benefit from using third term members and not penalized in the application. The next - you've heard from a lot of organizations that use separate entities of AmeriCorps. And I think that it is really important when looking in disaster areas in your funding towards these areas to recognize that we need to utilize these because we are in (inaudible) and not (inaudible). We are trying to meet the basic needs of the individuals in these communities, such as housing and getting people to move back home. We won't always need as many members as we currently have and to keep that in consideration in recovery funds that you provide. My last comment is on the National (inaudible) as I am a proud alumni of that program. I want to say thank you for making it a permanent program. And also looking at the fact that it is becoming focused around disaster recovery as that is a priority to make sure that you pay attention to members comments. A couple of NCCC have had projects out here with FEMA that they didn't feel very utilized. And so when

the percentage of time taken to specific organizations that you hear feedback and you continue to have a varied and positive experience for those members because they go on to serve in all five capacities. Thank you.

18 MS. MCSWAIN:

19 Nadia is the last speaker who is on

20 the list. So when she's done, I'm

21 going to ask you to raise your hands if

22 you want to speak. So be thinking. If

23 you have anything else to say, a

24 question, a comment.

25 NADIA: I do have a unique position in serving as a manager for the Office of Social Entrepreneurship here in Louisiana, which is housed inside the Lieutenant Governor's Office. So we are very privileged in that we can work together very closely with LA Serve. And what I hope to do in the few minutes that I have is try to connect some of the dots that were heard by previous comments about social innovation and how to disperse innovation. We have a little bit of time in terms of actually trying to do this here in this state. And what we've learned by talking to non-profits and other entities in our state is that there has to be time, space and resources in order to plan for innovation. And I think when we are allocating resources, in order to do that then we can also address the issue of measurement. Those organizations will be involved in the opportunities of plan versus success. And what the success looks like. They plan that for themselves during this period where we provide the support and the capacity in order for them to be successful. So I think that it's in both hands when it comes to measurement. That there can be a standardized measurement. But also there's that dynamic piece of measurement that needs to happen inside of a very deliberate planning process around innovation that the organization seeks to implement. So I wanted to try to give a little bit perspective on that piece. And lastly, I'm proud to have served as the first manager for the Summer of Service here in New Orleans. I just want to commend you all on continuing to expand that program and having it implemented and be part of this Act. We were actually able to serve 100 young people and you changed their lives in that summer. And I don't want to underestimate the ability of that program to touch young people in a way that they have not been previously been able to. But through the education process or through the service that's available in their communities. So I applaud you for that and also if there are any questions from the members that are familiar with the Office of Social Entrepreneurship here in Louisiana, please feel free to approach me about this. Thank you.

12 MS. MCSWAIN:

13 So what I would like you to do for

14 our Court Reporter is state your name.

15 SARA FISHER: I'm Sara Fisher and I work with the Literacy Alliance of Greater New Orleans and specifically with the National Direct program called Nursing AmeriCorps. And you had asked for suggestions on your focus areas and I have an answer for you or a suggestion. I think if you focus on education but that you look at that category, kind of, outside the box. We work with adult literacy programs. And our state and national funding streams for adult literacy are hurting in general. So AmeriCorps, specifically Literacy AmeriCorps here in New Orleans area has been - our program is one of the ones who got (inaudible). They couldn't do it. And considering that as much as the Obama Administration, he just cut a national institute family literacy and reading start program, which are two of our big supporters. Just look at the adult education

as part of that component. It's often left out or shoved under workforce development. And while that's important, there's something valuable to going back to get your GED, which is essential for many of the students here who couldn't finish high school in the New Orleans area because of Katrina. But also to look at older Americans who are coming back because they couldn't get their education for a variety of reasons. And are not trying to just get their GED necessarily, but just improve their quality of life. So I just ask that you put that bug in your ear and anyone else you may talk to and the President too because it's on his Agenda. Thanks.

7 MS. MCSWAIN:

8 Does anyone else want to speak?

9 LILLIAN THOMPSON: I'm a former Peace Corps volunteer and former Associate Director of Peace Corps. And one thing I'd like to say is I have incredible respect and appreciation for AmeriCorps and NCCC and all of the other programs that are encompassed here. I have always, sort of, viewed as my partner and my brother and sister. I do want to say that following up on one of the other speakers that I think branding is an issue that needs to be addressed here. And I am embarrassed to say that I campused all of the organizations that are represented here and I can't tell you one program from another. MCSWAIN: I don't think you should be embarrassed. THOMPSON: I think it would be a great help to my brother and sister organization if we did have one name and I think that that would strengthen your brand recognition and recognition for the wonderful work that you do. I would also encourage you to when you're thinking about that, think about removing age from your view of programs. I hate to think that AmeriCorps is only for someone that is young just out of school. And I'd hate to think that some of the things that are older are restricted to them. There's a natural sorted out and that will take place, of course. But I would encourage you not to strategize your programs by age. Thank you.

