

Report of the FCNL Representatives

June 2015

By Charlie Wilton (Berea), Jane Hiles (Birmingham), and Christopher Easton (Athens)

As your SAYMA Representatives to the **Friends Committee on National Legislation**, we attended the sessions of FCNL's annual meeting in Washington, DC, November 20-23, 2014. The theme: Living Our Faith Through Action. The focus of the Quaker Public Policy Institute: maintaining diplomacy with Iran. Quaker writer and activist Parker Palmer spoke to the gathering on Thursday evening on *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Quaker Dimension*. (Friend Palmer is affiliated with SAYMA through his membership in Berea Friends Meeting.) The Snyder Award was presented to US Senator Chris Murphy (CT). Details of the meeting, including handouts and other documents, can be found at fcnl.org/moreinfo.

Legislative priorities for the 114th Congress

The principal task of the General Committee this year was approval of a set of legislative priorities to direct the resources of FCNL lobbyists during the two years of the 114th Congress. This was developed with input from all monthly meetings and many other Quaker bodies over the last year. Thanks to those monthly Meetings who participated in this important work. The priorities are:

- Advance peacebuilding and the peaceful prevention and resolution of violent conflict
- Reduce military spending and militarized responses to global and domestic situations
- Promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation
- Support solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate disruption
- Reduce the influence of money in politics
- Address poverty, reduce income inequality, and promote economic justice
- Advance policies that reduce mass incarceration
- Continue our witness and advocacy on Native American issues
- Promote fair, humane and demilitarized immigration policies

Get Involved!

Would you like to become involved? Attend the Spring Lobby weekend in 2016, or go to fcnl.org to see how you can help further Friends' testimony in the world. There are many opportunities for **YOUNG FRIENDS** to get involved. FCNL offers paid Washington Program Assistantships and other FCNL programs for young adults. Young adult friends interested in these opportunities can apply at futureadvocate.org/program/advocacycorps.

Your FCNL Reps. are hoping to develop stronger lines of communication among FCNL Contacts in SAYMA's constituent meetings. Please contact Jane, Charlie or Chris if your Meeting appoints a new FCNL Contact. Don't have an FCNL Contact in your Meeting? Please ask for volunteers and let us know!

FCNL Successes

While change is always incremental and the result of many factors, FCNL can take credit for their role in many positive developments in the last year:

- The Senate Intelligence Committee's Torture Report is a sobering look at the cost of the "war on terror." We learned not only that the CIA used torture techniques--including water boarding, sleep deprivation and humiliation--more extensively than even lawmakers realized, but that CIA worked around its own safeguards to allow these detentions and interrogations to continue.

- The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to support rolling back the law behind more than a decade of war: the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force.
- Congress passed crucial legislation that requires states to collect the information that can help prevent deaths while in detention. FCNL worked with people in key states to move this legislation through the Senate.
- In May of this year, President Obama issued an executive order that bans the federal government from sending some types of military equipment to U.S. police departments. His executive order mirrors the bill FCNL has been lobbying for in the past year, the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act.
- Since the Quaker Public Policy Institute in November 2014, in which 440 citizen lobbyists visited Washington to advocate for diplomacy with Iran, 25 members of Congress have made public statements in support of ongoing diplomacy. In May, 151 members of Congress sent a letter to President Obama commending the political framework reached between the P5+1 countries and Iran and pressing for continued diplomatic efforts to secure a negotiated nuclear agreement.
- For the first time, thanks to the work of FCNL and constituents in his district, a Republican member of Congress has agreed to draft legislation acknowledging that climate change is real. Rep. Gibson's bill is a possible first step to getting bipartisan action on climate.
- 289 Young Adult Friends (and some less young) visited legislators on the Hill to advocate for our environment during Spring Lobby Weekend 2015.

Highlights of Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business, 2014

Through its five-year, \$15 million Capital Campaign, FCNL hopes to add \$9 million to the endowment and develop the 205 C Street property into meeting and living space. This campaign is in addition to the Annual Fund, which is projected to remain on a path of steady growth. The endowment addition will provide reliable long-term funding for young adult programs, the Friend in Washington program, in addition to lobbying.

