AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

S. HRG. 107–707

THE PEACE CORPS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE, PEACE CORPS AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

JUNE 25, 2002

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/senate

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

82–102 PDF WASHINGTON : 2002

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., Delaware, *Chairman*

PAUL S. SARBANES, Maryland
CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, Connecticut
JOHN F. KERRY, Massachusetts
RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, Wisconsin
PAUL D. WELLSTONE, Minnesota
BARBARA BOXER, California
ROBERT G. TORRICELLI, New Jersey
BILL NELSON, Florida
JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER IV, West Virginia

JESSE HELMS, North Carolina
RICHARD G. LUGAR, Indiana
CHUCK HAGEL, Nebraska
GORDON H. SMITH, Oregon
BILL FRIST, Tennessee
LINCOLN D. CHAFEE, Rhode Island
GEORGE ALLEN, Virginia
SAM BROWNBACK, Kansas
MICHAEL B. ENZI, Wyoming

ANTONY J. BLINKEN, *Staff Director*
PATRICIA A. MCNERNEY, *Republican Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE, PEACE CORPS AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, Connecticut, *Chairman*

BILL NELSON, Florida
JOHN F. KERRY, Massachusetts
RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, Wisconsin
JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., DELAWARE

LINCOLN D. CHAFEE, Rhode Island
JESSE HELMS, North Carolina
MICHAEL B. ENZI, Wyoming
RICHARD G. LUGAR, Indiana

CONTENTS

	Page
Coyne, John, Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia/Eritrea (1962-1964), New York City Regional Manager (1994-2000), co-founder, the Peace Corps Fund, Pelham, NY	42
Prepared statement	43
Ferris, Barbara A., Peace Corps volunteer in Morocco (1980-1982); Women in Development Coordinator (1987-1993), co-founder, the Peace Corps Fund, Washington, DC	38
Prepared statement	40
Schneider, Mark, former Director, the Peace Corps; vice president, International Crisis Group, Washington, DC	21
Prepared statement	25
Shays, Hon. Christopher, U.S. Representative from the 4th Congressional District of Connecticut	4
Smith, Dane, Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia (1963-1965); president, National Peace Corps Association, Washington, DC	33
Prepared statement	36
Vasquez, Hon. Gaddi H., Director, the Peace Corps, Washington, DC	5
Prepared statement	8

THE PEACE CORPS

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2002

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
PEACE CORPS, AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:38 p.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher J. Dodd (chairman of the subcommittee), presiding.

Present: Senators Dodd and Chafee.

Senator DODD. Good afternoon. And I thank you. I apologize for starting a little bit late, but we had a vote that began just around 2:30. And so rather than come over and start early and then have to recess very quickly, I decided to wait a couple minutes.

I believe my colleague from Rhode Island, Senator Chafee, who is the ranking member of this subcommittee, will be joining us at some point. And other members may come in and come out. And I thank them for their attention and support.

I am going to share with you some opening comments and remarks. I note the presence in the audience of my colleague from Connecticut, Congressman Shays. And hiding out in the back of the room, I would point out.

Congressman, you are more than welcome to join us up here on the dais. I would not want you to get any exaggerated thoughts about leaving the House, but you are welcome here to join us on the dais if you would like to and be part of the hearing.

This is a wonderful friend and colleague, a former Peace Corps volunteer himself, and very, very active and interested in the subject matter. I know it is uncharacteristic of Senators to invite House Members to share in their——

Congressman SHAYS. What side do I sit on, sir?

Senator DODD. Well, I would kind of like you on this side. But if you want to sit on this side—anywhere you would like to be——

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you.

Senator DODD [continuing]. We are more than happy. And thank you for doing so.

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you for doing so.

Well, today the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Peace Corps, and Narcotics Affairs convenes to receive testimony on the future of the Peace Corps, and specifically on legislation that I have introduced, along with Senator Gordon Smith, Senators Kennedy, Toricelli, and several other members, to define

the Peace Corps charter so that we are better able to meet the challenges the Peace Corps will face in the coming years.

A companion bill has also been introduced in the House by Sam Farr, Mark Udall, and others. I want to thank Congressman Farr and Congressman Udall as well as members of the return Peace Corps community for working with us to craft the bill that is the subject of today's hearing. I look forward during the course of the hearing today to receiving comments on the legislation and to discussing ways in which we can begin to address the needs and challenges of today and tomorrow's Peace Corps so that it can continue to be as relevant in the 21st century as it was in the latter part of the 20th century.

As we all know, some 41 years ago, President John Kennedy made public his vision for the future of an American volunteer service. He spoke of a corps of committed and idealistic young volunteers, the Peace Corps, who would travel all over the world promoting world peace and friendship. He saw public service as an ideal that would transcend political rhetoric.

Volunteers were not to reflect particular Republican or Democratic ideologies, but rather their service was to be a manifestation of American values, values held in common by all of us as American citizens. The goal of this new endeavor was to support the development and betterment of the countries and communities where the Peace Corps volunteers served to foster a greater understanding of American values and culture abroad and to likewise foster a greater appreciation of other peoples' cultures on the part of Americans.

Four decades later, and more than 165,000 Americans have volunteered to serve in the Peace Corps and worked with diligence and compassion to achieve the very aims outlined some 41 years ago. As remarkable as the success of the Peace Corps has been and as important a symbol and example it is of public service in the aftermath of the tragic events on American soil on September 11, it has become something more. It has become a necessity.

The terrorist attacks of last September have shown us that the world has become a much smaller place. The United States can no longer afford to neglect certain countries or certain parts of the world. We need to find ways to help developing countries to meet their basic needs, and we need to do so now.

We especially need to act in places where there are people who are unfamiliar or hostile to American values. Now more than ever the Peace Corps volunteers play a pivotal role in helping to achieve a greater understanding of America abroad, especially in predominantly Muslim nations. If we are to expand the reach of the Peace Corps, to send our volunteers into more countries, then we must provide the Peace Corps with adequate resources to safely and effectively pursue these objectives.

I believe that the legislation that we have introduced last week, the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act, provides a framework for the Peace Corps to maintain its relevance in the context of the new challenges it confronts and authorizes sufficient funding to implement that framework, including expanding the number of volunteers, as called for by President Bush.

Today our witnesses have been asked to comment on the various provisions in that bill. Before turning to them, let me first take a few minutes to outline some of the significant provisions in the proposed legislation.

First, our bill stresses the importance of maintaining the Peace Corps' independence from any political affiliation, party, government agency, or particular administration. This independence is absolutely critical to the continued success, credibility, and acceptance of the volunteers in the countries where they are to serve.

We must vigilantly preserve this independence. This is especially critical as we attempt to open new programs in challenging places. We must make sure that the Peace Corps' goal of friendship, peace, and grassroots development are in no way muddled or compromised by short-term political objectives.

One way the Peace Corps can address the needs of the 21st century is to give special emphasis to recruiting volunteers for placement in countries whose governments are seeking to foster a greater understanding by and about their citizens. Moneys are authorized in the bill for this purpose.

The bill also calls upon the director of the Peace Corps to outline a strategy for increasing the Peace Corps presence in countries with substantial Muslim populations and other places of particular concern. We must find ways to engage with these nations, particularly with the younger generation, and to foster more open interaction and understanding between our citizens.

I know that the current Peace Corps Director is anxious to provide opportunities for Americans for all walks of life and ethnicity to become volunteers. And I commend him for that.

Gaddi, you have my compliments on the work you have done.

To that end, the pending legislation attempts to level the playing field in order to make it possible for more Americans to become volunteers through an assessment of the adequacy of college loan forgiveness programs offered to volunteers and by an increase in the readjustment allowance provided to volunteers at the end of their service.

Another important provision in this legislation is the training mandated for volunteers in the areas of education, prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, so that they can better help fight these diseases in the communities in which they will be serving.

This training, in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization, and local officials, I believe will help prepare volunteers promote a better grassroots approach to public health safety and disease prevention.

I also feel very strongly that we must find better ways to utilize the insights and experience of return volunteers to get them more involved in the promotion and support of the Peace Corps' three core goals. One way I believe to do this is to provide Federal grant moneys to nonprofits established by return volunteers. These nonprofits would be established for the express purpose of using the knowledge, experience, and expertise of return volunteers to help carry out the goals of the Peace Corps. Return volunteers are an

underutilized resource, I think, in this country. This would seek to remedy that under-use.

As our witnesses today will make clear, many return volunteers do continue to make a difference here at home through their enduring community service and their work to strengthen America's appreciation of other cultures. Together they are building a legacy of service for the next generation. And it is my hope that the nonprofit grant moneys provided in this bill will help provide them with yet another outlet for continued service.

Finally, let me speak briefly about the funding level increases called for this legislation. Over the next 4 years, this bill authorizes annual appropriations in the following amounts: $465 million for fiscal year 2004; $500 million for fiscal year 2005; $560 million for 2006; and $560 million for 2007.

In addition and most importantly, this bill allows for additional appropriations to be made to address the specific funding needs of the Peace Corps as it seeks to increase volunteer strength. Again, we must not allow our desire to expand the number of volunteers in the field to infringe on the security of our volunteers or the quality of the Peace Corps experience. If that means that the President's goal of doubling the Peace Corps by 2007 is not met, then so be it, in my view. Quality must go hand in hand with quantity if this organization is to remain true to its goals, as I have stated earlier.

In conclusion, I believe that the Peace Corps charter for the 21st century provides a road map for the Peace Corps to enable it to better meet the future needs of our volunteers while expanding and refining the organization. The Peace Corps is a symbol of the very best of American ideals of service, sacrifice, and self-reliance. And our volunteers are to be commended again for their enduring commitment to these ideals and for the way that they are able to communicate the message of the Peace Corps throughout the world. They are entitled to an organizational framework and funding levels that meet the demands that they will confront in the coming years.

I am now going to turn to—Congressman, do you want to make any opening brief comments here before we start?

Congressman SHAYS. Absolutely.

Senator DODD. Do this before some Senator shows up so I do not get myself in trouble here.

Congressman Shays, as I mentioned earlier, is a former volunteer, as is his wife, Betsy, and knows the organization very, very well. I am delighted you are here. Thank you for coming over.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, (R-CT) U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE 4TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF CONNECTICUT

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you, Senator Dodd. You are one of my heroes in public life. And I attribute a lot of your instincts to your opportunity to serve in the Peace Corps. And I consider you such an extraordinary friend of the Peace Corps. I find myself sitting in Mr. Feingold's chair, and I feel very comfortable in this seat.

Senator DODD. Do not try to amend this bill with any campaign finance reform.

Congressman SHAYS. Then-Senator Kennedy, John Kennedy, when he was debating President Nixon, he captivated me by his—in eighth grade, the opportunity to potentially serve in another country and walk in the paths that people would walk in, travel their roads, drink their water, eat their food, dress in their clothes, live in their houses, speak their language, you know, just get to understand and appreciate their culture. And I think that we both learned that as much as we thought people were different, there was so much that united us, so many similarities between people of all cultures. And for me, the Peace Corps was the greatest experience in my life. And I came here truly not to participate here, but just to understand this bill—because I have some questions. And I want to understand the motivation and also frankly to support the Director of the Peace Corps, because I feel that he is working really hard to try to make this a very humane and magnificent organization. And I think all Peace Corps volunteers rally around your effort to do that.

And so I thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Congressman.

Now I am going to invite Mr. Gaddi Vasquez, who is the Director of the Peace Corps. Gaddi, we welcome you to the committee. And that chair right in front of you is your chair.

I said to—in fact last week there were some wonderful ceremonies. I did not attend all of them. But the reception on Thursday night and a program at Constitution Hall on Friday morning where Sargent Shriver came in and mesmerized the entire audience, as apparently he did on Friday night or Saturday, arriving on a Harley Davidson. I was thinking they gave me a Honda 50 when I was a volunteer. I would have appreciated a Harley Davidson back in those days.

But I said it then and I will say it here publicly for this record, Gaddi, there were people who raised a lot of concerns when the President nominated you for this job. I supported you. And you have proven to be a good Director. You have only been on the job a relatively short amount of time, but I like the fact that you are getting out, you have visited as many different countries as you have, you are meeting with all the return volunteer groups in the country, listening to them, which I think is very, very important. And so I commend you for the work you have done. It has been good. And we look forward to working with you and are anxious to receive your testimony.

I will say to you and to the other panelists who will be appearing shortly that all of your statements in full will be included in the record and supporting data, materials you may think are important we will include as well as part of this record.

And so with that, the floor is yours, Mr. Vasquez.

STATEMENT OF HON. GADDI H. VASQUEZ, DIRECTOR, THE PEACE CORPS, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity. And I also want to thank Congressman Shays for his comments.

Mr. Chairman, I also want to thank you very much for your continued support and interest in the work of the Peace Corps. As a former volunteer, you certainly have a very unique perspective of Peace Corps service. And I thank you for all that you have done on behalf of the Peace Corps and the volunteers who have served over the 41-year history of this great organization.

As you have mentioned, this past weekend, the National Peace Corps Association hosted a gathering of our RPCVs, return Peace Corps volunteers, their families, their friends, to celebrate that anniversary. These are exciting times for the Peace Corps as we embark on what could really be one of the most significant areas of expansion for the Peace Corps in many decades.

President Bush, as has been referenced, has called for a doubling of the Peace Corps. And we have been mapping out organizational plans subject to appropriations by Congress. But I can report to you, Mr. Chairman, that the American public is responding to that call. The interest in serving has seen an upward trend since President Bush called on Americans to engage in community and public service.

From January to the present, we have seen an almost 17 percent increase in applications over the same period last year. Requests for applications are up almost 59 percent over last year. So it is fair to say that the President's message, coupled with our recruitment strategies, are having some results.

We have also been using technology to advance and expedite the application process. I know that those who have served in the Peace Corps would appreciate the fact that now you have online accessibility to tracking your application. And for those who have not been, it is maybe not too important. But for those that have, that is a major, major step forward in order to expedite our process.

And as the new director of the Peace Corps, I have made many, many efforts and have engaged in visitations with staff, with volunteers, and return Peace Corps volunteers, because that is a very high priority. And based on their input and their unique perspective, I have initiated a number of efforts at the Peace Corps.

We are moving aggressively to become more agile and responsive to the needs of the applicants, the trainees, and volunteers. And we are enhancing our safety and security functions.

As Peace Corps Director, I have had the privilege of visiting 7 countries thus far, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, Peru, Senegal, Mauritania, and Morocco. In Peru I had the privilege of signing the bilateral agreement that will result in our reentry to Peru after a 27-year absence. And in addition, on June 21, 16 volunteers arrived in East Timor, the first new country of the 21st century.

So, Mr. Chairman, I believe that we are well positioned to implement a smart growth plan by entering new countries, optimizing the number of volunteers in existing countries, expanding our recruitment efforts to create greater diversity in the Peace Corps, recruiting more seniors to serve in the Peace Corps—and, I might add, about 7 percent of our current volunteers are 50 and over—and using technology and advanced communications——

Senator DODD. We still consider that very young.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Yes, sir. It is very young.

Senator DODD. I just wanted to make sure that I heard that right. When I talked about young Americans, I was thinking about people over 50. I want you to know that.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Yes, sir. Duly noted.

We are also using technology and advanced communications strategies to reacquaint Americans with the Peace Corps. So, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to address your committee today about the proposed legislation that has been introduced.

We have had a limited amount of time to review the legislation and to analyze it in any kind of great detail. There are a number of portions within the legislation that would require some analysis on our part before I could provide in-depth comments or perspectives on some of the elements of the proposal.

But I do hope that we have the opportunity to work with you, Mr. Chairman, and your staff to analyze those sections of the proposal. I would like to offer some general observations about managing the Peace Corps that may relate to the proposal.