LINDA DIKES: Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Linda Dikes. And I'm from the Tangipahoa Parish. I'm much interested in helping the seniors there. And I would like to be able to offer them a more attractive wages. I looked at the poverty level and things of that nature and it wasn't too pretty to look at. So anyway, I would really like to offer the seniors something better. I think they'd be more attractive to them and bring them onboard.

STEPHANIE MONIKY: I'm Stephanie Moniky with the Mississippi Campus Compact. And I can actually tell you the difference between all of the programs, but it took me more than a couple of years to be able to do that. So that brings me to my point about perhaps having a category developing AmeriCorps. They may not have as many members or they may not have as much (inaudible) and they may have a new tour assigned to them or maybe a grant to an experienced program to serve as a mentor for them throughout the three year process. Another thing is that we are in here, most of us have experience with AmeriCorps National Service. But what we don't have a lot of is community folks, in terms of Mayors and elected officials and business people. And one suggestion I have is to get out of those silos not only programs but of these programs have a very limited view of how to pull the community in. So looking at the community, begin to think of national service as a community wide opportunity so that they need to say, okay, we want to have these kinds of national service programs in our community and we will find the match through Chambers of Commerce, through city or county funding. And I believe that that's happening right now and this seems like a call to service with the Bill that's just been passed to really pull the community in and make it a social innovation grant to have a group pull that together to see how that works. That's the suggestions that I have And finally, on performance measures. I'm always hesitant about what people won't tell you so I put it in because I know I'll be held to them. But sometimes there are things that I would really like to explore and figure out and it may not work. But I don't want to put it in my grant because I'm going to be held accountable. So in terms of having some of these required, we will be measured on this. Here is some ideas that we will do that we just won't do and share with everyone else, but we don't want to have consequences necessarily for trying something new.

TONY HARDEN: My name is Tony Harden and I'm a proud NCCC alumni as well as now a proud VISTA member serving with Tulane University as the Mayor's Volunteer Director for the City of New Orleans. I wanted to first thank you. Thank the Corporation, the members, the supervisors, everyone for allowing us the opportunity to serve and then also for coming down here to serve, because it's not done yet. There's still a lot more to do. You've all driven through the city. Many of you know, everyone around here knows there's a lot more to be done in the city of New Orleans and throughout the Gulf coast. So please as many other people have said here, remember us. There's still a lot to do. And with that, on what the last speaker said, I'd like to encourage the Corporation and especially project development to work with the communities more. There is a lot of knowledge in our communities, especially in New Orleans and larger cities and it's not as hard as a lot of people think. I would like to see and I know you would gain a lot from project development by working direct communities, not just on the city-wide basis. We're great and all. But our neighborhoods, neighborhood associations, outside of just the project non-profit themselves. And quite frankly, avoid the mistakes and pitfalls that a lot of projects have had happen. So with that said, I'd like to say that the city is always ready to work with the Corporation. And they told me this to help more AmeriCorps members, Senior Corps, Learn and Serve, serve within the City of New Orleans. And as a VISTA member, I'm encouraged and former NCCC member by you all looking over the programs and considering changes to the programs. There are a lot of great things that we do. But there's always room for improvement.

17 MS. MCSWAIN:

18 Anyone else? Any question you may

19 have? Comment you need to make? Yes,

20 ma'am.

21 ASHLEY

My name is Ashley. I'm Louisiana (inaudible) Association. We're the leadership organization of the state's federally qualified health service. I'm a community healthcare program coordinator. So we have members all across the state in our community help centers. I have two comments, really questions. But first, in regards to healthy futures corps, I guess I'm kind of curious about how the community health corps is going to be effected by that. And soon, having abortion referrals as a prohibited activity for members, does that, is that also part of the organizations which they are serving because as a community help center, that's something that's done in the organization. So will that have a community health center serving as AmeriCorps sites? MS. MCSWAIN: I'm going to ask the lawyer. The Bill went back and forth so many times in different versions. We all sort of have to go with the final version. She's going to look that up. In terms of the healthy futures and education and other focusing areas, our current thinking is those are focus areas that are to the currently funded would fall under. So that the health corps would fall under the healthy futures. Programs like your tutoring programs are in, Teacher Corps programs, are all under education. So that is our current thinking. In that we have performance measures that are spelled in the statute. Heather, do you have an answer for us yet? HEATHER JOHNSON: Yes. It's only a prohibited member activity. It shouldn't impact what the organization does outside of what AmeriCorps members do.

