

## Guide to Discerning Legislative Priorities in Your Quaker Community

### *What is the FCNL priorities process? Why does it matter? How does it work?*

- FCNL advocates on issues and policies identified as concerns by Quakers around the country. For each session of Congress, FCNL seek Friends' input, through your meetings, churches, or other Quaker-affiliated communities, as to what is most pressing for the FCNL community to focus on.
- Between January and April 2022, Friends across the country will engage in discernment of policy priorities.
- Throughout the summer and fall, FCNL's Policy Committee meets in worship to season the collection of submitted policy priorities discerned by meetings, churches, and communities around the country and recommends a slate of legislative priorities to FCNL's General Committee.
- During FCNL's Annual Meeting in November, the General Committee gathers in worship to consider and approve the final priorities for the coming session in Congress.
- *Learn more about the process and current priorities here.*

### **What are some different ways your community can organize your discernment?**

There is no FCNL prescription or one right way to participate – it depends on your community! For ideas, here are some ways meetings and churches have facilitated the priorities process in past years. Whether you are a virtual, hybrid, or in-person meeting or church, Quaker-affiliated retirement community, or young adult Friend community, one of these options will work for your community's specific needs for engaging with this spirit-led priorities process.

- Discern as part of a peace and social concerns or another committee meeting
- Discern during a meeting for business
- Hold a called gathering to discern the priorities process with those who want to participate
- For an ongoing/asynchronous approach, survey your community members about their legislative priorities. There are several free platforms you can use to create a simple survey, including *Google Forms*.
- Put *The World We Seek* poster boards representing FCNL's vision up in your meeting house for a few weeks, so that community members can, on their own time, write personal policy priorities under the aspect of *The World We Seek* that relates to their priority. (This could also be done by setting up a *Google document* or *Google Jamboard* online that people could contribute to.)
  - We seek a world free of war and the threat of war

- I.e., policy priorities related to peacebuilding, anti-militarism, decreased pentagon spending, etc.
- We seek a society with equity and justice for all
  - I.e., policy priorities related to voting rights work, Native American work, etc.
- We seek a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled
  - I.e., policy priorities related to immigration reform, mass incarceration reform, etc.
- We seek an earth restored
  - I.e., policy priorities related to sustainable energy and environment

### **How FCNL can help you engage in the priorities process:**

- A Visiting Friend/volunteer or FCNL staff member can visit with your community to help you organize your discernment.
  - This can take the form of a more active facilitation role, or the volunteer can simply be in the space with your community (whether in committee, meeting for business, etc.) to act as an elder, observe the process, and/or serve as a resource.
- FCNL can send resources and advice on how to engage
  - We have resources for you! We can mail you a toolkit for how to engage
  - You will receive materials in January that will support your participation in this process, including instructions on how to participate, a list of current priorities, queries to help your community discern, and the World We Seek statement of legislative priorities!
  - We can remain in contact with your community to answer questions, keep you on track, and provide reminders
  - Reach out to Program Assistant for Quaker Outreach *Emma Hulbert* ([ehulbert@fcnl.org](mailto:ehulbert@fcnl.org)) with questions or requests for support.