As has been mentioned, the Peace Corps has enjoyed a 41-year history of success, progress, and achievement. And while the numbers of volunteers has fluctuated over the 41-year history, I think it is very fair to say that the Peace Corps has been a great success. The Peace Corps is a unique agency operating in 70 countries with 7,000 volunteers. The challenges are many. But as you know, Mr. Chairman, the volunteer is always No. 1. I would offer the opinion that directors need to have the latitude and managerial freedom to make important decisions affecting the safety and security of volunteers and staff overseas. We have to be able to administer our initiatives and other matters that require swift and decisive action.

A change in a director's ability to launch initiatives, like the Crisis Corps or safety enhancements or other potential initiatives, could hamper the director's ability to make critical and timely decisions. The current Peace Corps Act provides for a broad advisory board that would include 15 members and 7 return Peace Corps volunteers.

Since coming to the Peace Corps, I have made it a point to begin to explore the history of the advisory board, to better understand how it has been used by previous directors and to try to maximize value where appropriate. And also since coming to the Peace Corps, I have launched a number of initiatives that I would like to briefly share with you but that are critical to the future of the Peace Corps.

One is an initiative to evaluate the barriers and obstacles to service in the Peace Corps. You have identified one in your comments, Mr. Chairman, relative to student loans. That is a major issue. We want to examine those barriers, those obstacles, to service in the Peace Corps.

We also have enhanced our staging of security and safety training for volunteers. We have reorganized the safety and security functions within the Peace Corps to create more direct accountability to the director's office and we have restructured the process of compliance.

We have also announced an initiative with the National Peace Corps Association to enhance the role of the return Peace Corps volunteer community. I totally concur and agree with you, Mr.

Chairman, that the return Peace Corps volunteer community is absolutely one of the most underutilized assets that we have available to us. And we want to change that. And that is why President Dane Smith of the NPCA and I have agreed to form a working group to identify opportunities to work together.

If we are provided the appropriations to expand the Peace Corps and are empowered to make the key decisions that need to be made, we can accomplish a great deal. I am committed to protecting and preserving the core values of the Peace Corps. And I am committed to preserving the quality of the Peace Corps volunteer experience. And moreover, I am committed to building a new Peace Corps for the 21st century.

And in conclusion, while I have had a limited amount of time to analyze the scope and the intent of the legislation, I do look forward to possible discussions with you, Mr. Chairman, and the committee and staff to get some clarification and then be able to move forward.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Mr. Director.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Vasquez follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. GADDI H. VASQUEZ, DIRECTOR, PEACE CORPS

I am pleased to appear before your Committee today. I have a heightened appreciation for your interest in the Peace Corps and sincere admiration for your own service in the Dominican Republic in the late 1960's. Because you are a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV), I know you share in our enthusiasm to ensure the Peace Corps continues as a world-class organization promoting world peace and friendship abroad.

While I understand the purpose of today's hearing, let me reserve some general comments on the legislation for later in my testimony, but at the outset, let me say that I look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, and your staff and hope that together we can continue a productive relationship that will serve this agency and our Volunteers well. In an effort to put my testimony in context, one must understand the past, present, and future of the Peace Corps. Valuable lessons have been learned over the last 41 years. We remain committed to the core values of the Peace Corps and believe that any changes or alterations to the management structure and administration of the agency require thoughtful and constructive dialogue and, again, we look forward to working with you.

I thought I would begin my comments by reviewing with you some of the actions and initiatives that I have taken since my swearing-in on February 15th of this year. It has been an exciting four months at the agency as we set the stage to carry out President Bush's call for public service and his goal to double the number of Peace Corps Volunteers over the next five years. Mr. Chairman, never in the history of our nation has the mission of Peace Corps been more important. As you are quite familiar, the work of the Volunteers is carried out through three goals as outlined by President John F. Kennedy upon the formation of the Peace Corps. Those goals are:

- to help the people of interested countries and areas in meeting their need for trained men and women;
- to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and
- to bring that information back home to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

While the world today is very different from how it was in 1961, and even more so since September 11th—the American spirit of sharing with others remains a fundamental part of our democratic society.

Many host country leaders and community members have expressed deep feelings about the Peace Corps, similar to those shared recently by Mr. Teburoro Tito, the President and Foreign Minister of Kiribati, when he said, "This Republic is in love with the Peace Corps," he said. "We are in love with them, with their goals, their hard work, and their willingness to live like us."

And, just as President Kennedy challenged a new generation during the establishment of the Peace Corps in 1961 to join ". . . a grand and global alliance . . . to fight the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease, and war . . . To those people in the huts and villages across the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery," he said, "we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves." Kennedy went on to note that, ". . . the life will not be easy, it will be rich and satisfying. For every young American who participates in the Peace Corps—who works in a foreign land—will know that he or she is sharing in the great common task of bringing to man that decent way of life which is the foundation of freedom and a condition of peace."

TRAVEL TO PAST AND PRESENT PEACE CORPS COUNTRIES

In the spirit of President Kennedy's remarks, and inspired by the challenge from President Bush, in early March, I traveled to the counties of Afghanistan and Pakistan where I met with government officials to discuss Peace Corps programs and future opportunities that may exist for our Volunteers. In Afghanistan, in particular, I met with the Peace Corps assessment team members who were conducting programming and security assessments, along with embassy officials, to determine if conditions would support the sending of our agency's Crisis Corps Volunteers. I traveled to China, and had an incredible visit—with Helen Raffel a Peace Corps volunteer who, at age 74, teaches environmental science and English at Sichuan University in the Chengdu province of China. Her enthusiasm, vigor, and accomplishments were truly amazing and offered many insights into the needs of these nations. Peace Corps has the ability to provide trained men and women to meet the emerging needs of their respective peoples, but within our grasp is the ability to touch an entire generation of people throughout the world.

I traveled to Peru during President Bush's visit with President Alejandro Toledo, and I had the privilege of signing a bilateral agreement with the government of Peru. This agreement will allow Peace Corps volunteers to return to Peru for the first time in more than 27 years. As a young man, President Toledo was taught by Peace Corps Volunteers who lived in his family home. The Volunteers made a lasting impact on his life and he remains a strong advocate of the Peace Corps today.

In June, I visited Peace Corps programs in Senegal, Mauritania and Morocco. While in the city of Azib, Morocco, I visited an environmental Volunteer and the Women's Center where she works. The Volunteer is providing training and assistance to expand the sales of their locally produced crafts.

BUDGET REQUEST

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I report to you today, that the future of the Peace Corps is brighter than ever and we are setting into motion plans that will lead the agency into the 21st Century and increase our efforts around the world. This Administration is committed to the Peace Corps and the President has demonstrated his support by requesting an increase in our budget from $275 million in FY '02 to $320 million in FY '03. We believe that the budget request will enable us to increase the number of Volunteers while at the same time ensure that the quality of our Volunteers and the Volunteer experience remain high. We advocate fill funding, which we believe is warranted.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security remains a top priority for the Peace Corps particularly in the aftermath of September 11th. Meeting the President's initiative to double the number of Peace Corps volunteers over the next five years is dependent on the Peace Corps providing a safe and secure environment during each Volunteers term of service. A number of important initiatives are now underway. These initiatives not only strengthen the safety and security training for our Volunteers, but also galvanize the security infrastructure at posts around the globe.

These new initiatives include:

- The implementation and compliance ofnew procedures for Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security (Manual Section 270) to measure and monitor posts' compliance with important safety and security requirements;
- The hiring of over 40 new personnel in the field and at headquarters in security related positions;
- The addition of one full day of safety and security training during staging for new trainees;

- The establishment of regular safety and security staff training on a two-year cycle;
- An enhancement of the safety and security information message that a potential applicant receives from his or her first contact with Peace Corps—during recruitment and throughout the application process; and
- The ready availability of a library of safety and security information on the Peace Corps Intranet.

STRATEGIC PLAN TO DOUBLE THE NUMBER OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

Following President Bush's State of the Union Address when be called for the doubling of Peace Corps Volunteers, we had an immediate 300 percent increase in traffic to the Web site in the first 48 hours. Since January, interest in the Peace Corps remains high. Traffic to the Web site is 89 percent higher than the same period of time last year, inquiries—requests to our offices for an application—are up 39 percent over last year and the number of applications submitted both online and on paper total 4,701, a 17 percent increase over this same period of time last year.

We received approximately 94,500 inquiries last year resulting in 8,897 applications, which produced 3,166 trainees in addition to those who were serving in the field. Our standards remain high as to the suitability requirements and technical skills required of the Peace Corps assignments. Currently, we have a number of task forces to examine our recruitment and selection process, our internal processing of applications and to identify and examine barriers and obstacles to service.

Although there are more and more Volunteers who have advanced degrees and specialized technical skills who are joining the Peace Corps, the vast majority are people with solid generalist backgrounds with lots of leadership and community service experience. Volunteers serve in a broad range of programs. Such as:

- Education
- Health and HIV/AIDS
- Environment
- Agriculture
- Business Development
- Information and Communication Technology

Recruiting is one of our key challenges and in responding to the President's challenge to increase the number of Volunteers, our agency has recently delivered to Congress our Fiscal Year 2003 Congressional Budget Presentation, which outlines our eleven goals to accomplish this effort.

The first goal is to *reacquaint the American people with the mission of the Peace Corps*—by introducing the value of Peace Corps service to a broader audience, particularly school children, seniors and those "baby boomers" who are nearing retirement, we bring the visibility of the work of the Volunteers to a new audience of potential Volunteers.

Second, the agency will seek to expand recruitment efforts and *increase diversity* of our Volunteer population. This means that recruitment efforts will grow beyond college campuses. Just as the face of America has changed over the past 40 years, so will our recruitment efforts so that we reach out to all people regardless of faith, married couples and the disabled, seniors and retirees, and the scores of men and women who are currently in the work force or between jobs and looking to make a meaningfull contribution to the United States.

Third, efforts will be made to *optimize the number of Volunteers and staff currently working in each country.* The Peace Corps will continue to seek advice from country directors about possibilities for growth and the placement of additional Volunteers in new programs. We believe that incremental growth in a number of countries will increase the number of Volunteers worldwide.

Fourth, the Peace Corps will *expand programs into new countries.* I am pleased to announce that just last week, we sent 19 eager and enthusiastic Volunteers to the new nation of East Timor. It is thrilling to know that these Volunteers, after traveling over 36 hours, will be the first Americans that many people of this island nation will see. We will also be re-opening the Peru program this August. We have been approached by a large number of representatives from the governments of countries who are anxious to have Peace Corps return to their country. We are also eager to forge new alliances with countries that have never had Peace Corps Volunteers.

Fifth, we are going to explore new ideas such as *expanding current alliances* with organizations such as the American Red Cross and the AOL Time Warner Foundation, as well as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We are also working with the RPCV community on how to make best use of their collective talents.

The 165,000 RPCVs are a resource that we intend to maximize both in their important work with Third Goal activities and in the recruitment of potential new Volunteers.

Sixth, Peace Corps plans to *improve the Volunteer delivery process.* Nearly 60 percent of current applications are now using the online application, which decreases considerably the Volunteer delivery timetable. However, we have more work to do to shorten the time between the first contact with a potential applicant and the time that the applicant departs to begin training.

Seventh, we plan to expand and broaden the *Crisis Corps* program, which mobilizes returned Volunteers to respond to natural disasters throughout the world on a short-term basis. To date, more than 450 Crisis Corps Volunteers have served in 30 countries. Currently, Crisis Corps Volunteers work in eight countries in Africa on HIV/AIDS-related activities.

Eighth, we are going to review the participation of the Peace Corps in the *United Nations Volunteer program.* This program was developed in 1971 by the United Nations General Assembly and is administered by the United Nations Development Program. There are approximately 50 United States citizens currendy serving in two-year UNV assignments supported by Peace Corps.

Ninth, I intend to strengthen and *expand the scope of the Peace Corps' domestic programs that are designed to help educate Americans about other countries.* The Volunteers' years of experience working and living in cross-cultural situations presents a treasure trove of information that must be preserved and made available to the American public. Development of publications and placing these materials online will be useful to domestic and international educators, students, domestic volunteer organizations, and people who volunteer in their home communities. Examples of our publications include: *Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultured Workbook* and *Insights From the Field: Understanding Geography, Culture and Service.*

Tenth, we intend to continue to *provide high-quality programming and training support to our overseas staff* and Volunteers. Building on our agency's existing strength in teaching Volunteers to speak new languages, the Peace Corps will reassess and redesign our training programs. We are looking at additional training opportunities prior to departure to ensure that Volunteers are prepared to undertake increasingly sophisticated project activities in complex environments with difficult-to-learn languages.

Our eleventh goal is to place a special emphasis on the use of *world class technology* to communicate and share knowledge to achieve improvements in overseas communications and connectivity around the globe. In August 2000, Peace Corps headquarters completed its migration from a Macintosh-based to a Windows-based computing platform. The Peace Corps also recently redesigned its Web site (www.peacecorps.gov) and was nominated by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences for their prestigious "Webby" award. The Peace Corps was very pleased to have been nominated among such notable organizations as Amazon.com, Google.com and the United States Army.

THE PEACE CORPS CHARTER FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Collectively, we are all at the beginning stages of reviewing the legislation just introduced at the end of last week. While I have not had sufficient time to thoroughly examine the specifics of the proposal, one of the major strengths of the Peace Corps Act is that it is a broad authorization, which has over the years, given ample opportunity for the agency to maintain its independence and its effectiveness. Congress set forth broad objectives, and let the Executive Branch, in consultation with the host government or its peoples and Congress, establish programs that meet the individual needs of each country. Few agencies have been so successfully and efficiently managed over such a long period. In addition to its traditional Volunteer programs, this broad authority has enabled the Peace Corps to launch such successful initiatives as the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools Program and the Crisis Corps. These accomplishments were possible because of the flexibility under the Peace Corps Act.

Our effectiveness in an era of continued growth and opportunity requires the flexibility to manage a decision-making process that best serves the agency and, most importantly, the Volunteers. While there are a number of initiatives and programs that we have undertaken at the Peace Corps; several stand out as prime examples of our ongoing efforts to build the Peace Corps for the 21st Century.

First, we consider the RPCV community to be the most underutilized resource we have. That is why I have made it my highest priority to meet with RPCVs at every opportunity in the U.S. and abroad. As I stated earlier, I believe they are one of

our best resources for recruitment. These RPCVs have first hand experience in the field and can help us to capture the imagination of those interested in international volunteer service. I have also been working with Dane Smith, President of the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA), to design a strategy to expand the role for RPCVs and former Peace Corps staff in America.

Peace Corps has been in countries with predominantly Muslim populations since the program began. Currently, 23 percent of Volunteers are serving in countries with predominantly Muslim populations, while two-thirds of potential new country entries are predominantly Muslim countries. From Senegal to Kazakhstan, the Peace Corps' mission in these regions has become increasingly important. Host communities are exposed to positive and personal images of America and returning Volunteers share their new understanding of different cultures with friends and family in the United States.

The Peace Corps continues to be actively engaged in activities addressing HIV/AIDS. Fightirg the ravages of this disease continues to be paramount to the lives of people across the globe, and to this agency. Volunteers who serve in Africa—regardless of their program sector—are trained to provide HIV/AIDS prevention and education as part of their duties. This year we are re-entering Botswana and Swaziland, exclusively to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in those countries. In June of 2000, the original HIV/AIDS Initiative was greatly strengthened with additional funding from USAID and grants from the Gates and Packard Foundations. In the future, we anticipate a further expansion of HIV/AIDS programs outside of the Africa region.

CONCLUSION

The Peace Corps has a clear mission that has served the agency well for the past 41 years. The strategy outlined above is our blueprint as we set out to double the number of Peace Corps Volunteers over the next five years, heighten the visibility of the work of the Volunteers, and create a renewed worldwide interest in international volunteer service. Our FY 2003 budget request of $320 million will also support the enhancements to the safety and security of our Volunteers and permit the Peace Corps to open new programs and, at the proper time, re-open currently suspended programs with dedicated Volunteers.

