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FRIENDS COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL LEGISLATION

... a Quaker lobby in the public interest

To Friends Everywhere The Importance of Friends Lobbying in the Public Interest in 2010-2011

Program Report from the Friends Committee on National Legislation

We Seek a World Free of War and The Threat of War

We Seek a Society with Equity and Justice for All

We Seek a Community Where Every Person's Potential May be Fulfilled

We Seek an Earth Restored

In 2011, FCNL's powerful combination of skilled staff lobbyists and an energized grassroots Quaker network throughout the country is working together to protect the world from nuclear weapons, to end the war in Afghanistan, to invest in the peaceful prevention of deadly conflict, and to mobilize a national effort to make real cuts in Pentagon spending. Here in Washington and at Friends Meetings and Churches around the country, Quakers are building bridges of understanding with Muslims, are working together for real reform of our nation's broken immigration laws, and are championing effective solutions to address global greenhouse gas pollution.

FCNL offers an advocacy witness by Friends in our nation's capital and the Quaker community is recognized and respected in Washington as a leader for peace and justice. We invite Friends everywhere to strengthen their connection with the FCNL community by reading our FCNL *Washington Newsletter*, visiting our website www.fcnl.org, signing up and taking action through our email updates from Washington, or making a contribution.

Here are some of the accomplishments of the FCNL community:

Advancing a World Free of Nuclear Weapons: After an intense, 16 month campaign in key states, FCNL won on ratification of the New START treaty. The final Senate ratification vote of 71 to 26 was a huge success. It mobilized a Senate super majority in favor of international engagement as the path to greater security for our country. It sets the stage for work to prevent cuts in nuclear nonproliferation funding and ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

Preventing War: FCNL won – unanimously – on passage of a critical Genocide Prevention resolution in the Senate. S.Con.Res. 71 calls on the U.S. government to take specific steps to prevent genocides and mass atrocities before they happen. FCNL worked closely with Senate staff on the resolution and helped build its bipartisan list of 22 cosponsors. Now we will be proposing further congressional actions, as part of a multi-year legislative campaign to improve U.S. capacities to peacefully prevent deadly conflict.

War Is Not the Answer: The U.S. "shock and awe" security policy is not working. After a decade of continuous war, increasing numbers of people are reacting against the violence and cost of a military-based solution to conflict. More than 160 members of Congress last year voted against sustaining the Afghanistan war. By early 2011, we saw growing bipartisan support to end the failed war strategy in Afghanistan. We at FCNL are lobbying Congress to call for an end to that war and to put in place policies to prevent conflict and encourage effective development.

Local Action to Advance Human Needs and Reduce Military Spending: Across the country, local elected officials, religious leaders, community groups, union officials, Quaker meetings and churches, and many other groups are urging Congress to cut the military budget. Our Nation's Checkbook, an FCNL Campaign to spend our tax dollars more wisely, is focusing education and organizing efforts in Michigan, Iowa, Washington and Florida where we see a groundswell of public support for new federal budget priorities.

Congress Approved Cobell Settlement for Native Americans: After decades of advocacy and litigation, the way finally cleared for hundreds of thousands of Native Americans to receive the money that the federal government owes them for the use of their land. FCNL worked steadily for years with our Native American colleagues to achieve justice in this case.

Acting on Global Warming: With FCNL's lobbying, the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal (CLEAR) Act (S. 2877), emerged in 2010 as a principal bipartisan alternative to the ineffective cap-and-trade approach that had previously been the focus of congressional action. FCNL's lobbyists are working in 2011 to protect the EPA's regulation of greenhouse gas pollution and support the reintroduction of CLEAR, among other priorities.

Constituent Action FCNL provided the tools for tens of thousands of people to lobby Congress and start conversations in their communities about the world we hope for. More than 17,000 people contacted their elected officials through our website in 2010, sending more than 156,000 communications to their elected officials. We distributed 355,000 War Is Not the Answer signs and bumper stickers in 2010.

Legislative Priorities Set By Friends As has been our practice for 67 years, FCNL's policy and legislative priorities are guided by the discernment of Friends across the country. Many Friends meetings and churches worshipped together to consider priorities for our lobbying work for the 112th Congress (2011-2012). FCNL's General Committee approved priorities in November at our Annual Meeting in Washington, DC and you can review the full text on our website at http://www.fcnl.org/priorities/priority_112th.htm

The Vital Financial Support of Friends The prudent stewardship of our operations helped FCNL weather the worldwide economic crisis that battered many nonprofit organizations. We are grateful for the faithful support of meetings, churches and the thousands of individual donors whose contributions form the bulk of our annual income. Yet our funding remains at a level that is not yet sufficient to allow FCNL to take advantage of all the opportunities we see for change. Your continued and growing support for FCNL assures that our engagement on Capitol Hill and throughout our network will be effective and strong. We rely on your support.

Leadership and Change In March 2011, our community completed a wonderful, spirit-led, three year process of moving from the leadership of our long-time Executive Secretary Joe Volk to Friend Diane Randall. A long-time member of Hartford Monthly Meeting, New England Yearly Meeting, Diane brings a lifelong commitment to social justice and years of experience in nonprofit management to her new position. The FCNL community celebrates Joe's years of service and the strong, vibrant organization that he has been a part of creating and we are eager to introduce Friends everywhere to Diane.

On behalf of the General Committee, thank you to all Friends for your many contributions of time, energy, and dollars which make FCNL's work possible.

G. Dorsey Green, Clerk
FCNL General Committee, March 2011

(This report may be reproduced and circulated.)