BRENDA REED:

I'm Brenda Reed and I'm the AmeriCorps leader for Catholic Charities. And I've been serving, this will be July 1st, I'm ending. I've served my whole three years as of July. So I'd like to know if y'all are considering adding on, like you could do more years. I was wanting to save my last year, where if I wanted to come back again, I could. But I was needed at the time, so I went ahead and signed on last year. And also I would like to say that I'm 43. I was put on disability. And I couldn't get my medication. So I was really infuriated because of not being able to get my medicine. So I felt like I was walking around working for my meds. More so than anything else. So that's a big plus that I was able to get my meds. I want to thank you for letting people

with disabilities to do this program and I think it should be more publicized because there are probably aren't more people that could just work for their meds. You know, just to get their medication. And it's authorized and it's authorized medicine is what I needed. It's so expensive that I couldn't get it. So I would like to say thank you for that. But I feel like I would like to see it be added on that we could serve longer. I would again later. Do you think that would ever be? HEATHER JOHNSON: That is actually eliminated. The limitation now (inaudible). MCSWAIN: I'm not sure if you heard Heather, but she said that the maximum of two terms was removed from the statute. REED: The other thing is the education award. Up front, I'm signing to get the cash and then as I started serving, I thought maybe I would like to go back to school. But you couldn't go the other award to get the education award. And I would like to see that. I think after people serve, sometimes there heart changes and they feel like they can go back to school and do something different.

JULIANNE MCNAB: My name is Julianne McNab. And I'm with United Way for Greater New Orleans area. To echo what was already said, I would like to thank you all for coming down here. It means a lot. I thank you all for the contributive comments. They're really great. (Inaudible phrase.) One thing that I do want to make a point of is that really important is performance measurement. I really want to be mindful that is not meant to be punitive. That performance measurement is about (inaudible) in how can we as a community together. It doesn't need to be prescriptive as the walls outside of our community but how can we come together to identify what outcomes we would like to see on possibly three levels, the individual volunteer level, the community non-profit level that's hosting the volunteers, and the third is the community level. We speak a lot about improved raise, or improved behavior performance (inaudible) volunteers in the school. And I think that's very important. I think someone else hit the nail on the head when she said that she increased her skill capacity because of volunteering. That's a wonderful outcome. We'd love to see more of that. And that's part of being taken into consideration. But the other thing that I always look at as United Way employee and I have to rely on results and outcome standards, but we acquire of our agencies that again as someone else mentioned in Mississippi, if they want to put themselves out there and try something new and measure or begin to use that as a baseline. How important that is. And how to encourage that. Because I think a lot of people think the performance measurement as accountability with punishment. And rather than punishment, how we use it as quality improvement and continue to give us feedback. So when I think about outcomes, I think about why do we want to gather than information. And what are we going to do with that information. And I think as a community and as a region, we have the ability to come together and have those dialogues and bring them back to you all at a national level. And I do think its nice to have those conversations here. So that's one point and I apologize if I'm taking too long. (Inaudible phrase.) How can we provide affordable housing for all of the many wonderful volunteers that we have? Our United Way, right now, is in conversation with NORA, other long industries across the city to develop different types of housing that we can put along different areas around our city and region so that we can house young people, not young people, any age and any volunteers who are serving so that that helps to encourage people and it's not an inhibitor or an obstacle. I think also at these sites, you will find hubs of innovation there. There can be nights where people can discuss having better sites because as somebody else mentioned, they're plenty of ideas and innovative solutions to problems and issues that their - I'm sorry to keep on talking because I don't see anybody else behind me - but I think that that's a huge thing to look at as a region. The other is the recruitment enhancement strategies of gaining volunteers into the door. Having we systemize that will get better in this region and creating online systems. Do you know there's a capacity building of organizations that are hosting volunteers. We talked a lot about technical assistance. What does that mean? To me, that's a proven technique for that is actually peer to peer or coaching on the ground at the site, not a webinar, not a seminar. It is ongoing and deliberate. And I think that we have the ability again as a region to really develop innovative coaching and peer to peer review mechanisms that can be extremely powerful and I really encourage that as a major piece of capacity building. So those are some of my points. Thank you for listening to me.

5 HEATHER GONEY:

I'm Heather Goney. Y'all already met me. I had one question. I heard a bunch of other people talking about similar things that I thought that it's been a wonderful experience, but being really poor sucks. And I guess I was wondering how interested you would be in approving some sort of a committee or something to plan