In conclusion, I am grateful to you and members of the Committee for your continued support of the Peace Corps mission. September 11th is a grim reminder that the work of past, present, and future Volunteers is more critical than ever. I believe that the Peace Corps is well positioned to achieve expansion and build upon the successes of the past 41 years.

Senator DODD. We will be hearing from Dane Smith shortly, but I want to commend the National Peace Corps Association as well for their fine conference. They had a great turnout. And it was wonderful to hear so many people and share thoughts with them about the Peace Corps. And it was wonderful to watch so many people who had not seen each other in a long time come together. So I thank Dane Smith and all those who were involved with the organizational efforts over last weekend.

Let me begin with just a series of questions for you. And I am going to——

Chris, if you have some questions, I am going to turn to you at some point and ask you to be part of the record if you would like.

I emphasized in my comments, Mr. Director, the independence of the Peace Corps. In fact, I think you were there on Friday morning when I shared some brief remarks with the audience and talked about the independence and the reaction of the return Peace Corps volunteers, how strongly this is felt among the 165,000 of us as return volunteers, as well as obviously those in the field, I think, the importance of independence.

I am curious whether or not the Bush administration supports the continued independence of the Peace Corps as required by law, No. 1. And two, what is the relationship between the USA Freedom Corps and the Peace Corps?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Well, Mr. Chairman, the relationship between the USA Freedom Corps and Peace Corps is one that the President described in the Executive order that created USA Freedom Corps. But in essence, for us, the USA Freedom Corps is two essential things.

The first is that it creates an opportunity for an interagency council comprised of a number of agencies that are part of the response or the opportunity, as I like to call it, for Americans to respond to the President's call for service.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, the President has issued a call to all of us to contribute our time and our lives and our talents to some form of community or volunteer service. The Peace Corps is one of those avenues, one of those opportunities to serve.

The USA Freedom Corps is an interagency council and an office that is monitoring to see how we are creating the opportunities for people in the United States to serve. And they are, for instance, an organization that provides Americans a passage or an avenue to our Web site, our linkages.

But my clear understanding of the USA Freedom Corps is that it is intended to be an interagency council to be able to track the opportunities that we are creating for Americans to be able to serve. I do not believe that there is any change or any alteration to the independence of the Peace Corps within the executive branch. We continue to do our work on a daily basis. We continue to design our priorities for our agency. And we continue to expand where we believe it is safe, it is secure, and it fits within the goals and within the mission of the Peace Corps.

So in my view, the USA Freedom Corps, and based on the discussions that I have had with Mr. John Bridgeman, whom you know, is that it is intended to be a coordinating council. And I fully expect that we will be meeting in the not too distant future to discuss how we are progressing in terms of creating greater opportunities for Americans to serve, specifically in the Peace Corps.

Senator DODD. Let me—I will just make the statement, and you can answer yes or no. So the administration does support, as required by law, the continued independence of the Peace Corps.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Yes, sir.

Senator DODD. And as I understand it, the USA Freedom Corps, the role as has been explained to me is primarily one to help promote the Peace Corps by a Web site or other such means to facilitate further volunteerism. I am curious about it in a sense because I do not—I mean, I know about USA Freedom Corps. But if I had to ask a room full of people if they had heard about USA Freedom Corps and the Peace Corps, I suspect more people will have heard about the Peace Corps than USA Freedom Corps.

So the question becomes, we have one organization that very few are familiar with promoting an organization that people are very familiar with. And I am sort of curious as to how that is going to work.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that the USA Freedom Corps, again, is the coordination council, within the administration. But at the end of the day, it is the Peace Corps who is still strategically responsible for the recruitment, for promoting the Peace Corps, not only in terms of the public knowing about who we

are and what we do, but also managing it, administering the actual recruitment efforts in terms of accounting, in terms of accessing, in terms of screening, in terms of approval, in terms of placement, and obviously the deployment of volunteers in the countries in which we serve.

So that has not changed. That remains very much intact. It is true that if you go to the USA Freedom Corps Web site, it allows you the opportunity, if I am sitting out in Nebraska somewhere trying to figure out how I respond to President Bush's call to public service—is it Crisis Corps that is for me? Is it Peace Corps? I have an opportunity then to go off of that USA Freedom Corps Web site and link to the Peace Corps Web site and in turn then identify what opportunities may exist for me.

So I think it facilitates information, but the USA Freedom Corps office also facilitates some coordination to ensure that we are doing what we can do to create those opportunities for Americans to serve.

Senator DODD. Well, if that is going to be the role, I do not find anything on its face that is troublesome about that. But obviously, we all are going to be watching it.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Certainly.

Senator DODD. I understand—and you and I have talked about this—there have been times over the 41 years when others have sought to sort of deprive the Peace Corps of its unique historic, independent role. And so we are somewhat sensitive to the subject matter because we have been down the path before. And it took a long time to undo the deprival of independence of the Peace Corps.

So keep your eye on this one very carefully——

Mr. VASQUEZ. Certainly, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD [continuing]. Mr. Director. It is one where obviously people up here are going to be watching it carefully. But we are sort of calling on you to keep an eye on it as well.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Certainly.

Senator DODD. Let me ask you about the budget submissions, if I can. According to the fiscal year 2003 Peace Corps budget submission, the administration is projecting budget increases for the next 4 years to coincide with the President's proposal to double the number of volunteers. I wonder how you develop those numbers. And does it include additional funding to expand headquarters to better manage the growth of the organization, the point I tried to make in here, the quality versus quantity issue, which is something that many of us are very, very concerned about?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Certainly. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me say that I am truly committed to the principle that we will not compromise the quality of the Peace Corps volunteer experience. I think it is critically important on a number of fronts. And I will speak to the budget specifically, but if I may for just a moment talk about the philosophy that we are trying to exercise here.

The philosophy we are trying to exercise is that we need to protect the core values of the Peace Corps. And one of the core values is providing good jobs and a good opportunity for Americans to go overseas and to serve in the Peace Corps, to make a contribution in country, but also to come back with the experience of having served and to hopefully then participate in the third goal of the

Peace Corps, which you are more familiar with, which is to stay involved through the National Peace Corps Association, the return Peace Corps volunteer community.

One of the examples that I give to you of that commitment is that I have had a personal hand in the selection of 20 country directors since I have arrived at the Peace Corps. And 15 of those 20 are return Peace Corps volunteers, because they bring a unique perspective to the management and administration they can offer in country.

That is very, very important because the country director plays a major role in helping us to find what are those valuable jobs, what are those opportunities, so when a volunteer comes in a country that they will be attached, affiliated with a responsibility and a program that is meaningful.

So to that end, we have sought information from our countries, our country directors. And that is why the quality of the country director is important. We have asked staff and headquarters to give us a foretaste and analysis of what it would take to achieve the goals that have been set out and do so in an integrated way so that the infrastructure grows incrementally with the growth of Peace Corps volunteers.

So we are assessing what it would take to recruit, what it would take for medical services; what it would take both at headquarters, in our regional offices in terms of recruitment, to get to those goals; as well as what it would cost to be able to finance the operations in country.

Senator DODD. So you are—I mean, this is, the issue of making sure we have the infrastructure to support these increases is critical.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Absolutely.

Senator DODD. Let me do some followup on that, because in the budget submission, the average number of volunteers as I read it, now here projected for fiscal year 2003, was about 6,300, while the number of volunteers expected to be on board on September 30, 2003, was 8,200. And I was confused about the discrepancy of almost 2,000 volunteers in those two numbers.

Mr. VASQUEZ. The numbers that we describe in our reports, Mr. Chairman, have to do with the fact that we have a fluctuation of numbers as trainees come into the service of the Peace Corps. We typically use the end of September as the time to gauge the number of volunteers that we have in service. But at any given time, we will have trainees who will be coming into the Peace Corps and others who will be, what we call, close of service, at the end of their Peace Corps service.

And so there are numbers that fluctuate. But we believe that by the end of 2003 we will be at 8,200, based on all of the assessments that we have done and recognizing that there are all those fluctuations. But we use the number of 8,200 as the goal that we will achieve. We have had internal discussions about that number and about the goals that have been set out. And staff, both at headquarters and overseas, agree that we can achieve and attain that target.

Senator DODD. Could you as well—and you may have—I think you shared this with me once before, but I have forgotten the num-

ber. What are we looking at today in terms of number of applicants versus acceptances, roughly the ratio?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Roughly right now the ratio is between 9,000 and 10,000 applicants and approximately, if I recall correctly—I will be glad to provide you more specific information—I think 3,000 to 4,000 ultimately that are invited to be trainees.

Senator DODD. So somewhere between one in three, one in four, is the ratio of applicants to acceptances, roughly. Is that right?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Yes, sir. I think that is, if I am—yes. I will be glad to provide some additional information.

Senator DODD. Let me know if I have the wrong share on that. I was just curious what that number is.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Certainly.

Senator DODD. Last, let me turn to, if I can, because you talked about it, the Peace Corps National Advisory Council, which was established in 1985. And I know that, you know, this is—you know, anybody who is heading up, the last thing some people want is enough—you have Members of Congress picking at you and the administration. An advisory council can be threatening to some degree, although I think it can be of tremendous value. That is why we established it. But it has been basically a nonfunctioning organization since it was called for back some 17 years ago.

I mentioned 165,000 return volunteers in every imaginable walk of life. And while we deal with the group such as the National Peace Corps Association and others, having an advisory committee to function and provide aid and assistance to the organization itself, I think, could be a very strong feature. You would, of course, continue to serve on the council, as would Jodie Olsen, in that capacity.

Would you expand your thoughts and views on this, on how you think you would benefit from a functioning advisory council rather than just one in name only? And what are your intentions regarding that?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that question, because it is one that I have given a lot of thought to. I have had the personal privilege of serving on a number of national advisory boards for organizations, and I know they can be valuable. Sometimes I have probably been, some would attest, a bit of an annoyance as an advisory board member of some of those organizations, but you ask the questions and you want to be engaged because you care about the organization.

Since arriving at the Peace Corps, I have been examining the history of how directors have used the advisory board that is in the act. And it, frankly, runs the gamut. Some have been very active. Others have not. It has been dormant for a number of years. I do believe that there is some viability and a place for a good, solid advisory board to be a participant, to help us, frankly, not only to give us insight about what we are doing, what we can do better, but frankly also assist us in elevating the profile of the Peace Corps.

As I think you and I have discussed, one of the goals that we have is to reacquaint the American public with the Peace Corps. Frequently people say to me, well, you know, I did not even know the Peace Corps existed. What do they do these days? What kind

of programs are they involved in? So an advisory board could serve a valuable purpose.

What I would certainly advocate is an advisory board that would be representative of the cross-section of America, representing various diverse interests. And I do note that in the act that establishes the current advisory board, it does provide for 15 members. Seven of those members would be return Peace Corps volunteers and represent a cross-section of the community, no more than 8 of one political party. So there is a structure in place that I think is workable.

I, to be frank with you, have not completed my total assessment of that function. But I think it is manageable. And I think there could be some very, very positive outcomes as a result of that involvement.

Senator DODD. Well, thank you. I will include in the record here—I think it must be the Peace Corps Web page [1]—I believe it is the Peace Corps Web page—that lists a rather lengthy list of people who are called notable.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Yes, sir.

Senator DODD. That is not a self-description, I hope. But people who have done various things in all sorts of fields.

Mr. VASQUEZ. I certainly hope that you were on there, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. What is that?

Mr. VASQUEZ. I certainly hope that you were on that list, if you are checking our Web site.

Senator DODD. I am not going to check it. I am afraid I might not find myself there. But this is a good list of just some ideas of people in arts and literature and so forth that I think are wonderful examples of what—and that is people that are notable. There are a lot of return Peace Corps volunteers who may not make a list of notables but are doing very notable things.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Indeed.

Senator DODD. And that will take a little affirmative action, if you will, to reach out and try to find people who do not necessarily step up and fill out questionnaires about what they are doing. But there are wonderful people out there who are making a huge contribution, really care about this organization very deeply. And I strongly urge you to look at them.

Last, let me turn to the issue of the Corporation for National and Community Service, which is included in the bill. And this is a bit of a different idea. I will be the first to admit it. It is unique in its proposal, and that is, you know, the idea to provide some moneys to nonprofit corporations established by return volunteers as a way to promote the continued service of volunteers.

Do you have any comments you want to share about that concept or idea?

Mr. VASQUEZ. No, Mr. Chairman. Well, I have—I will qualify my comments by indicating that I do not want to represent the National Corporation for Service, because I think they will probably have some comments at some point. However, just in general, I would like to offer this perspective. And that is that I know that

[1] The Web site can be accessed at www.peacecorps.com

you are committed, and I know Congressman Shays is committed, and Senator Chafee is committed, and I am committed to protecting the integrity of the Peace Corps as an agency, as an entity that has built an incredible reputation over 41 years.

I think—and again, I base this on my experience of having been involved with foundations, advisory boards, and whatnot, who have expanded and who have had groups grown out of core organizations. And that is that one must be very, very careful so as to protect the integrity of the name Peace Corps, in that while there are many well-intentioned folks who would want to become involved in this kind of a program—and I think it might serve a positive purpose—the important thing is to make sure that there is accountability so that there is no confusion amongst the donor community, the support community, as to who is the Peace Corps and who is not the Peace Corps.

And I want to say as an example I applaud Dane Smith because I notice on his literature that he makes reference to the fact that NPCA is not part of the Peace Corps, a Federal agency, but is an association. I think it is important for people to know the difference as they make decisions about contributing dollars and investing their talents and skills to these efforts.

So that is the only observation I would make that would be important in any kind of a process that would involve expanding funding programs that would represent or suggest Peace Corps.

Senator DODD. Maybe I should make it clear, and staff has reminded me here, we do not take any moneys out of the Peace Corps budget for this purpose.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Understood.

Senator DODD. So we are not competing in that sense. But, believe me, we have struggled over the years with this goal of the Peace Corps and how to engage a willing group of people, many of whom were willing to begin with; they joined the Peace Corps for that purpose. Some may not have been. But because of the Peace Corps experience they have wanted to find some way to continue their service in a way that would be constructive.

And we have grappled with this over the years to find some sort of a structural mechanism that will allow for return volunteers to be able to utilize their talents in a way that would contribute at home to the goals of the Peace Corps. And this is just one such idea as a way to find some framework by which they could fit back into the process.

With that, we have been joined by my colleague from Rhode Island. And I thank him for coming over. I have completed my questions. So we have been joined by the Congressman from Connecticut, a former volunteer as well. I think you know Chris Shays. I think you know each other, hope you do.

Senator CHAFEE. You have said, Mr. Chairman, that one way to continue your years of service to your country after the Peace Corps is to do as these two gentlemen did and run for office.

Senator DODD. I am not sure the Peace Corps would like to fund that, though.

Senator CHAFEE. Speaking of funding, before I turn it over——

Senator DODD. Is it campaign finance reform? Do you think we could include that as a part of the budget each year?

Any comments, Senator, or questions?

Senator CHAFEE. Just one. I know Congressman Shays has been here for awhile, and I just came in.

But does the Peace Corps have any kind of endowment of its own where alumni might contribute?

Mr. VASQUEZ. No, Senator, we do not have any kind of an endowment. We certainly have foundations that participate with us on specific programs. Like the Gates Foundation, AOL, participates with us on programs. But there is no endowment per se.

Senator CHAFEE. And alumni who have done well after their time in the Corps, and who might want to help the Peace Corps and future volunteers, are encouraged to give to these foundations?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Well, in some cases many return Peace Corps volunteers involve themselves with local chapters of the NPCA or the return Peace Corps volunteer community. And there are partnership projects where they are able to fund projects that volunteers submit on our Web page that we are then able to then identify some funding and make that connection. But usually that comes from a chapter or—as an example, in Chicago there is a strong return Peace Corps volunteer community that raises dollars, which are then sent out to projects that volunteers are working on overseas.

Senator CHAFEE. And in the long 41-year history—is that correct?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Yes, sir.

