

Our Lobbying Impact

Ending U.S. Support for the War in Yemen

President Joe Biden's February 2021 decision to end U.S. support for the Saudi-led war in Yemen is the culmination of years of tireless advocacy from Yemeni-Americans, the FCNL community, and allies around the country. In a textbook case of persistent advocacy, FCNL worked with coalition partners to secure 27 votes in the Senate to end the war in 2016, then 47 votes in 2017, and finally to pass a bipartisan War Powers Resolution calling for an end to the war in 2019. Now *we need to* end other U.S. support for the war and focus on humanitarian aid to Yemen.

New START Agreement Extended for Five Years

In late January 2021, the United States agreed with Russia to extend the New START treaty limits on the number of deployed nuclear weapons in each country. The two countries together own 90% of all nuclear weapons in the world. The FCNL community lobbied in Washington and in key states around the country to secure Senate approval of the treaty in 2010. In the last two years, FCNL built bipartisan support for its extension within Congress.

Action on Climate Change

Early in 2021, the United States rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement and President Biden issued a series of executive orders to put in place a robust domestic climate policy that also extends environmental justice to historically marginalized groups. Now comes the hard part—passing federal legislation. FCNL has worked for the last decade to persuade Congress to set aside partisan divisions and focus on legislative actions that will place the United States on a path toward a sustainable, low carbon, 21st century economy. Our advocacy in Washington, D.C. and around the country for a price on carbon and other legislation must continue.

Restoring Access to Education for Incarcerated People

In December 2020, legislation was signed into law that restored access to Pell Grants for an estimated 400,000 incarcerated people. Pell Grants are need-based aid for 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 the bill.

Protecting Hungry People from the Impacts of COVID-19

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



Remembering lives lost to COVID-19. Photo: Matthew D'Agostino/FCNL

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. Native women in particular 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 in active partnership and in solidarity with Native American groups.

Racism and Police Violence

One of FCNL's key priorities is the crisis of racism, police violence, and police militarization that is disproportionately 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 virtual Spring Lobby Weekend, March 20–22, 2021.

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*. They must also 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 National Defense Authorization Act, is a step toward preventing atrocities in high-risk countries.

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 March round* of stimulus checks in March. 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 our Advocacy Corps. The young organizers are also pressing for legislation to provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented youth (Dreamers) and support our broader Hill lobbying on immigration.

A Roadmap to Prioritize Peace

FCNL's sibling organization, the FCNL Education Fund, *issued a report that provides six recommendations* for how the 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 Biden administration can prioritize peace and some are already being turned into policy.

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.