

# FCNL's Impact

## Restoring Access to Education for Incarcerated People

In December 2020, legislation was signed into law that restores access to Pell Grants for an estimated 400,000 incarcerated people. Pell Grants are need-based grants to low-income students that can be used for college or technical training. FCNL lobbied for years to build support for this legislation. We organized briefings with Rep. Danny Davis (IL-7), a lead sponsor of the legislation, and mobilized lobby visits with key Republican and Democratic lawmakers who eventually inserted this language into legislation.

## New Laws to Address Missing and Murdered Native People

*New bills signed into law at the end of 2020* give tribes greater authority over criminal activity on reservation lands. Savanna's Act and the Not Invisible Act would fix issues of coordination and information access that hinder tribes' ability to protect their citizens, particularly women, who face a murder rate more than 10 times the nation average. For more than two years, FCNL has been leading faith community advocacy on these bills as an important partner for Native American groups.

## A Small, But Important Step to Demilitarize the Police

A new law approved in December 2020 will *ban the transfer of bayonets, weaponized combat vehicles, and other war equipment* to local police departments around the country. Although the measure falls short of the ban on the transfer of military combat equipment to streets in the United States that FCNL has been advocating for since 2013, it is an important step toward demilitarizing the police.

## Racism and Police Violence

One of our FCNL community's key priorities is the crisis of racism, police violence, and police militarization that is killing Black people. That is why FCNL brought some 600 people into congressional offices in mid-November to advocate for the Justice in Policing Act.

We will also be organizing at least 500 young people to lobby again for legislation to address police violence at our Spring Lobby Weekend, March 20-23, 2021.

## Blocking a Return to Nuclear Weapons Testing

The *military policy bill passed in December strips out \$10 million* for preparations to resume explosive nuclear testing. While FCNL lobbyists and advocates are working to prohibit funding for new nuclear testing, we did support this measure that became law as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY2021 (NDAA).

## More Steps to Prevent Violence and Atrocities

When the United States provides military aid to countries at high risk of new atrocities, planners at the State and Defense Departments are *now required by law to assess the impact of the aid on the risk for atrocities* and factor in ways to reduce the chances of violence against

civilians. As a Quaker lobby, FCNL opposes military aid. But this provision, passed into law as part of the NDAA, is nonetheless a step toward preventing atrocities in high-risk countries.

### **Protecting the Hungry from the Impacts of COVID-19**

Strong legislation to protect the most vulnerable from the impacts of COVID-19 is a top priority for FCNL. We have been advocating since the beginning of the pandemic for the expansion of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) benefits in any relief packages. FCNL mobilized faith leaders to lobby in Washington, organized sign-on letters, and organized repeated digital lobbying and grasstops lobbying in key states of influential senators. The *final relief package* that became law in late December expanded SNAP benefits by 15% for six months.

### **Everyone Deserves Relief, Regardless of Immigration Status**

The COVID-19 relief package passed at the end of December provided \$600 stimulus checks to families *with mixed immigration status who were excluded from receiving the previous round* of stimulus checks in March. Mixed status families may also retroactively claim the stimulus checks from the CARES Act passed earlier in 2019. Immigrant communities are facing particularly severe risk and hardship during the pandemic. Providing assistance to mixed-status families was a priority for our lobbyists on the Hill and the young adults in our Advocacy Corps.

### **A Roadmap to Prioritize Peace**

The FCNL Education Fund *issued a report that provides six recommendations* for how the incoming Biden administration should put peacebuilding at the core of its foreign policy during its first 100 days. After four years of President Trump's dismantling, the State Department and USAID are facing mounting global crises without the resources to address them. U.S. foreign policy needs a major reorientation. These recommendations provide a roadmap for how the incoming administration can prioritize peace.

### **Join Our Advocacy, Support This Work**

None of this work would be possible without the dedicated advocacy of thousands of people working with the FCNL community around the country to lobby Congress and provide financial support. Sign up for our mailing list, find out more about how you can lobby your members of Congress, and provide financial support for this work at our website: [fcnl.org](https://fcnl.org).