Senator CHAFEE. As you have testified, the President's initiative to double the number of volunteers means the budget, of course, is going to go up. Is there any preclusion to establishing some sort of alternative means of reaching this funding level? Can we be creative and consider some kind of endowment, or is that forbidden by the charter?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Well, there are some limitations and prohibitions on how we can seek funding. However, we do have an Office of Private Sector Enterprise in the Peace Corps that has done a good job in the past of establishing some partnerships with organizations like AOL, the foundation, like the Gates Foundation, Hewlett-Packard and others. And we certainly look to the opportunities of maybe expanding those kinds of relationships that might provide some funding for global programs that we are doing.

Senator CHAFEE. Well, I wish well and hope you are successful.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you very much, Senator.

Senator DODD. Congressman Shays.

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate your courtesy in allowing me this opportunity. I am somewhat reluctant to ask questions of the Director, since he is my wife's boss. And I just want to say——

Senator DODD. Perfect time, it seems to me.

Congressman SHAYS. I just want to say that whatever I say should not be held against her.

Mr. VASQUEZ. All right, sir.

Congressman SHAYS. And just say to you that Chris and I have had conversations about this in the past. At one time the Peace Corps was part of Action, I think. And, you know, you had the domestic and you had the international. And it was under this thumb

of Action. And it proved to be quite unacceptable. And it took away the spirit and the independence of the Peace Corps.

So when Senator Dodd asks you about the concept of independence, I guess I would like to know that no matter who tried to compromise the independence of the Peace Corps, could I feel assured that you would stand up to whomever that may be, no matter how powerful that person or persons might be, to maintain the independence of the Peace Corps?

Mr. VASQUEZ. Congressman, you have my commitment that I would defend the independence of the Peace Corps within the executive branch of Government. I believe in that. I think it is important. And it is important to our future. It is important to our success.

Congressman SHAYS. And the only other question I wanted to ask is: It is my understanding, and Chris really drove that. But when I have expressed my concern about the USA Freedom Corps, it was made clear to me that this is an organization where people can come to learn about all the places they can serve. And one of the places is the Peace Corps.

Therefore, the logic of not allowing them to talk about possibly being able to serve in the Peace Corps would be kind of crazy. In other words, we want, when people contact the USA Freedom Corps, that the Freedom Corps can say, you know, one of the places you may want to go is the Peace Corps. And that it has no control over your budget. It has no control over your management. It has no control over the Peace Corps whatsoever. Is that your understanding?

Mr. VASQUEZ. That is my understanding, Congressman.

Congressman SHAYS. And if you found that to be different in the future, you would rise up in arms against any possibility that it would play a greater role?

Mr. VASQUEZ. I would certainly seek to articulate and advocate for the position of its independence because I think it is important. It is part of what makes the Peace Corps a unique agency. And I would argue vigorously that it needs to maintain its independence and needs to move in the same kind of framework that exists today and that that should not be changed or altered.

Congressman SHAYS. And just as I do not want you to be influenced by or controlled by any political entity or any Government agency, I just would say that I think the advisory group that you have established should be nothing more or nothing less than an advisory group.

Thank you.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you, Congressman.

Senator DODD. Just to make the point again, because the independence of the Peace Corps is not a voluntary conclusion, it is a legal conclusion, even though we passed legislation a number of years ago because of what had happened. I did not raise it with you here because there is no reason to at this point. But just to—back a few years ago, we had those who wanted to turn the country directorships—it was a wonderful opportunity to take care of some good friends politically. And it came to a screeching halt.

But nonetheless, there was a real program under way to—people who would not necessarily qualify to be an ambassador in people's

minds through a confirmation process, they were put in country directorships. And that was just clearly an over-politicization of the institution. That stopped, and I know you have made a commitment that that would not be the case at all under your leadership. And I appreciate that very much.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. Well, Gaddi, we will leave the record open for others who may have some questions for you. We are very much interested in having you back with us as soon as we can. We would like to mark this bill up here. We do not have a very long session left here. And there are some windows to get some things done. So we would like to move forward with legislation.

It would be very important, obviously, to have the input of the administration, you particularly, on the bill. So as soon as we can get that, we would appreciate that very much.

Mr. VASQUEZ. OK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD. And we thank you for appearing here today.

Mr. VASQUEZ. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Our second witness, Mark Schneider, is the former Director of the Peace Corps. He is the vice president of the International Crisis Group.

And, Mark, we are very honored to have you here. Mark and I have known each other a long time and he worked here on the Senate side, worked for Senator Kennedy, and of course was the Director of the Peace Corps, a former Peace Corps volunteer himself. And did a tremendous job with some very innovative and creative programs that were authored under your stewardship, Mark. And so it is a pleasure to have you here.

You have known the institution. You have worked with it for many, many years, in addition to your service as Director. But long prior to that, your interest and involvement with the Peace Corps is something we have all appreciated immensely. So we are honored to have you here today and interested in hearing your testimony.

STATEMENT OF MARK SCHNEIDER, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS; VICE PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL CRISIS GROUP, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you very much, Senator Dodd. It is a privilege to appear before you and the members of the committee today to testify on the importance, value, and heightened need of the Peace Corps in the post 9/11 world. And let me say at the outset that I support the fundamental purpose of the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act to double the size of the Peace Corps to 15,000 volunteers over the next 5 years.

As Director, I was proud that we had moved toward the congressionally mandated goal of achieving 10,000 volunteers. When I left the Peace Corps, we had already matched the highest number of Peace Corps volunteers in the field in 27 years, some 7,300.

And at that time, we had a strategy to get to 10,000. We did not have the funding, but we had the strategy. And hopefully now with this bill, the funding will be available to go beyond that.

I applaud President Bush's decision to restore the Peace Corps to the highest levels in the 1960s. And I am sure, and we have

heard, that the new Director, Gaddi Vasquez, is working to implement that decision and working to do it in a way that maintains the core values of the Peace Corps.

We also celebrated the 40-plus-one anniversary of the establishment of the Peace Corps this last weekend. And I am sure we also commend the Bush administration for its 40th anniversary gift to us. Of course, Sarge said it should be 50,000, not 15,000, but——

President Kennedy's idea of a Peace Corps to join the struggle of people in developing countries across the globe and to strengthen international understanding appealed to young Americans on campuses all across the Nation. And as you have said, as volunteers we may have contributed a little something to our host community and to our host country. But we were the greatest beneficiaries of that experience. And we brought that knowledge back home.

As a volunteer, I learned of the realities of poverty in El Salvador, of the way that repression denies human dignity, and the courage of men and women who risk everything to give their children a better life. And I can attest, after four decades and after visiting volunteers in 21 countries as Director, that they, too, not only are contributing but are learning skills, leadership, and international awareness in what may be the most effective graduate education program ever conceived.

Sarge once said that "the road to peace is no highway. It is wracked with wars, riddled with mistrust and suspicion. And if humanity ever hopes to pave this road, it must accomplish an understanding even deeper and more durable than the world has ever known." The Peace Corps has been trying to pave that road ever since.

On my trips, I met a half dozen government ministers who were students, colleagues, or friends of volunteers. And we have to ask ourselves how many millions of students have been taught by volunteers or whose teachers were trained by volunteers? I knew the director of the WHO campaign that eradicated smallpox from Ethiopia. And he told me it never would have succeeded without the Peace Corps.

So you have to ask how many men and women are alive today because volunteers were part of the immunization campaigns to eradicate small pox and polio and measles. And how many families avoided death from diarrheal disease because volunteers have explained in 180 different languages how to avoid waterborne disease.

I know that after 9/11 there were some who asked whether the Peace Corps is still needed, is still safe, is still a priority. My answer is yes, yes, and yes. Peace Corps volunteers still are needed at the development core of our work in carrying out the first goal of the Peace Corps—teaching in classrooms, carrying health and nutrition messages to distant villages, and working with farmers to find more sustainable ways of growing food.

And volunteers are also on the cutting edge of change. They are answering the challenge of globalization by bringing computers and information technology to the task of development, not only in the cities but in rural villages as well. They are answering the challenge of HIV/AIDS by carrying education and prevention awareness throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

I am proud that as Director I required that every volunteer in Africa be trained in HIV/AIDS prevention education. And last year I have been told volunteers reached more than 370,000 people with HIV/AIDS prevention education activities. This bill's proposal to train more volunteers in addressing global health risks is to be commended, obviously with the caveat that the training must be appropriate to the country in which they are serving.

Volunteers also are beginning to play a role in countries coming out of civil conflict. In most instances, Crisis Corps volunteers begin that process. Experienced volunteers can be brought back to help countries respond to natural disasters and to also help countries respond to the aftermath of the conflict.

One way, it seems to me, that we can help increase the capacity of the Peace Corps is to increase the capacity of Crisis Corps. And it seems to me that we might look at how to do that.

We know that there are jobs waiting for volunteers. We know that there are countries who want volunteers to fill those jobs. And I am pleased that the bill recognizes that upping the number of volunteers in a 5-year authorization requires increases in funds for staff in the countries, in Washington, in our recruiting centers, as well as for strengthening program quality and strengthening the measures that assure the safety and security of volunteers.

Also with respect to recruiting, I think it is important to recognize that the bill's provisions to have a modest increase in the amount of the adjustment allowance provided to volunteers and to explore the possibility of student loan forgiveness can also be important incentives.

Currently, only the Perkins Student Loan Program provides for a volunteer reducing his or her repayment by 15 percent for each of the 2-years that they serve. Otherwise, there is no reduction in the debt owed as the result of Peace Corps service. So I am pleased the committee is looking at that.

I also would urge the committee to consider measures to strengthen and expand the Master's International Program. It is a marvelous concept. I wish that I could take credit for it, but it was there when I arrived. It provides for applicants to apply both to the Peace Corps and to graduate school. A participating university accepts the applicant and the Peace Corps accepts the applicant. All the course work is done in the first year. And then the volunteer enters the Peace Corps. When he or she returns after 2 years, they have a master's degree as well.

It is a marvelous way to get more specialized volunteers into the Peace Corps. And I think with some modest incentive funding, that we could expand the program significantly—there are only 40 colleges and universities who currently participate. They essentially receive no additional funding with respect to this program.

Peace Corps volunteers also are the best way to convey an understanding of who we are as a people, which is the second goal of the Peace Corps. It is even more crucial in a world where the United States is the last remaining super power and a lightening rod of envy for too many raised in frustration and incapable of coping with the clash of modern and traditional cultures.

I thought about our volunteers, obviously, after 9/11. And I asked what was the reaction. And in many cases, just as when we were

volunteers, volunteers are the only way that people in those villages or communities could convey their sympathy about what had occurred.

In Jordan, a Peace Corps teacher received this letter from her Palestinian student. "Please accept our, the class and I, condolences and our deepest sorrow toward evil acts that took place in the United States. May God bless the victims, their family, and their loved ones. After all, we are all citizens of the world."

In China, a volunteer had to teach class soon after she learned of the attack. As usual, she started to write a word on the board at the start of the class that they could all discuss. Flustered, she just wrote the word "terrorism." The whole class of students immediately starting crying. They stood and each hugged her, saying how sorry they were for her, for her family, and for America. This public expression of emotion was, as she wrote, "not normal," in China. And the response of her students was deeply moving to her.

When Walter Cronkite was asked what one could do to answer the terrorists, he responded, "Join the Peace Corps." And what he meant, I think, are three things. First, that we have to engage around the world even more than in the past. And there is no better way for individual Americans to engage than by joining the Peace Corps.

Second, we still have to break through the mythology about this country and the misconceptions about our people. And the Peace Corps remains the very best way to accomplish that mission as volunteers live, work, and play with their host country colleagues.

And third, we need to find more ways to help nations break through the constraints of poverty and equality, repression, and fear. Peace Corps does work to reduce those conditions. And while we may not be able to eradicate them entirely, it is also worthwhile that others see us trying harder.

That message in a way also underscores the rationale for the independence of the Peace Corps, which I am pleased to see underlined in bright letters within the proposed legislation. It is not merely that the Peace Corps must maintain its own independence in every sphere as you indicated is legally required, but it has to be seen that way by other governments and other peoples.

Every Secretary of State has sent a message to ambassadors around the world reaffirming the independence of the Peace Corps. And let me just quote the 1983 cable from the Secretary of State at that time. "To be effective, the Peace Corps must remain substantially separate from the formal day-to-day conduct and concerns of foreign policy because of its unique people-to-people character."

As former Secretary of State Rusk wrote to the chiefs of the U.S. missions, "To make the Peace Corps an instrument of foreign policy would be to rob it of its contribution to foreign policy."

It seems to me that this legislation should seek to do whatever it can to maintain and strengthen the independence of the Peace Corps in every possible way. And I am pleased to have heard the dialog that took place earlier.

In relation to the third goal of the Peace Corps, helping improve our awareness and understanding of the peoples and nations around us, our PCVs, like those who came here this past weekend,

have been engaging their communities and their nations in ways even President Kennedy never would have imagined.

It happens naturally. But a few important programs have developed to enhance that experience—World Wise Schools is one of the best; the National Peace Corps Association, now the new Peace Corps Fund; and other RPCV organizations around the country.

My one suggestion about the proposal in the bill that provides some direct funding for such groups through the Corporation for National and Community Service would be to make it even broader so that any organization of RPCVs would qualify for direct funding with a proposal for its community activity without necessarily going through any particular intermediary.

And with respect to the third goal, I also would urge the committee to examine how best to strengthen the Peace Corps fellowship program so that those who want to participate in the program can do so. RPCVs who want to go to graduate school can get some of their tuition covered if they make a commitment to work in underserved communities for 2 years while they get their degree. That would be an additional way to strengthen the involvement of RPCVs in the third goal.

Mr. Chairman, President Kennedy said, "Peace does not rest in the charters and covenants alone. It lies in the hearts and minds of all people." The Peace Corps has been helping to build that peace. The bill before the committee can help give countless other Americans the chance to become part of this magnificent 40-year legacy of making a difference.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schneider follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK SCHNEIDER, FORMER DIRECTOR, THE PEACE CORPS

Mr. Chairman, it is a special privilege to appear before you and the members of this Committee to testify on the importance, value and heightened need for the Peace Corps in the post 9/11 world.

Let me say at the outset, I strongly support the fundamental purpose of the "Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act" introduced by you, Mr. Chairman, and others here in the Senate and its companion in the House of Representatives to double the size of the Peace Corps to 15,000 Volunteers over the next five years. As Director, I was proud that we had moved toward the congressionally mandated goal of achieving 10,000 Volunteers. When I left the Peace Corps, we already had matched the highest number of Peace Corps Volunteers in the field since 1974—7,300.

Now I am sure the same bipartisan coalition, led by you and the other RPCV members of Congress, supported by Senator Ted Kennedy and others, will help President George W. Bush restore the Peace Corps back to the highest levels of the 1960s. I applaud his decision and his recognition of the Peace Corps contribution to development, understanding and peace around the world.

Just this past weekend, we all celebrated the fortieth plus one anniversary of the establishment of the Peace Corps. I commend the Bush Administration for this 40th anniversary initiative. Of course, Sarge said it should be 50,000 not 15,000.

In October 2000, as a Peace Corps Director, I stood at the student union on the campus of the University of Michigan at 2 a.m., where 40 years earlier, then candidate John F. Kennedy launched the idea of the Peace Corps. On March 1, 1961, he signed an executive order creating the Peace Corps and a few months later Congress followed with the Peace Corps Act to complete that call to service and international engagement. Even as it was being passed, the Peace Corps' first director, the Honorable R. Sargent Shriver, had the first Volunteers on their way to Ghana and Chile and the Philippines.

The idea of a Peace Corps to join the struggle of people in developing countries across the globe and to strengthen international understanding, appealed to young

Americans on campuses all across the nation. Now 165,000 Volunteers have served in 135 countries. As you have said frequently, Senator, as Volunteers we may have contributed a little something to our host community and to our host country; but we were the greatest beneficiaries of that experience. And we brought that knowledge back home.