The second year of the Capital Campaign has just ended, with over \$6 million (40% of goal) raised from leadership gifts. The public phase of the Campaign will begin in 2015. Contributions from monthly and yearly meetings will be solicited in 2016. We urge each of SAYMA's constituent meetings and worship groups to think and plan for a special Capital Campaign contribution to FCNL at that time. We also urge SAYMA to keep this campaign in mind when doing budget planning. Also, if any individual members or attendees would like to speak with a member of the FCNL Capital Campaign Committee about making a major gift or bequest, we can put you in touch.

Note that once a capital campaign pledge has been made, the donor will have five years to fulfill that pledge, allowing for more substantial gifts.

FCNL's financial position is strong. The 2015 and 2016 budgets are the largest ever. FCNL is returning to the financial and advocacy trajectory that we had hoped for before the 2008 financial crisis, when staff was cut from 40 full time equivalent (FTE) employees to 24.6 FTE. FCNL is currently

staffed at 37 FTE. While investment income waxes and wanes, individual contributions have remained on a path of steady growth. In order to allow for maximum management flexibility, be sure that contributions are made to FCNL (a 501(c)4 organization), as opposed to the FCNL Education Fund (a 501(c)3 organization), whenever possible.

The FCNL Representatives respectfully request that SAYMA search for a way to contribute meaningfully to the Capital Campaign in 2016.

Submitted 29 May 2015

Christopher Easton (Athens) elijaheaston@gmail.com

Charlie Wilton (Berea) cwilton@gmail.com

Jane Hiles (Birmingham) njhiles@samford.edu



2015 Report to Yearly Meetings

Since the early days of the Religious Society of Friends, God's spirit has led Friends to take action in the world. Since 1943, the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) has carried on this witness of the Spirit through action on Capitol Hill.

FCNL brings the concerns, experiences and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation's capital. We are governed by a General Committee of 184 Quakers, representing 25 Yearly Meetings and 7 Quaker organizations. We are sustained by the advocacy, prayers and financial support of tens of thousands of Friends and like-minded people across the country, in every state and nearly every congressional district.

Living our Faith through Action

FCNL's 17 registered lobbyists meet on Capitol Hill with lawmakers and their staff, and we work as partners with citizen advocates across the country. In 2014, Friends in FCNL made more than 750 personal visits to congressional offices, in Washington and in local districts, on FCNL priority issues. Our network also sent 116,981 issue-related messages to Congress and had 121 letters to the editor published that support our advocacy priorities.

In November, we welcomed 440 Quakers and other friends in the FCNL network to Washington for our annual, and largest ever, Quaker Public Policy Institute, focused on sustaining diplomacy with Iran. Quaker writer and speaker Parker J. Palmer delivered the keynote address, talking about the ways that Friends' practices can create safe spaces and conversations to heal the heart of democracy. Attendees visited more than 200 congressional offices over the course of two days; 25 offices released statements in support of diplomacy following these visits.

At the Annual Meeting gathering, convened just after the Policy Institute, FCNL's General Committee approved new legislative priorities to focus the organization's work in the 114th Congress (2015-2016). The priorities were developed with input from 167 Quaker meetings and churches across the country. Priorities are available at fcnl.org/priorities.



1 Participants in FCNL's 2014 Spring Lobby Weekend question Rep. Adam Schiff (CA) about endless war.

The Future of Quaker Advocacy

FCNL engages with Quakers of all ages. As I write this, we have recently completed our Spring Lobby Weekend, which brought nearly 300 students and other young adults to Washington to ask Congress to act on climate change. These experiences light the inward fire and motivate young adults as they become empowered advocates on this and other peace and justice issues.

From our Young Fellows program (formerly called an internship), now in its 45th year, to our new Advocacy Corps, which will help young adults organize in their own communities, FCNL is providing important opportunities for young people during their formative years to learn and practice ways to put their faith into action. Find out more at futureadvocate.org. We are also exploring opportunities for Friends who are later in their careers to work with FCNL for a period of time through our revived Friend in Washington program.

As the 114th Congress begins, FCNL's non-partisan witness on Capitol Hill is more important than ever. Our faith and experience convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable and sustainable world we seek. Above all, we seek to remain open to where God's spirit leads us. We greatly appreciate and acknowledge the significant impact of the financial support and activism of individuals and Quaker meetings, churches and yearly meetings. Please keep our work in your prayers.



