



Friends Committee on
National Legislation
A Quaker Lobby in the Public Interest

2019 Report to Yearly Meetings

“When courageous action is required, God calls on ordinary people to accomplish the extraordinary.”
Amelia Kagan, FCNL Legislative Director for Domestic Policy, addressing the 2018 FCNL Annual Meeting

Dear Friends,

As Quakers, our faith and practice convince us to work for the peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable world we seek. We are ordinary people called to accomplish the extraordinary. Founded in 1943 in Richmond, Indiana, FCNL has been bringing the concerns, experiences, and testimonies of Friends to bear on policy decisions in the nation’s capital for over 75 years. This work continues with your support and engagement, and with the ever-present grounding of Spirit.

Friends, in the last year your advocacy and financial contributions have helped ensure food is not taken away from families struggling with hunger, push to end the disastrous Saudi-led war in Yemen, prevent genocide and atrocities across the globe, and reform our criminal justice system.

Setting the Legislative Priorities for the 116th Congress

One of the distinctive features of the Friends Committee on National Legislation is our practice of asking Quakers around the country to help shape our collective work. Every two years, FCNL asks Friends and their meetings, churches, and worship groups to discern **which public policy issues they feel are most pressing for the next Congress.**

The core question as part of this process is, where is the Spirit leading us? How are Friends called to influence government today? Friends discernment is the foundation for the lobbying priorities that FCNL establishes for each congress. We were heartened to see robust participation by Quakers across the country in this process in 2018 (an increase of 20 % from 2016). The legislative priorities recommended by Friends were approved by FCNL’s General Committee on December 1, 2018 and are included in this report.

Prophetic. Persistent. Powerful. Update on Annual Meeting 2018.

FCNL’s Quaker Public Policy Institute and Lobby Day drew 400 people to Washington, DC to lobby to protect SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). Attendees went on 193 lobby visits representing 45 states with 39 different Members of Congress. One third of the participants were first time attenders.

More than 300 people stayed for FCNL’s Annual Meeting which celebrated FCNL’s 75th Anniversary, affirmed the direction of the Forward Plan as outlined by staff, and conducted the business of the organization. FCNL awarded the Edward R. Snyder Award for National Legislative Leadership in Advancing Disarmament and Building Peace to Rep. Ro

Khanna (CA-17) for his steadfast work to prevent war with North Korea, to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen, and to strengthen U.S. diplomacy abroad.

We Get Heard by Listening – The Growth of Advocacy Teams

FCNL's Advocacy Team network is made up of more than 1,500 Quakers and friends from across the country who use their power as constituents to make change in Washington, D.C. Our success comes from our commitment to building relationships with Congress grounded in mutual respect and listening. 2018 brought tremendous growth in this program, as we launched 26 new Advocacy Teams. FCNL currently supports 113 teams around the country, an increase of 30% from just a year ago. In 2019 new Advocacy Teams are forming. To see current locations, visit fcnl.org/advocacyteams.

One of the greatest values in the community-building work done by FCNL's Advocacy Teams is that we are making a conscious decision to stay focused on a single topic for a long time, even when it's out of the headlines. This relationship-based approach to constituent advocacy has a unique value in a noisy time. We find that our steady, focused, and calm approach makes a difference when it comes to influencing policymakers. For members of Congress, meeting with us is a more pleasant experience than being yelled at in a town hall meeting.

The Critical Role of Young Adult Friends

FCNL is committed to growing our lobbying power both here on Capitol Hill and across the country. Central to all that we do is FCNL's recruiting and training of young adults across the country to be advocates for peace, justice, and a sustainable planet. Eighteen Advocacy Corps organizers – who work part-time in their home congressional districts -- lobbied on police demilitarization in 2018-19. Five summer Interns, 10 full year Program Assistants, and 450+ participants in the 2018 annual Spring Lobby Weekend...young adults are taking the lead — and pressing Congress to pass key legislation.

For more than a decade, Spring Lobby Weekend has been a cornerstone of FCNL's commitment to training new generations of advocates for peace and justice. In March 2019, more than 500 young advocates gathered in Washington, DC to learn, build community, and lobby Congress on the immigration crisis. Visit fcnl.org/youngadults to learn more about these opportunities.

In the year ahead, please join Friends in your community, and in Washington DC as we work for a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled, and an earth restored.



With gratitude for your partnership,



Bridget Moix
Baltimore Yearly Meeting
Clerk, FCNL General Committee