As a Volunteer, I learned of the realities of poverty in El Salvador, of the way that repression denies human dignity, and of the courage of men and women who risk everything to give their children a better life.

I can attest, that after four decades, after visiting Volunteers in 21 countries as Director, that they too not only are contributing but also are learning skills, leadership and international awareness in what may be the most effective graduate education ever conceived.

Sarge Shriver said, "The road to peace is no highway. It is racked with wars, riddled with mistrust and suspicion . . . If humanity ever hopes to pave this road, it must accomplish an understanding even deeper and more durable than the world has ever known."

The Peace Corps has been trying to pave that road ever since.

- On my trips, I met a half dozen government ministers who were students, colleagues and friends of Volunteers. Ask yourselves, how many million students have been taught by Volunteers, or whose teachers have been trained by Volunteers?
- The Director of the WHO campaign that eradicated smallpox from Ethiopia told me it never would have succeeded without the Peace Corps. How many men and women are alive today because Volunteers were part of the immunization campaigns to eradicate smallpox and polio and measles?
- How many families have avoided death from diarrheal diseases because Volunteers have explained, in 180 different languages, how to avoid waterborne diseases?

As Director I was privileged to witness the dedication, energy and ingenuity that Volunteers were bringing to their communities. After 9/11, I know there were those who asked whether Peace Corps is still needed, is still safe, is still a priority.

My answer is yes, yes, and yes. Peace Corps Volunteers still are needed at the development core of our work in carrying out the first goal of the Peace Corps' teaching in classrooms, carrying health and nutrition messages to distant villages, and working with farmers to find more sustainable ways of growing food.

Today's Volunteers also are on the cutting edge of change.

• They are answering the challenge of globalization by bringing computers and information technology to the task of development—not only in the cities but also in rural villages.

• They are answering the challenge of HIV/AIDS by carrying education and prevention awareness throughout sub-Saharan Africa. I am proud to have required that all Volunteers in Africa be trained in HIV/AIDS prevention education—last year Volunteers reached more than 376,000 people with HIV/AIDS prevention education activities. And the bill's proposal to train more Volunteers on addressing global health risks is to be commended, but with the caveat that the training obviously must be appropriate to the Volunteer's country of service.

• And Volunteers also are beginning to play a role in helping countries coming out of civil conflict find a new future. In most instances, Crisis Corps Volunteers begin that process—experienced Volunteers who can be brought back to help countries respond to natural disasters, so too can they help their countries respond to the aftermath of conflict, always after full evaluation and assurance of conditions of safety and security.

I would like to urge a renewed effort to increase Crisis Corps capacity to serve in HIV/AIDS support and in post conflict situations. More can and should be done.

We know there are jobs waiting to be done by Volunteers. And we know there are countries who want Volunteers to fill those jobs. I am pleased that the bill recognizes that upping the number of Volunteers and the five-year funding authorization also requires increases in funds for staff, in the countries, in Washington and in our recruiting centres, as well as for strengthening programs and for strengthening the measures that assure the safety and security of Volunteers.

Also, with respect to recruiting, I want to commend the Chairman for including a modest increase in the amount of the adjustment allowance provided to Volunteers, and for exploring the possibility of greater student loan forgiveness. Currently only the Perkins student loan program provides for a volunteer reducing his or her repayment obligation by 15% each of two years. Otherwise the current law and regulation merely provide for postponing interest payments while in Peace Corps.

I would urge the Committee to consider measures to encourage the Master's International program. It is a marvellous concept, which began before I arrived but which I tried to strengthen. It provides for applicants to apply both for a master's degree program at a participating university and to the Peace Corps. Usually, it means all of the course work is done in the first year and the Peace Corps service occurs in the second and third years and fulfills the thesis, or fieldwork requirement. The Volunteer finishes the Peace Corps and returns home with a Master's Degree as well. I believe some incentive funding could multiply this program far beyond the 40 colleges and universities, which currently participate. It also could help attract more Volunteers with more specialized training that some countries would like to see for specific needs.

Peace Corps Volunteers also still are the best way to truly convey an understanding of who we are as a people. And the second goal of the Peace Corps is even more crucial in a world where the Unites States is the last remaining super power and a lightening rod of envy for too many raised in frustration and incapable of coping with the clash of modern and traditional cultures.

After 9/11, I thought about our Volunteers around the world and wondered about the reaction. As in times past, the Volunteers were the only way that people in villages around the world could convey their sympathy and caring.

In Jordan, a Peace Corps teacher received this letter from her Palestinian student: "Please accept our, the class and I, condolences and our deepest sorrow toward evil acts that took place in the United States. May God bless the victims, their family and their loved ones. After all, we are all citizens of the world."

And in China, a Volunteer had to teach class soon after she learned of the attack. As usual, she started to write a word on the board at the start of the class that they all could discuss. Flustered, she just wrote the word, "Terrorism". The whole class of students immediately started crying. They stood and each hugged her, saying how sorry they were for her, for her family and for America. This public expression of emotion was "not normal" in China, and the caring response of her students was particularly moving to her.

When Walter Cronkite was asked what one could do to answer the terrorists, he responded, "Join the Peace Corps."

What he summed up in those words was an important lesson for all of us:

First, we have to engage around the world even more than in the past and there is no better way for individual Americans to engage than by joining the Peace Corps.

Second, we still have to break through the mythology about this country and the misconceptions about our people and the Peace Corps remains the very best way to accomplish that mission—as Volunteers live, work and play with their host country colleagues.

Third, we need to find more ways to help nations break through the constraints of poverty, inequality, repression, and fear. Peace Corps does work to reduce those conditions and while we cannot eradicate them entirely, it also is worthwhile that others see us trying.

That message also underscores the rationale for the independence of the Peace Corps, which I am pleased to see underscored in bright letters, within the proposed legislation. It is not merely that the Peace Corps must maintain its own independence in every sphere but it must be recognized by the rest of our government and be seen by other governments as fully independent.

Every Secretary of State has sent a message to Ambassadors around the world reaffirming that, and I quote the 1983 cable under President Reagan, "to be effective (Peace Corps) must remain substantially separate from the formal day-to-day conduct and concerns of foreign policy because of its unique people-to-people character. As former Secretary of State Rusk wrote to the chiefs of U.S. missions: 'To make the Peace Corps an instrument of foreign policy would be to rob it of its contribution to foreign policy' . . . ." From the start Peace Corps was to be independent. If anything has protected Volunteers across the globe, it has been that separateness. Whatever is done with this legislation, maintaining the Peace Corps independence is crucial.

In relation to the *third goal of the Peace Corps,* helping improve our own awareness and understanding of the peoples and nations of the world, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, like those who came here this past weekend, have been engaging in their communities and their nations in ways even President Kennedy never would have imagined.

It happens naturally, but a few programs have developed to enhance that experience including Worldwide Schools, the National Peace Corps Association, now the new Peace Corps fund and countless other Returned Peace Corps Volunteer organizations around the country. My one suggestion about the proposal in the bill to help

provide for some direct funding of such groups through the Corporation for National and Community Service would be to make it even broader so that any organization of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers would qualify for direct financing of its social projects—without necessarily going through an intermediary.

With respect to the third goal, I also would urge the committee to examine how best to revitalize the Peace Corps Fellows program, so that all those who want to participate in this program can do so. Returned Volunteers who want to go to graduate school can get some of their tuition covered if they agree to work in an underserved community for two years while they get their degree.

Mr. Chairman, President Kennedy said, "Peace does not rest in the charters and covenants alone. It lies in the hearts and minds of all people . . ." The Peace Corps has been helping to build that peace. The bill before the Committee can help give countless other Americans the chance to become part of this magnificent 40-year legacy of making a difference.

Senator DODD. Thank you very, very much, Mark, some very good ideas and thoughts. And again, we thank you for your service and your good leadership during your directorship.

Let me ask you how hard you think it is going to be. I mean, I raised the issue of what the number of applicants was to acceptances to Director Gaddi Vasquez. And I wonder if you might share with us, you know, how difficult you think it will be. Let us assume we have resources and so forth. But is it going to be hard to raise and get the quality of numbers we are talking about here? Is it in any way unrealistic?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think it is going to be hard. I also think it can be done. I think what has been interesting is that every time that we have had the resources and the authorization to go higher, we have gotten the applications increased. And I think that in this case as well, that if we have the resources to reach out and do additional recruiting—and I think that Gaddi's concern to expand diversity, which is something we have been trying to do over the past 10 years—and Paul Coverdell started it. When he started, there was about 6 percent of volunteers who were from minority backgrounds. We are now at 15 percent. And I think that we can do better.

And I think that we have to look at our advertising and recruiting efforts. At the same time, I am convinced that we can reach those numbers.

Senator DODD. Any other particular thoughts on altering the recruiting practices in your mind? You mentioned a couple of things there. But anything else?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Well, again, I think that we need to do more advertising. I went to the movies the other night and saw the Marine Corps had an ad in every movie that you go to. And it is voluntarily done by the Motion Picture Association and by the Advertising Council of America. It seems to me that they might cooperate with the Peace Corps in spreading our message as well.

Senator DODD. Pick a corps.

Well, let me ask you about the—in talking about the—I mentioned expanding Peace Corps activities in Muslim countries. And part of our efforts to better understand and to create better understanding of who we are, particularly when you read reports of a younger generation and their attitudes, that some of these madrasses and other schools the other day in Malaysia, stories in I believe one of the national newspapers, about schools that very much duplicate what is going on in Pakistan and elsewhere, where

you get a sense of the level of hatred being taught to very young people.

And obviously, the Peace Corps cannot take on all this itself. And public diplomacy at the State Department has to be vastly improved. But the Peace Corps can play a role here, it seems to me. What thoughts do you have about expanding Peace Corps activities in the Muslim world?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. There is no question. And I think there are two things there. One is that we already have a significant experience in having volunteers in Islamic countries. And we need to build on that and take the lessons.

And the second is that—and again, this goes back to diversity—I would suspect that we have not made any efforts to reach out to the Islamic community here, specific targeted efforts.

When I was director, I asked what have we done to reach out and communicate across the religious spectrum, especially at the time of high school. In other words, a lot of times families that are very close to their religions, they get a lot of their information from their churches or their synagogues or their mosques. And yet we have very little communication. It seems to me that we could do more, particularly with respect to the Islamic community in reaching out.

Senator DODD. Good suggestion. The Peace Corps has a modest student loan forgiveness program. I wonder if you think it should be doing more in this area. And the bill also raises the readjustment allowance paid to volunteers for their service from $225 each month to $275. Now I am going back a few years to my days of volunteer. But I think my readjustment allowance was $75.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think that is right. But that is $75 for each month of service.

Senator DODD. And I was a volunteer when Thomas Jefferson was President. So that has not gone up much in those years.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think that you are absolutely right. I think that going up to the level of $275 for each month of service is thoroughly appropriate. I also think that we should look at the whole range of student loans, provide the opportunity to perhaps some reduction in the balance owed by volunteers who complete the 2-years of service.

Senator DODD. Are you concerned at all about this USA volunteer program and the independence of the Peace Corps? Are concerns that are being raised by that, based on what you know, unwarranted?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. At the outset, I was very concerned. Knowing that we have both you and Senator Chafee, I feel less concerned. And I think the commitments from Director Vasquez earlier today are important.

I think one has to always—there is a tendency always to say, well, gee, it would be more efficient to have all service agencies in one department. And there is a tendency sometimes for people to move in that direction. So I think you always have to be vigilant.

I remember the phrase, "Trust, but monitor; trust, but verify."

Senator DODD. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Is there any apprehension on behalf of the Peace Corps alumni about doubling the numbers and that entire initiative?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I think there is concern that it be done in a way that assures the quality of the program, and the safety of volunteers. And I think that the legislation providing additional resources for staff and for programming is essential. And I think that as well, going back for a second, you mentioned the concern. The return Peace Corps volunteer community was very concerned about any effort to reduce the independence of the Peace Corps. So I think it is important that that provision, those provisions, be in the bill to make clear that that shall not occur.

But I think you are right. You have to be concerned about the quality of the programming. And thus far, what I have heard is that the assessment missions that have gone out from the Peace Corps to look at new countries have said that these are our standards, we are not going to jeopardize them. So I think we have to continue to press for that high quality.

Senator CHAFEE. And I guess following along that same line, in my short time here in Congress, everything has been so partisan. Is there any—I do not want to put boogeymen where there are not any, but is there any apprehension about anything partisan to do with this doubling of the Peace Corps?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Oh, no, no. I think that this is an absolutely wise decision in the national interest. And I think that we all should support it.

Senator CHAFEE. That is good to hear. Yes.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Congressman.

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you again for the opportunity.

Mark, you were a great Director of the Peace Corps and obviously a wonderful volunteer in your earlier years. I was thinking of the allowance as you were raising it. I remember we had, my wife and I collectively when we went in Peace Corps, we had about $2,000 we put in a mutual fund. When I came back, it was $1,000.

The $1,500 that we each received, I remember putting my nice clothes away, packing them away. And when I came back, the lapels were too wide; I could not use any of them. And all my underwear and all the other clothes, after cleaning on rocks for 2 years, were not very serviceable. So I had to buy all new clothes. And by the time you did, you did not have anything left in your allowance.

So anything we can do to increase that allowance would probably be good. People do not go into the service for the allowance, but it is nice to come back and at least be able to buy some clothes with it.

I would be interested to have a sense of the role you think any advisory group should play with an organization. And I will preface my comments by saying I do not like knowing that if you have a grievance against an attorney, the only people you can speak to are attorneys. And there is a part of me that rebels, thinking that this advisory group of Peace Corps volunteers will advise the Peace Corps Director.

And I am sharing my bias. I would like the full range of American creativity to be part of that. And so with my bias known, tell

me how you argue against why we should have 150,000 volunteers have a special impact on the Peace Corps.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I guess there would be two things. One is that I would hope that among those 165,000 volunteers you have a range and diversity that would reflect the broad reach of the American people and that you would get the kind of breadth of view that you want.

And the second is yes, I do believe that in this particular instance the special experience of returned Peace Corps volunteers can help the agency think through new ideas, can give, for example, a Peace Corps Director a sense of how something he has proposed is going to work in the field and how it is going to—what is the reaction going to be. It is a feel.

And I think RPCVs have it. I agree with having an advisory board of RPCVs.

Congressman SHAYS. Have you ever worked with people, though, that even though they were Peace Corps volunteers, almost put Peace Corps volunteers to shame, candidly? I mean, I think of this young man who spoke at Fairfield University, graduated 10 years ago. He went to Haiti, and he ended up—a young homeless kid, as they call the kids, in Haiti said to him, "Can you promise me that I can go to school?" And this young man out of school said, "I promise you that you will go to school." And the next thing, he realizes he had to start the school.

He came back to speak to the graduates 10 years later. I am a Peace Corps volunteer, listening to what he has done in the last 10 years and saying to myself, this man is magnificent. He has Peace Corps through and through, and he is not even a volunteer.

And frankly, one of his themes to his staff was: "Difficult, impossible—done." And he had all these other ways of dealing with these issues. And he talks about a kid who every morning gets up and, you know, goes to the bathroom in his pants because he sits in a car afraid police are going to harm him. And in the morning, he comes and gives him a hug. And he says, "My best laid plans are left. And I have to go change my clothes. But I give that kid a hug."

All I am trying to say to you is, I would like him, that man, to be part of an advisory group to the Peace Corps without the special, you know, Peace Corps history. So that is kind of what I wrestle with. Why should he not be part of that?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. In that sense, you do not—you have an endless board, because there are lots of people who have enormous creativity and have done things that are unique. And that would be helpful. The difference, it seems to me—and by the way, I do not think there is anything that would restrict and I hope there would not be anything that would restrict, a Peace Corps Director, any Peace Corps Director, from reaching out and consulting with anybody they want to.

But I think that there is a value in having an advisory board of RPCVs to bounce things off of because they have gone through the Peace Corps experience. And I think that that is the reason that I would support it.