innovative ways to help this? To go on a fact-finding mission to see how this - because right now, noone has asked me: How are you paying your rent? How do you get your groceries in your refrigerator? I know I found out some interesting things right here just listening to other people. So I was wondering how you felt about that as building on AmeriCorps VISTA? MS. MCSWAIN: So there's a couple of things. One is that the staff has been thinking about doing in a regulatory process. And to the questions are should this be able to go to school and should this be able to have work outside of their VISTA experience. Acknowledging that the world has changed from the time those regulations were originally put into place, and that one can do internet work that doesn't impede your ability to committed to your organization leading them. So that's a question that would be on the table on that regulations. So part of this listening sessions is not only thinking about the Service America Act, but also thinking about other things that are happening in our programs. And what kind of regulation we need to have around those. So that's one by taking information from these listening sessions. The other thing is VISTA has a nice online community that they just launched. And it's the VISTA Campus and I think that's a way for VISTA's to go to share how they are creatively budgeting. So you all can connect with one another. Because regional districts is also a matter. You all have housing problem here that is very different from other places. So the ways you think about using your (inaudible) are different. So I think those are two ways. And if you think of others as you go home and contemplate, feel free to put it on our web log.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: One quick comment about housing. Just a suggestion of looking at how you can overlay getting back federal programs. That every community is covered by has a public housing authority overlay. Maybe a dialogue with HUD for vouchers, Section 8 alternative to look at some means to provide affordable housing alternative that is income based.

25 BASHLEY GRAM:

My name is Ashley Gram. And I'm a second year (inaudible). I worked last year with (inaudible) Spokane County in Washington State and I'm serving the state with Louisiana (inaudible) in Baton Rouge. I'm glad you brought up the topic of being able to work and have outside commitments. That's something I want to touch on. That honestly, has been one of the biggest deterrents in my recruitments efforts to recruit new people onto our team. Is when they find out, A, this is how low your stipend is and B, you can't do anything to add more income to yourself. So that's been the biggest struggle in recruiting people. It's when they find out they can't go to school or work an outside job. The second thing was that the biggest rustration I have heard from current VISTA's and sometimes other members is that they feel they corps doesn't understand exactly what it is they are there to do. Some of that comes from the nature of the (inaudible) it's a little less tangible than the direct services ridges. But I think that it might be really helpful for programs who have just coming up with a list of projects who (inaudible). To have a really solid example of some of the inner community that's already effectively using VISTA members. Actually people have come down to talk to our group about what they do with all their VISTA members, indirect service members, working to rebuild New Orleans, and I think that that really helps some of our supervisors to see what a real great and effective program can do with its members. So I think that may be a good way to kind of show people really strong ways to use this as a resource. I have one quick question about what we were talking about them bringing some of the AmeriCorps type programs into high schools. And I was wondering if the \$500.00 education award they would be receiving will count towards their lifetime education awards? MCSWAIN: I don't believe it is. It is not.

NADIA: Just a quick comment about innovation. If we could consider not just a non-profit sector and that's often what we hear (inaudible). In order to encourage social innovation in other business structures so that you can get better outcomes throughout our communities and not just in that same old business structure in non-profit. I just wanted to throw that out there to consider it.

17 AUDIENCE MEMBER:

I just wanted to say a couple of things. I just wanted to encourage to continue collaborations. I hope that

continues because primarily because as a parallel we're in (inaudible) with the youth who serve and youth when you need to work. It's a very smart type of activity. So thank you for that and I hope that continues. I did want to make a comment about some of the educational (inaudible). There's a lot of different types of pieces that are listed referencing through achievements, through engagements, graduation rates, different types of things that are actually important and accountability is very good. The thing I would just hope the Corporation considers is that teaching (inaudible) programs characteristically engage teachers who work in the classroom that other teachers don't want to work in. Therefore, you can do (inaudible) compared to the standard, you're going to have situations in which our teachers are working with students who are grade level. Those kinds of issues. Thank you all for being here in New Orleans.

22 MS. MCSWAIN:

Couple of things to wrap this up.
Number one is as you think about things
you would like to say, here is the
website. I've been on the road too

2 much to actually access it. But you
3 can put your thoughts in. You can
4 comment on other peoples comments. We
5 can get the feedback. There also will
6 be three conference calls in the first
7 part of June. If you run into someone
8 who says they really wanted to go to
9 that listening session. I didn't make
10 it. Feel free to show the information
11 with them. They're on June 2nd, 3rd,
12 and 5th from 12:00 to 1:30 eastern
13 standard time. In a minute, I'm going
14 to turn it over to Peachy. She's going
15 to get some feedback on how this
16 session went. But first of all I want
17 to thank you not only for coming and
18 spending almost four hours sitting in
19 this small seat getting your feedback.

20 But more importantly, the membership of
21 service that they're doing every day.
22 And for all of you who make our
23 national service programs possible. We
24 spend a lot of time thanking our
25 volunteers, our members. We don't

1 spend as much time thanking the people
2 who actually make that service
3 possible. The work that you do is
4 largely (inaudible) and I thank you for
5 it on behalf of your members and
6 communities. So thank you.

7 (THE PROCEEDINGS CONCLUDED AT 4:15 P.M.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

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