DeAnne Butterfield
Intermountain Yearly Meeting
Clerk, FCNL General Committee
March 2015

FCNL's Executive Committee

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

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war
We seek a society with equity and justice for all
We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled
We seek an earth restored

Work and Witness 2014-2015

FCNL's staff and volunteers work with a nationwide network to advocate for social and economic justice, peace, care for the earth, and good government.

Climate Change: A Call to Conscience

In meetings with more than 150 Democratic and Republican congressional offices, we have engaged members in conversations about how their faith and values lead them to act. These conversations are space for congressional action on climate change: a Republican representative is drafting a resolution calling for climate change action, and other bipartisan bills are gaining support. We see opportunities this year to advance these bills and to build the relationships that will enable more far-reaching action in the next several years.

Iran: Diplomacy Works

For the first time in 30 years, the U.S. and Iran are engaged in robust, sustained, high-level diplomacy, which is already reducing the likelihood that Iran will develop a nuclear weapon. FCNL is lobbying Congress to support, not undermine, this progress. We've helped persuade more than one-third of Congress to speak out in favor of negotiations and helped postpone votes on new sanctions that could derail the talks. We continue to discourage Congress from placing pre-conditions on these talks or imposing new sanctions while progress is being made.

Mass Incarceration: Easing Harsh, Discriminatory Sentencing

Sentencing reform can break the cycle that sustains mass incarceration. FCNL is lobbying to support the Smarter Sentencing Act, bipartisan legislation that would halve the length of mandatory sentences, give judges discretion on sentences for many drug offenses and allow thousands of federal prisoners to seek fairer sentences. Members of Congress from across the political spectrum support these changes, and we are working to capitalize on that interest and bring this bill to a vote.

Prevent Violent Conflict: Building Infrastructure

Through FCNL's lobbying and our work with a coalition that includes Amnesty International, MercyCorps, and others, we are successfully helping to establish and fund civilian structures within the U.S. government to better prevent and respond to violence, including violent extremism. FCNL is also working to reverse years of underfunding of U.S. civilian diplomatic agencies, which has allowed the military to play an outsized role in setting and carrying out U.S. foreign policy.

Peacebuilding: Putting it into Practice

In advance of elections in 2013, FCNL worked closely with Kenyan Quakers to encourage U.S. government support for violence prevention. Now, we are doing similar work with Quakers in Burundi, where elections in 2015 could be a violence flashpoint. Thanks in part to our efforts, the administration's interagency Atrocities Prevention Board is also focusing on how the U.S. can support violence prevention in Burundi.

End the Endless War & Advance Our Shared Security

The 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force has been used by two administrations to justify war, indefinite detention at Guantanamo, lethal drone attacks, and now U.S. military action against ISIS. We have helped convince more than 200 members of Congress to support this law's repeal. Now, we are leading efforts to stop new military action and shift to strategies to bring long-term peace.

Repeal the Pentagon's 1033 Program: Get Tanks off Main Street

The program to transfer military weapons, vehicles and equipment from the Pentagon to U.S. police departments is both a symptom and a cause of the militarized approach to policing, visible in Ferguson, MO and many other communities. FCNL has helped lead efforts for nearly two years to repeal this program, resulting in bipartisan legislation in both the House and Senate to put needed checks on these activities.

Nuclear Weapons: Working for Disarmament

FCNL is a leading voice in Washington for nuclear disarmament, gathering bipartisan support for cuts to nuclear budgets and for reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the U.S. and worldwide. Even in an era of budget cuts, we have had success in increasing funding for nuclear nonproliferation programs. Our current work focuses on eliminating funding for the refurbishment of the B-61 nuclear bomb, opposing efforts to undermine the new START Treaty with Russia, and adequately funding programs to secure nuclear materials around the world.

Native American Advocacy: Continuing Our Witness

FCNL is a steadfast advocate for issues of concern to Native communities. Our presence on Capitol Hill continues to elevate awareness of these issues with our nation's leaders. We are working for legislation to support the revival of Native languages, provide increased funding for the education of Native children, acknowledge the inherent governing authority of tribal councils and other tribal structure, and protect sacred sites from the intrusion of commercial interests.