Now I also would say I would like this to be an advisory board to the Director so that the Director is the one in a sense setting the agenda.

Congressman SHAYS. And I hear Senator Dodd say, if you have an advisory board, it should be something. And it should not just be in statute or whatever and not be somehow involved. I guess the question I have is: Would you be open to advocating or considering that if you have had overseas experience, that you have done things, like this young man has done for the last 10 years of his life. By the way, not just 2, the last 10 years—could something like that meet your criteria of someone who could advise the Peace Corps and advise the Director? Would they have to be—if they had experiences like that, would you be open to them?

Mr. SCHNEIDER. There is no question that they would have something to offer. I still go back in terms of I would still keep it to RPCVs, not so much because the others would not have something to offer, particularly the individual that you just mentioned, but in terms of the experience of what it is like being a Peace Corps volunteer in the institution and then how an issue would have an effect.

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you, Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

And, Mark, we thank you immensely. We want you to stay in touch with us here. And we appreciate your support of the legislation and look forward to your continuing involvement as we move forward with the bill. And we look forward to your continuing interest in the areas that the Peace Corps has been involved in. And we wish you very well with your International Crisis Group, as well.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Our last panel is made up of some very valuable people. I mentioned Dane Smith already. And Dane, we thank you for being with us today.

Dane is the president of the National Peace Corps Association, a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia back along with, I think, the days of Paul Tsongas. You had overlapping service, I believe, anyway.

Mr. SMITH. Overlapping. That is correct.

Senator DODD. He was there probably, I think, the year before you. He went in 1962, I think.

Mr. SMITH. That is correct.

Senator DODD. Mrs. Barbara Ferris, who was a volunteer in Morocco, Women in Development Coordinator 1987 to 1993, Peace Corps in Washington. And Barbara, we thank you. Once again, it is nice to have you with us.

Ms. FERRIS. Thank you.

Senator DODD. And John Coyne was a volunteer in Ethiopia in 1962 to 1964. Now you did serve with Paul——

Mr. COYNE. Right.

Senator DODD [continuing]. In those years. He is the New York City Regional Manager, 1994 to 2000, Peace Corps in Pelham, New York.

We thank all three of you for being here. What I would like to do, if you would, I will ask Bertie to keep an eye on the clock here,

not to make you live by it, but if you can just sort of keep your remarks to around 5 or 6 minutes, so we can get to some questions. And if you run over a little bit, do not worry about it. But if you could try to keep it within that timeframe, I would appreciate it. And we will obviously take all of your statements in full. And we thank you all for being here.

Dane, thank you again for a very fine weekend. I am sorry I could not participate in all the events. But I know Janice O'Connell of my office was on one of the panels on Saturday. And I gather from press accounts it sounded like a good old Peace Corps party. Having Sarge show up on that motorcycle was—he came in on Friday morning. And I know what his age is, and, believe me, I wish I had half his energy. And I am half his age. He was remarkable. His enthusiasm is contagious.

So we thank you, Dane, for your fine work this weekend, as you have over the years with the National Peace Corps Association. We will begin with your testimony.

STATEMENT OF DANE SMITH, PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER IN ETHIOPIA (1963–1965); PRESIDENT, NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Congressman Shays, thank you for your kind remarks about our conference. We greatly appreciate the participation of both you and Janice in our conference.

It is an honor to appear before this subcommittee to represent the National Peace Corps Association and its membership. We are a 501(c)(3) organization. And we are the only national organization which represents return Peace Corps volunteers or RPCVs, former staff of the Peace Corps, and friends of the Peace Corps.

We have 15,000 members in all 50 states. And we have 141 affiliate Peace Corps alumni groups in 44 of those states. We carry out programs in global education, service, and peace-building. And we have launched a Microenterprise Program working with FINCA, the Foundation for International Community Assistance, and the Calvert Foundation, to promote investment in micro-lending programs for poor countries.

In early January of this year, two members of the National Peace Corps Association, Roger Landrum and David Hibbard, convened a small group to formulate ideas to be conveyed to the U.S. Congress on a "new mandate" for the Peace Corps, namely, how to strengthen the agency and position it for greater effectiveness in the post-September 11 world. NPCA leaders, including Pat Reilly, soon to become chair of the NPCA board of directors; Ed Crane, our advocacy coordinator; and I joined this group.

And immediately after the State of the Union Message, our group, which had reached a kind of consensus on our views, submitted recommendations at the request of offices in the Senate and the House, including your office, Mr. Chairman. And we have since participated in consultations on the draft legislation before it was introduced with staff of this subcommittee.

For the Peace Corps family, September 11 underlined more than anything else the vital importance to our security and well-being of America's positive engagement with the rest of the world. No as-

pect of America's engagement with the world over more than 40 years has been more positive and effective than the Peace Corps. It has had a positive impact on 135 countries already, with many more to come.

Moreover, 165,000 Americans have served in the Peace Corps over this period. These Americans return still fired with a passion for service, which they undertake in their own communities in the United States, nationally or internationally.

As you pointed out, Mr. Chairman, we have just completed a national conference celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Peace Corps, a conference which brought together 2,000 Peace Corps alumni to Washington. And the main question before this conference was: How can the Peace Corps and Peace Corps alumni make an even more effective contribution to a peaceful world through grassroots development and the promotion of harmony and understanding among peoples of different ethnicities and religion?

Mr. Chairman, we believe that this bill goes a considerable way toward answering this question and that it should be supported by a strong bipartisan majority. Having examined an initial draft of the legislation and aware that the bill was likely to undergo some further change, the National Peace Corps Association board of directors last month adopted a set of general principles it wanted to see reflected in the legislation in its final form, so as to enable the Peace Corps and its alumni to address new challenges of peaceful grassroots development in the 21st century.

And these principles very briefly are support for President Bush's proposal to double the number of volunteers over 5 years in the context of volunteer security, quality programming and placement, and broader, more innovative, initiatives of people-to-people development assistance.

Second, the historic independence of the Peace Corps from other agencies of foreign policy and from any and all forms of intelligence gathering. Third, a well-funded strategic planning unit within the Peace Corps. Fourth, a streamlined bipartisan advisory council to the Peace Corps composed of Peace Corps alumni representing a broad range of international knowledge and relevant career expertise. Fifth, an RPCV innovation fund providing grants to support selected innovative projects and programs proposed by return Peace Corps volunteers, both domestic and international projects, which are consistent with the goals of the Peace Corps.

A restructured Crisis Corps that better utilizes the career expertise of return volunteers to extend the mission and goals of the Peace Corps into challenging new contexts of peaceful development in the 21st century. And finally, a new era of collaboration between the Peace Corps agency, the National Peace Corps Association, other Peace Corps alumni organizations, and initiatives and other international volunteer programs.

Mr. Chairman, the NPCA considers that this bill is consistent with the mandate principles we have formulated. And therefore, we strongly support its passage. We believe that the bill, if enacted, would provide a strengthened mandate for the Peace Corps and important suggestions about how the agency can be strengthened.

We particularly favor the important role envisaged for return Peace Corps volunteers in contributing to a strengthened agency.

There are 165,000 Americans who have served in the Peace Corps. They have brought knowledge and experience back from that service. And they continue to serve in their own communities, as well as overseas.

And I want to emphasize how pleased we are with the commitment of Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez to draw on the insight and talents of our PCVs in moving the Peace Corps forward and to the formation of the working group that he has mentioned.

In closing, I would like to make a few comments on section 10 concerning the Peace Corps Innovation Fund. The National Peace Corps Association has been promoting service initiatives of the kind envisaged for the proposed fund for more than 15 years. In 1986, we first awarded the Sargent Shriver Award for Outstanding Humanitarian Service. And in the intervening years, this award has been given to Peace Corps alumni who have done such things as establish a family hospital in Appalachia or an eye clinic in Haiti or carrying on reconciliation between warring ethnic groups in Bosnia.

This year the award was just given to Molly Melching, who through her Senegalese NGO Tostan has brought about decisions in hundreds of Senegalese villages to halt the practice of female genital cutting.

A second award, we also confer the Loret Miller Ruppe Award annually to an NPCA affiliate group for group service projects. And in recent years, the Ruppe Award has been given for such projects as a mentoring program at a high school in inner city Chicago, which includes a carefully tailored three-week visit to West Africa for several students or conflict resolution work in civil war-ravaged Sierra Leone and efforts by Ethiopia and Eritrea returned Peace Corps volunteers to encourage a peaceful resolution of the war that broke out between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998.

We not only encourage such projects, Mr. Chairman, but we are beginning to provide funding for them. The NPCA has just launched a program of continuation of service grants, seed money to be made available for projects undertaken domestically or internationally by our affiliate groups under a set of criteria endorsed by our board of directors. During the conference which just ended, we raised $10,000 to support the continuation of service grants.

In anticipation that this legislation will be enacted, the National Peace Corps Association is proceeding with planning for organizing a separate nonprofit corporation which would meet the criteria established in section 10. We expect to draw on the talents of our new mandate group led by Roger Landrum and Dave Hibbard and on others with experience in particular project areas and in project design and evaluation.

And we anticipate that the new entity would give emphasis to projects for educating Americans about the developing countries, for AIDS education, for community, national, and international service, including youth service programs, and for conflict resolution.

And so, Mr. Chairman, the NPCA supports this bill, the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act, and intends, with its affiliate groups, to work hard for its passage.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Smith follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DANE F. SMITH, PRESIDENT, NPCA

A PEACE CORPS CHARTER FOR THE 21ST CENTURY—VIEWS OF THE NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman. I am Dane Smith. President of the National Peace Corps Association, It is an honor to appear before this Subcommittee to represent the National Peace Corps Association and its membership. The NPCA, a 501(c)(3) organization, founded in 1979 as the National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and incorporated in the State of North Carolina, is the only national organization which represents Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs), former Staff of the Peace Corps and Friends of the Peace Corps. The NPCA has 15,000 members in all 50 states and has 141 affiliate Peace Corps alumni groups in 44 of the 50 states. The NPCA carries out programs in global education, service, and peace-building and has just launched a Microenterprise Program, in collaboration with the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) and the Calvert Foundation, which promotes investment in micro-lending programs in poor countries.

In early January of this year two members of the NPCA—Roger Landrum and David Hibbard, who both served in the Peace Corps in Nigeria—convened a small group to formulate ideas to be conveyed to the U.S. Congress on a "new mandate" for the Peace Corps, namely how to strengthen the Agency and position it for greater effectiveness in the post-September 11 world. NPCA leaders, including Pat Reilly, soon to become Chair of the NPCA Board of Directors, Ed Crane, NPCA Advocacy Coordinator, and I joined this group and hosted it at NFCA headquarters. By the time President Bush delivered his State of the Union message proposing a doubling of the Peace Corps within five years—a proposal we warmly welcomed—our group had reached a consensus on basic ideas and had visited Congressional offices, both Republican and Democratic, seeking support. Immediately after the State of the Union message, our group submitted recommendations at the request of offices in the Senate and the House. We have since participated in consultations on draft legislation with Congressional staff, including staff of this Subcommittee.

Why has the NPCA pressed for legislation embodying "a Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century? For the Peace Corps family, September 11 underlined more than anything else the vital importance to our security and well-being of America's positive engagement with the rest of the world. No aspect of America's engagement with the world over more than 40 years has been more positive and effective than the Peace Corps. It has had a positive impact on 135 countries already, with many more to come. Moreover, 165,000 Americans have served in the Peace Corps over 41 years. These Americans return still filled with a passion for service which they undertake in their own communities in the United States, nationally or internationally. The NPCA has just completed this past week-end a National Conferrnce celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Peace Corps. The Conference brought over 2000 Peace Corps alumni to Washington. The primary question before this Conference was: How can the Peace Corps—and Peace Corps alumni—make an even more effective contribution to a peaceful world through grassroots development and the promotion of harmony and understanding among peoples of different ethnicities and religions? Mr. Chairman, we believe that S. 2667 goes a long way toward answering this question and that it should be supported by a strong bipartisan majority.

Principles for a Mandate for the Peace Corps in the 21st Century

Having examined an initial draft of legislation and aware that the bill was likely to undergo further change, the NPCA Board of Directors last month adopted a set of general principles it wanted to see reflected in the legislation in its final form so as to enable the Peace Corps and its alumni to address new challenges of peaceful, grassroots development in the 21st century. These principles are as follows:

1. Support for President Bush's proposal to double the number of Peace Corps Volunteers over five years, in a context of quality programming and volunteer placement and broader, more innovative initiatives of people-to-people development assistance.

2. The historic independence of Peace Corps, from its inception, from other agencies of foreign policy and from any and all forms of intelligence gathering.

3. A well-funded Strategic Planning Unit within the Peace Corps with the expertise and authority to guide the expansion of volunteer numbers and programming initiatives with improved reserch evaluation, and forward strategic planning.

4. A streamlined, bipartisan Advisory Council to the Peace Corps composed of Peace Corps alumni representing a broad range of international knowledge and relevant career expertise.

5. An RPCV Innovation Fund providing grants to support selected innovative projects and programs proposed by RPCVs, both domestic and international, consistent with the goals of the Peace Corps and experience gained through Peace Corps service.

6. A restructured "Crisis Corps" that better utilizes the career expertise of RPCVs to extend the mission and goals of the Peace Corps into challenging new contexts of peaceful development in the 21st century.

7. A new era of collaboration between the Peace Corps agency, the National Peace Corps Association, other Peace Corps alumni organizations and initiatives and other international volunteer programs.

NPCA Support for S. 2667

Mr. Chairman, the National Peace Corps Association considers that S. 2667 is consistent with the Mandate principles we have formulated and strongly supports its passage. We believe the bill, if enacted, would provide a strengthened mandate for the Peace Corps and important suggestions about how the Agency can be strengthened. We particularly favor the important role envisaged for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers in contributing to a strengthened agency. There are 165,000 Americans who have served in the Peace Corps. They have derived important knowledge and experience from their service overseas, and they have brought back a passion to continue to serve, in their own communities as well as overseas. And we are pleased that Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez has indicated a strong desire to draw on the insight and talents of RPCVs in moving the Peace Corps forward.

Funding Projects of Peace Corps Alumni

In closing I would like to make a few comments on Sec. 10 concerning the Peace Corps Innovation Fund. The National Peace Corps Association has been promoting service initiatives of the kind envisaged for the proposed Fund for more than 15 years. In 1986 we first awarded the Sargent Shriver Award for Outstanding Humanitarian Service. In the intervening years this award has been given to Peace Corps alumni who have done such things as establish a family clinic in Appalachia, create an eye clinic in Haiti, carry on reconciliation between warring ethnic groups in the Balkans. This year the award was given to Molly Melching, who through her Senegalese NGO Tostan, has brought about decisions in hundreds of Senegalese villages to halt the practice of female genital cutting. We also confer the Loret Miller Ruppe Award annually to an NPCA affiliate groups for group service projects. In recent years the Ruppe Award has been given for such projects as a mentoring program at a high school in inner-city Chicago, to include a carefully tailored three week visit to West Africa for several students; conflict resolution work in civil war-ravaged Sierra Leone; and efforts by Ethiopia and Eritrea Returned Volunteers to encourage a peaceful resolution of the Ethiopia-Eritrea war. We not only encourage such projects, but we are beginning to provide funding for them. The NPCA has just launched a program of Continuation of Service Grants, seed money to be made available for projects undertaken domestically or internationally by our affiliate groups under a set of criteria endorsed by our Board of Directors. During our Conference, which just ended, we raised $10,000 to support the Continuation of Service grants.

In anticipation that this legislation will be enacted, the NPCA is proceeding with planning for organizing a separate non-profit corporation which would meet the criteria established in Section 10. We expect to draw on the talents of our "new mandate" group led by Roger Landrum and Dave Hibbard and on others with experience in particular project areas and in project design and evaluation. We anticipate that the new entity would give emphasis to projects for educating Americans about the developing countries; for AIDS education; for community, national and international service, including youth service programs; and for conflict resolution.

Mr. Chairman, the National Peace Corps Association supports the passage of S.2667 "A Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century." Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much. You did say in 44 states, you had that many affiliate organizations. So we look forward to having cosponsors from all 44 states. And I tell you this much, I can promise you this, when you were here and I know you had an advocacy day on Thursday, I guess it was——

Mr. SMITH. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DODD [continuing]. And I can tell you I would like these folks in town on every bill all the time. I ended up with more cosponsors in one day than any other bill that I can think of that I have offered up, and I thank the members of the National Peace Corps Association who went around and knocked on doors. It was remarkable the number of colleagues of mine who called and said, "Put me on the bill."

So we thank you immensely for that work. We may bring you back to town another time for that kind of——

Mr. SMITH. Well, 200 of our members came specifically for that.

Senator DODD. Well, they did a good job, I can tell you.

Ms. Ferris, how are you?

Ms. FERRIS. I am good. How are you?

Senator DODD. Good. Nice to see you.

Ms. FERRIS. Thank you.

Senator DODD. Welcome.

Ms. FERRIS. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF BARBARA A. FERRIS, PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER IN MOROCCO (1980–1982), WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR (1987–1993), CO-FOUNDER, THE PEACE CORPS FUND, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. FERRIS. Mr. Chairman and Congressman Shays, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of section 10 of the legislation of the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act, which provides $10 million to RPCVs to implement the third goal.

I am a return Peace Corps volunteer from Morocco, where I taught English as a second language. I served for 5 years as the Women in Development director for the Peace Corps, 6 years as a member of the board of directors of the National Peace Corps Association, and I chaired the 40th anniversary task force for the celebration, cochaired the Committee for the Future of the Peace Corps, and now I am the cofounder of the Peace Corps Fund.

I am also the founder and the president of the International Women's Democracy Center, which trains women outside the United States in the technical skills of how to run for elected office, how to engage in building their civil society, and how to lobby their legislatures.

I want to applaud you and this institution for finally designating resources to support return Peace Corps volunteers who want to implement the third goal in their communities, as stated in the Peace Corps Act of 1961. Bill Moyers said that Peace Corps volunteers carry two passports, one stamped American and one stamped human being.

Last weekend, as Dane said, nearly 2,000 people from the Peace Corps family gathered in Washington to lead and attend workshops, to celebrate the music and traditions of the countries where we lived and worked as Peace Corps volunteers, to honor those who died in service, and to support the very organizations like IWDC that continue to embrace the challenges of service.

The Peace Corps Fund was created at the urging of thousands of return Peace Corps volunteers and staff, who formerly and force-

fully support the third goal of the Peace Corps Act. I am here today as cofounder of the fund, a nonprofit organization established in the District of Columbia to provide grants up to $100,000 to returned Peace Corps volunteers who want to carry out the third goal in their communities in the shapes of programs, projects, and activities.

The fund brings together an extraordinary team of returned Peace Corps volunteers with demonstrated skills in nonprofit management, fundraising, grants management, budget and finance, foundation relationships, communications, public relations, technology and vision combined with an extensive network that reaches to every corner of our country and the farthest corners of the world.

In order to enhance efficiency and keep costs down, the Peace Corps Fund will take advantage of the latest technology and facilitate our grant making on line through its Web site, www.asknot.org. The online grant making process includes application, awards of grants, project reporting, and evaluations.

Individuals representing three generations of the Peace Corps family, including one of the early architects of agency and a recently returned Peace Corps volunteer from Asia, incorporated the fund. Many of the early architects of the Peace Corps, Members of Congress, members of the National Peace Corps Association, and numerous individuals and organizations committed to sustainable development support this innovative idea.

The fund does not have dues paying members. It does not publish a magazine. It does not have programs and does not engage in peacemaking activities around the world. The fund is open to support all return volunteers who want to do third goal activities. It will act as a fiscal agent to provide grants to do so. And my colleague, John Coyne, will provide a more detailed example as to the specific projects that the fund could support.

For the past 41 years, RPCVs have been bringing the world back home in small ways with limited resources, as you stated earlier. Creating speaker bureaus for their local schools, hosting forums to discuss culture and tradition of countries where they served, teaching English to immigrant parents with children in local schools, and a multitude of other activities that continue to share what we have learned and to carry on a tradition of service here at home.

While many RPCVs carry their unique experiences gained around the world into classrooms and boardrooms, thousands have become leaders in corporations, educational institutions, journalism, international organizations and here in our Nation's political leadership, both at the state and national levels.

Increasing the resources available to RPCVs will have a significant impact on increasing understanding among Americans about the people, places, cultures, and traditions of the nations where we lived and worked as volunteers.

While I could spend days speaking about the depth and range of the transforming projects initiated by RPCVs in their communities with little or no resources, I do want to share with this committee the 13-year-old calendar project, which I gave each of you, created by the RPCVs of Wisconsin. And it is their collective effort to bring the world back home.

As a former teacher, this annual calendar is one of the most powerful development tools I have ever seen. It not only lists all the holidays from the Peace Corps countries every month, it provides spectacular photos taken by RPCVs of one nation a month with a description of a tradition or event that highlights the culture of the country. At the moment, they produce nearly 35,000 of these. Imagine the power of this teaching tool if our Nation's schoolchildren were given one of their very own.

It is a very cost-effective, efficient, simple way for kids not only to learn every day about different holidays and cultures, but every month about a different country and tradition. More importantly, I believe it would give students a chance to aspire and dream about exploring places far from home.

September 11 changed us forever. And we all continue to wrestle with the injustices of terrorism. One way to fight terrorism is to learn about and engage in the rest of the world. In 1961, when Sarge Shriver went to Ghana to lay the foundation for the first volunteers to serve there, the President of Ghana agreed to host Americans on the condition that he send the best and the brightest.

The 165,000 RPCVs who have served in over 135 nations speaking 300-plus languages for the past four decades, giving 300,000 years of service are, in my opinion, the best and the brightest.

Among the outstanding moments at the conference this past weekend, including the motorcycle, Sarge Shriver said the Peace Corps stands for everything we believe in America, that we care about the people of the world, that Peace Corps is dedicated to the goal of permanent peace.

Mr. Chairman, I speak in strong support of the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act, and particularly section 10, which provides $10 million for RPCVs to carry out their goal activities.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ferris follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BARBARA ANNE FERRIS, RPCV, MOROCCO, CO-FOUNDER, THE PEACE CORPS FUND

Mr. Chairman, Members of this Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of the legislation of the Peace Corps Charter for 21st Century Act. I am a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer from Morocco where I taught English as a second language. I have served for 5 years as the Women in Development Director for the Peace Corps, for 6 years as a member of the Board of Directors for the National Peace Corps Association, I chaired the 40th Anniversary Celebration of the Peace Corps, co-chaired of the Committee for the Future of the Peace Corps and am the co-founder of the Peace Corps Fund. And now I am the founder and president of the International Women's Democracy Center, which trains women outside the United States in the technical skills of how to run for elected office, how to engage in building their civil society, and how to lobby their legislatures.

I want to applaud you and this institution for finally designating resources to support Returned Peace Corps Volunteers who want to implement the 3rd goal of the Peace Corps as stated in the Peace Corps Act of 1961—to educate Americans about the people, places and countries where we lived and worked as Peace Corps Volunteers. Bill Moyers said that Peace Corps Volunteers carry two passports—one stamped American and one stamped human being.

Last weekend, nearly 2,000 people from the Peace Corps family gathered in Washington to lead and attend workshops, celebrate the music and traditions of the countries where we lived and worked as Volunteers, honor those who died in service, and support the very organizations that continue to embrace the challenges of service.

The Peace Corps Fund was created at the urging of thousands of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and staff who formally and forcefully support the Third Goal of the Peace Corps Act of 1961, I am here today as co-founder of The Peace Corps Fund, a non-profit organization established in the District of Columbia to provide grants up to $100,000 to Returned Peace Corps Volunteers who want to carry out the 3rd goal in their communities in the shape of programs, projects and activities.

The Peace Corps Fund brings together an extraordinary team of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers with demonstrated skills in non-profit management, fundraising, grants management, budget and finance, foundation relationships, communications, public relations, technology and vision combined with an extensive network that reaches to every corner of our country and the farthest corners of the world.

Individuals representing three generations of the Peace Corps Family—including one of the early architects of the Agency incorporated the Peace Corps Fund and a recently returned Peace Corps Volunteer. Many of the early architects of the Peace Corps, Members of Congress, members of the National Peace Corps Association, and numerous individuals support the Peace Corps Fund and organizations committed to sustainable peace and development throughout our global community. In order to enhance efficiency and keep costs down, the Peace Corps Fund will take advantage of the latest technology and facilitate grant making on line through its web site—www.AskNot.org The online grant making process includes application, awards of grants, project reporting and evaluations.

The Peace Corps Fund does not have dues paying members, does not publish a quarterly magazine, does not have programs and does not engage in peace making activities around the world. The Fund will be open to support all Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and the fund will simply act as a fiscal agent to provide grants to RPCVs and RPCV groups for 3rd goal activities. My colleague John Coyne will provide a more detailed example as to the specific project the Fund could support.

For the past 41 years, RPCVs have been bringing the world back home in small ways with limited resources. Creating speaker bureaus for their local schools, hosting forums to discuss culture and tradition of countries where they served, teaching English to immigrant parents with children in local schools and a multitude of other activities that continue to share what we have learned and to carry on a tradition of service here at home. While many RPCVs carry their unique experiences gained around the world into class rooms, board rooms, thousands of RPCVs have become leaders in corporations, educational institutions, journalism, international organizations and our nation's political leadership both at the state and national levels. Increasing the resources available to RPCVs will have a significant impact on increasing the understanding among Americans about people, places, cultures, religions and traditions of the nations where we lived and worked as Volunteers.

While I could spend days speaking about the depth and range of transforming projects initiated by RPCVs in their communities, I want to share with this committee the 13-year-old calendar project created by the RPCVs of Wisconsin—as their collective effort to bring the world back home. As a former teacher, the annual calendar is one of the most powerful development education tools I have ever seen. It not only lists all the holidays from all the Peace Corps countries every months, it provides spectacular photos taken by RPCVs of one nation a month with a description of a tradition or event that highlights the culture of the country. At the moment, they produce nearly 35,000 of these calendars. Imagine the power of this teaching tool if our nation's school children were given one for their very own. It is a very cost effective and efficient, simple way for kids to not only learn every day and about different holidays and cultures, but every month, about a different country and tradition. More importantly, it would give students a chance to aspire and dream about exploring other places.

September 11 changed us forever and we all continue to wrestle with the injustices of terrorism. One way to fight terrorism is to learn about and engage in the rest of the world. In 1961, when Sarge Shriver went to Ghana to lay the foundation for the first Volunteers to serve there, the President of Ghana agreed to host Americans on the condition that he sent the best and the brightest. The 166,000 Returned Peace Corps Volunteers who have served in over 130 nations speaking 300+ languages for the past 4 decades giving 300,000 years of service are in my opinion, the best and the brightest.

Among the many outstanding moments at the conference this past weekend, Sarge Shriver said that Peace Corps stands for everything we believe in America—that we care about the people of the world that Peace Corps is dedicated to the goal of permanent peace.

Mr. Chainnan, I speak in strong support of the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act and Section 10 which provides $10 million dollars for RPCVs to facilitate 3rd goal activities.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Thank you, Ms. Ferris.

John, thank you for being here. Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing, as well, with Barbara.

STATEMENT OF JOHN COYNE, PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER IN ETHIOPIA/ERITREA (1962–1964), NEW YORK CITY REGIONAL MANAGER (1994–2000), CO-FOUNDER, THE PEACE CORPS FUND, PELHAM, NY

Mr. COYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have prepared my remarks that I have submitted. So I will just be brief.

Congressman Shays, thank you very much for the honor, Mr. Chairman, to appear before you. And I, too, support the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century. I do so—I bill myself as the oldest living former Peace Corps volunteer, because in October 1960 I happened to be on the campus of the University of Michigan when President Kennedy introduced the idea. And from Kalamazoo, Michigan, I joined the Peace Corps in 1962 and went to Washington, where one of the first people I met was Paul Tsongas. And our Director was, as you know, the former Senator Harris Wofford from Pennsylvania.

And late in the session we went to meet the President on the White House lawn just before we left for Ethiopia. And he said then, "I hope you will regard this Peace Corps tour as the first installment in a long life of service, as the most exciting career in the most exciting time, and that is serving this country in the sixties and the seventies."

Well, here we are in a new century, and we are still trying to fulfill the third goal. We are still trying to bring the world back home.

In the 1980s, to fulfill the third goal of the Peace Corps, I started with another Peace Corps volunteer from Ethiopia, Marian Haley Beil, a newsletter to promote and share the writings of Peace Corps writers. Three years ago, we also established a Web site, peacecorpswriters.org. We believe that the writings of returned Peace Corps volunteers, all their novels, short stories, essays, and poetry are a positive way of educating America about the world, an essential third goal activity.

The poetry and prose is a literary bridge that links the cultures of the world. The writings of Peace Corps volunteers provide America a chance to learn about Peace Corps countries that they will never have the opportunity to visit. Today, on our Web site, we have listed over 500 writers who have published more than 1,200 books, many of which are based on their Peace Corps experience.

All this work on the newsletter, as with the site, continues to be done on a volunteer basis. We believe that we are promoting service by our own example of serving the Peace Corps community.

It was during the 1960s when I was on the staff of the Peace Corps in New York that I edited a series of essays written by Peace Corps writers, essays that I had previously collected and published into a paperback book. There have been three of them now. These

stories by former volunteers have been an extremely effective recruitment tool for the agency because they give a picture in the words of the volunteers in well-written language of what it is like to actually live in the Third World and to be a Peace Corps volunteer.

I was also recently asked, thanks to the Congressman's wife, to help her with the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools production of essays in a new textbook called, "Voices from the Field," to be used for language arts teachings in grades 7 through 12.

Mr. Chairman, these are just two examples of what can be done with the writings of people who have served our Nation as volunteers. I would like to add in addition to that, on my own and around the 40th anniversary I went out and I sought a foundation grant from the Shulman Foundation of $25,000 so that I could get Peace Corps writers to read across the country in a series of locations, classrooms, libraries, community centers. This is still going on. We started with Harvard University in Cambridge, and our next one will take place in Venice, California, at the Venice Public Library. We will have several volunteers, former volunteers reading, and also talking about their Peace Corps experience.

This $25,000 grant could be expanded under something like the section 10 of the new act in the sense that we can bring volunteers to many, many more communities if we only had a limited amount of resources to do it.

I believe at this moment in history we can provide what we call, or what Mark Gearan actually called, the domestic dividend from our Peace Corps service. We can share the lessons we learned overseas and working in another culture, when we can help people here understand what the whole world is like and what it is like to be a Peace Corps volunteer.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, let me offer the perspective of just one Peace Corps volunteer. The core of the Peace Corps is about service, service to our country and service to the fellow citizens of the world. It is a simple but very powerful concept, one that has stood the test of time and one that in my view has helped strengthen the ties of cross-cultural understanding between Americans and the people of the world.

This sort of understanding has never been more important than it is today. And as return volunteers, we have a responsibility to share with our fellow Americans what we have learned overseas, all in the hope of making the world a better, more peaceful place.

This legislation will help us do our job as returned volunteers. With your help and support we will continue to help bring the world back home. Thank you very much for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Coyne follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN COYNE, RPCV, ETHIOPIA, CO-FOUNDER, PEACE CORPS FUND

Mr. Chairman, members of the Subcommittee, I am deeply honored to appear before you today and offer testimony about the Peace Corps Charter for the 21st Century Act. I join many other Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, or RPCVs, as we refer to ourselves, in thanking you for working to strengthen the Peace Corps at this important time in the agency's history and our country's history.

In October of 1960 when John F. Kennedy was campaigning for the presidency, he spoke after midnight on the campus of the University of Michigan and intro-

duced the idea of a Peace Corps. It was a moment in time that defined four decades of public service by young and older Americans.

I was one of the students on campus that night swept up by John F. Kennedy's challenge to go to Asia, Africa, or Latin America and contribute a few years to my country. I had never thought of leaving the U.S. before. I would never even have thought of leaving my hometown of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Now I wanted to be part of the New Frontier. I wanted to do something for my country.

In the summer of 1962, I went to Washington to train at Georgetown University with the first group of Volunteers to Ethiopia.

On our first night of training, all of us Ethiopia-bound Volunteers went en masse for a long walk on the C&O Canal. Leading us was Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas who had recently saved that canal by having it designated a historic monument.

At the end of the two miles we stopped for hot dogs, beer, and an impromptu talk from a lanky kid named John D. Rockefeller IV. I am not sure if Senator Rockefeller remembers that evening or not, but he was just back from studying in Asia and was working at the Peace Corps headquarters with Sargent Shriver.

Towards the end of our training we went to meet President Kennedy in the Rose Garden. Leading us was Harris Wofford, then Country Director for Ethiopia and later, as you know, U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania. Also in our group was another young Volunteer like myself, the late Senator from Massachusetts, Paul Tsongas.

On the White House lawn, President Kennedy told us, "I hope that you will regard this Peace Corps tour as the first installment in a long life of service, as the most exciting career in the most exciting time, and that is serving this country in the sixties and the seventies."

Well, here it is in a new century and those of us who responded to President Kennedy's challenge of life long service are still trying to fulfill the Third Goal of the Peace Corps to "bring the world back home."

In 41 years of service in the developing nations of the world, the Peace Corps has come to represent the best that America has to offer the worid. It is also one of America's best bridges of friendship to the peoples of the world. We have touched the lives of people in 135 countries over these last four decades. We have made lifelong friends, and to an amazing degree, changed the global perception of America by living among, and with the peoples of the world. We have changed the face of the "ugly American" in many communities who have never had the opportunity to see, to touch, and to know an American. And we have come home to America and in our daily lives, within our extended families, and our communities, we have taught America about what we saw and, more importantly, learned from other people and cultures.

Our impact here in America has often been very personal.

In the 1980s, to fulfill this Third Goal of the Peace Corps of bringing the world vividly home to America, I started with another Returned Volunteer from Ethiopia, Marian Haley Beil, a newsletter to promote and share the writings of Peace Corps Volunteers. Three years ago, we expanded this effort by developing a web site, peacecorpswriters.org

We believe that the writings of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, all their novels, short stories, essays and poetry are a positive way of educating Americans about the world, an essential Third Goal activity. This poetry and prose is a literary bridge that links the cultures of the world. The writings of Peace Corps Volunteers provide America a chance to learn about Peace Corps countries that they will never have the opportunity to visit. Today, on our online bibliography, we have over 500 writers who have published more than 1,200 books, many of which are based on their experiences overseas.

All this work on the newsletter—as with the site—continues to be done on a volunteer basis. We believe that we are promoting service by our own example of serving the Peace Corps community.

It was during the 1990s that I also edited a series of essays written by Peace Corps Volunteers—essays about their Peace Corps experience—that I had first published in our newsletter and turned them into a paperback book. These stories by former Volunteers have been an extremely effective recruitment tool for the agency.

I also was recently asked by Paul D. Coverdell Worldwise Schools of the Peace Corps to find essays for their new classroom textbook, *Voices from the Fields,* to be used by language arts teachers in grades 7-12.

Mr. Chairman, these are just two examples of what can be done with the writings of people who have served our nation as Peace Corps Volunteers. There are many other projects and programs that RPCVs can do here at home to further the Third Goal of the Peace Corps Act. It is my hope that the new Peace Corps bill will make it possible for me to continue the work of peacecorpswriters.org and make the prose

and poetry of Peace Corps writers accessible to students and older audiences across the United States.

At this critical moment in our history, we can deliver a "domestic dividend" from our Peace Corps service. We can share the lessons we learned living and working in another culture. We can help our country understand the world by writing about the people we knew as friends.

Mr. Chairman, in closing, let me offer the perspective of just one of more than 166,000 people who have served as Peace Corps Volunteers. At its core, the Peace Corps is about service—service to our country, and service to our fellow citizens of the world. It's a simple but very powerful concept, one that has stood the test of time, and one that, in my view has helped strengthen the ties of cross-cultural understanding between Americans and the people of other countries.

This sort of understanding has never been more important than it is today, and as returned Volunteers, we have a responsibility to share with our fellow Americans what we have learned overseas, all in the hope of making the world a better, more peaceful place.

This legislation will help us do our jobs as returned Volunteers. With your help and support, we can continue to help bring the world back home.

Thank you very much.

Senator DODD. Thank you, John, very, very much; and, Barbara, for the tremendous work you are doing with the fund. My compliments to you and look forward to any ways we can be helpful to it. It is a very worthwhile endeavor.

I am just curious, Dane, over the weekend I had the opportunity to talk to a couple of people who have been up on the Hill talking about the pending, well, proposed, legislation. I wonder if you might—I know there was an opportunity to discuss it in some of the workshops. Can you give us sort of a flavor of what the reaction was among the participants in last week's conference to the bill?

What were some of the comments, criticisms, whatever you think may be appropriate to share with the committee?

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Chairman, as you know, during advocacy day, a major aspect of what the returned volunteers and other members of our association were doing as they met with their Members and Representatives on the Hill, was to promote this legislation. And the effect, as you said, was quite extraordinary. And I understand that a number of sponsors were added as a result of their activities.

In addition, we designed the conference to have as one of its major forums the future of the Peace Corps in the 21st century. And that panel, which included Deputy Director Jody Olsen from the Peace Corps, as well as Janice O'Connell from your committee staff, and Dave Hibbard, who was one of the organizers of the mandate group that I discussed, collected a very large number of people in the hall. It was one of our best-attended workshops. Ken Hill also spoke as a former chief of staff of the Peace Corps.

So we had a tremendous response, which continued during the course of the conference, and a lot of very positive reaction from members. And a number of our affiliate groups have signed on. We expect many more of them will do so in the coming weeks.

Senator DODD. Well, great. That is very helpful. Share with me, if you would—and all three of you comment on this—if you have any comments at all about the bill, anything more than what Dane has added in terms of the weekend. Again, the doubling the size of the Peace Corps, the President has advocated this as, I think, a general sense that this is needed. Obviously, there are concerns

about the adequate resources to support the increased number of volunteers.

But I wonder if you might just share with us your views, Barbara, we will begin with you, just on this notion.

Ms. FERRIS. I think I agree with what I think you have heard before. It is really important that volunteers have jobs and not be sent out to the field because it is such a transition when you are a volunteer to go out to the field and stand there with nothing, and not having a job to find is difficult. Although I do not think Peace Corps volunteers join the Peace Corps for a whole lot of structure anyway. And they are very innovative, creative, and flexible people. And we all know this. You get 10 volunteers in a room, and you have 11 opinions.

So there is a strength in the American, I think, who does sign up to be a volunteer. I think it is imperative that volunteers have jobs and that the security and safety of the volunteers is also considered. I think it is important, too, that the relationship with the countries where we are planning to enter be established and that there is an opportunity for a Peace Corps volunteer to have a job.

You know, there are countries that are very well developed that may be taking jobs away from host country nationals if you put volunteers in. And there are other places where volunteers are desperately needed. So I think it has to be done in a thoughtful way. For those of us who have had the experience, obviously it was life transforming. And you want as many people as possible to have that opportunity. But I think it has to be done in a very thoughtful way.

Senator DODD. John.

Mr. COYNE. Speaking from my experience in 5 years in recruitment in the nineties with the Peace Corps, several things struck me about that. One was that we came out of the era—we joined because of John F. Kennedy. But to most of these new recruits, you know, he was a figure in history. But when I talked to them and asked them, well, when did you decide to become a Peace Corps volunteer and what was the moment, invariably it was when they were in middle school. They had a teacher who had been a Peace Corps volunteer who brought her or his slides in and talked about it or told tales about it. Or they saw a commercial on television; and they decided that when they grew up, they were going to become a Peace Corps volunteer.

So our recruitment efforts really should be geared toward, I think, reaching down into this group and build toward the future. Because of the 5-year rule, we think only in short terms and quick hits and do something before we leave. But I think we should restructure the recruitment cycle in that sense.

The next important thing, I have a son going off to college in the fall. And I realize how expensive all of this is. And it is certainly true, we lose an awful lot of volunteers, potential volunteers, because they just cannot afford to go into it.

Senator DODD. Yes.

Mr. COYNE. And if we could figure out a way to, like the National Service does, get them into it and relieve some of their debt, this would be a tremendous help.

Senator DODD. One of the things, you know, we all heard this, and it is a constant source of debate and discussion about the role of the Peace Corps and its service. And I know when I left the project in my community in the Dominican Republic, I think I was, what was it, maybe the third, second or third, volunteer in this community. And there was concern about exhaustion a little bit of the Peace Corps. So there was some talk, obviously, of giving the community a break for a period of time and to see what would happen in a sense after having gone through 6 or 7 years of a Peace Corps experience.

And that goes to the issue of whether or not we are becoming more of an aid agency or people-to-people program. And there is a sense in many communities that after they have had their fourth or fifth English major who brings some wonderful attitudes, or skills even, to some degree, there is a level at which they are looking for more. They want something more than just the people-to-people experiences.

And I am wondering how that—first off, do you agree with that? But second, how that can be accommodated if we are expanding the numbers to such a degree? I know there are a lot of places in the world people can be, but there is obviously security and other such considerations that narrow the scope worldwide to some degree, and then being able to service volunteers in such a way that they are going to be effective.

I wonder if you might address those points.

Mr. COYNE. Well, I was an associate director in Ethiopia after I was a Peace Corps volunteer. And when I went in as a volunteer, they would not allow women to leave the major cities. And this changed rapidly over the year. But this is a big concern in terms of recruitment.

When I was out as a volunteer, I think the women were 23 percent. They are now approximately 64, maybe 65, percent. So there is a security issue on that part. But recently I looked at a map of Ethiopia. And we had served in over 200 different villages, towns, and places I had never heard of. So there is an endless stretching of the possibilities of going into new countries.

I think that it is possible to take a BA generalist, who I think is still the strong volunteer, and prepare them as they did years ago in India with checking identification projects, to do a specific skill for a period and also do the other part of it that Mark has alluded to earlier about being on the ground.

President Toledo talked about this. You cannot replace this touching another person. This is a key factor, I think, in the experience, not only for the volunteer who comes home and talks about it, but also for the country that there is an individual, there is a family, there is a community, that knows America as a person, as an individual.

Senator DODD. Good points. The independence of the Peace Corps, we have talked about it here today. Any of you have any concerns about the USA Freedom Corps and its relationship with the Peace Corps? Dane, do you want to start.

Mr. SMITH. We are absolutely committed to supporting the independence of the Peace Corps from the foreign policy agencies and intelligence. I frankly do not see a problem with the White House

encouraging people to join the Peace Corps. But the continuing independence and autonomy for the Peace Corps, particularly from intelligence gathering or from any threat that it be absorbed into the State Department or USAID, continues to be a matter that concerns the NPCA membership a great deal.

Senator DODD. John.

Mr. COYNE. I think that I believe it will not become a factor in terms of the independence. I do know that if it were to become involved in the Freedom Corps, that it would be an interesting response from the returned Peace Corps community.

Senator DODD. That is a diplomatic way of answering, I guess.

Ms. FERRIS. In earlier testimony, it is my understanding that on the Freedom Corps' Web site there is a link to the Peace Corps where you can find out how to do it. I guess my question when I heard that was: How many hits does the Peace Corps site get on its own and how many hits does this Freedom Corps get and links go to the Peace Corps site? My guess is that, and I think it was you who mentioned it, the Peace Corps is far better known than the Freedom Corps. And I would be interested to know those statistics.

I, like my colleagues and everybody else in this room, am absolutely adamant that it remain separate, because a volunteer really does struggle when you go to a site and you are an American and the first question is, "Are you CIA?" And so I do not think that the Peace Corps needs one more thing to deal with in terms of volunteers adjusting to their sites and doing a good job at their site, with having to worry about perception. And we all know that perception becomes reality.

Senator DODD. Chris.

Congressman SHAYS. Again, Senator Dodd, thank you for allowing me to sit in the front rather than in the back. And one of the reasons I wanted to be here was to hear from three of my colleagues who I think are just extraordinary people. And so it is nice to be able to look at their faces and listen to them and say to you that I have no doubt about this one thing. And I would want to say it to all three of you, because I have checked 100 different ways to make sure this is true.

The Peace Corps is better known. But the President is trying to establish a knowledge of people on where they can contact to volunteer for service. And you want the Peace Corps on that Web site. You want, when they turn to the Freedom Corps, because the Freedom Corps will become better and better known, that there is a wonderful opportunity of service overseas, and that is the Peace Corps.

So you want the Freedom Corps involved in terms of being able to know and send people to this site. But that is the extent of it. And it is not controlling. It is not management. And I was thinking, and maybe it was you, John, who said it, you know, if it ever was different, there would be all 160,000 of us in an uproar. So I smile, thinking, you know, what better protection than that?

But obviously, you have Members of Congress who are going to be watching it as well. But we have made our point to them. I guess what I want you to know is you have expressed a concern. Chris and I have made our concerns known to the administration.

They have responded that, you know, please relax on this one. This is not—this is not your concern.

And just to say I have lots of respect for all of you. And I will just end by saying that, you know, when you said, Barbara, if there are 10 people, there are 11 opinions. But, you know, you did not finish the story. I find with Peace Corps volunteers, when you put us all in a room, we get consensus pretty early. There are lots of different opinions. We express them. But we find consensus pretty well. It is one of the skills, I think, that I learned from my Peace Corps experience.

The other thing I would say to you is that one of the dangers in the Peace Corps, it may have been true in your case, but in Fiji where I was, in the urban areas there were a number of us. And we liked each other so much that there was always this danger we did not just want to be with each other, because we all had certain goals and certain interests that were very compatible. And we sometimes had to remind ourselves, you know, we cannot be too cliquish, you know, as Peace Corps volunteers overseas and need to make sure we are reaching out to the people we work and live with.

So thank you all for your participation. And, Chris, I want you to know that this still feels a little weird to be over on this side. And thank you for giving me this very weird experience.

Senator DODD. We know what you House Members think of Senators.

Congressman SHAYS. No one else laughed. How come?

Senator DODD. Well, I thank you, Chris, for being here.

Congressman SHAYS. Thank you. It is an honor to be with you.

Senator DODD. And it was a great job. As I say, in Connecticut we were the only state with two former Peace Corps volunteers, I believe, in the Congress. And we are bicameral and bipartisan in that sense. So it is a pleasure to have you over here.

I served alone in the Peace Corps. And there were times when I envied the volunteers who were clustered with each other. But then again, in the long run, I much preferred the situation where I was in the sense of really getting into it. I had no choice. But you really had to learn the language and the culture and so forth to get along. And that was one of the advantages of being alone as a volunteer.

But in many places, that does not work. And the importance of having volunteers on joint missions is extremely valuable.

Congressman SHAYS. I wonder if you would allow me to note just for the record, I got concerned when I saw the Director stand up and all the staff stand up, that all the staff came back to listen to our colleagues as well. And I would like the record to show you still have your Deputy Director here and your chief of staff and others who wanted to listen to what our colleagues had to say.

Senator DODD. Very good. We note the presence of the Peace Corps staff in the room. We thank them for being here. I thank all three of you for your work. And we look forward to your continuing effort.

And, Dane, you have some work to round up the rest of these cosponsors on this bill. So the ball is in your court.

Mr. SMITH. We will get at that.

Senator DODD. This hearing will stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:30 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene subject to the call of the chair.]