

Friends Committee on National Legislation Update

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Submitted by John Deikis, FCNL Representative

The Friends Committee on National Legislation continues to work on peace and social justice issues. As the oldest religious lobby in D.C., it employs a staff of professional lobbyists with expertise in various complex areas. Moreover, it supports an Advocacy Corps of college students and a nation- wide network of over 1500 citizen lobbyists as a part of its Advocacy Teams program. Recently, FCNL's online network generated over 650,000 emails to Congress expressing opposition to the war in Gaza and Lebanon. Last November's Quaker Public Policy Institute was held in Washington and online to train regular folks in lobby skills and visits to their senators' and representatives' offices. The "ask" was to co-sponsor and vote in favor of the Joint Resolutions of Disapproval to block the sale of offensive weapons to Israel. It was followed by the annual meeting of the General Committee, the organization's governance body comprised of Quakers from around the country. At the Annual Meeting, FCNL's legislative priorities for the 119th Congress were developed using input from monthly meetings around the country. These are aspirational, as the actual legislation FCNL pursues are determined by emerging opportunities in Congress as well as organizational capacity and expertise.

Proposed Priorities:

- Dismantle militarism at home and abroad while reasserting Congress' role in decisions around military engagements. Champion initiatives to reduce military spending and to eliminate nuclear, conventional, and newly emerging weapons.
- Ensure U.S. commitment to international peace- building, human rights, diplomacy, and cooperation, and human rights at home and abroad.
- Uphold the community rights and concerns of indigenous peoples, and reform the federal legal and administrative systems to protect tribal sovereignty and self-determination.
- Demilitarize our borders and reform immigration policies to protect fundamental human rights for immigrant communities, regardless of immigration status.
- Transform our current cruel and unjust criminal legal system into one that is restorative and rehabilitative.

- Support gun violence prevention, nonviolent conflict resolution, and community-led safety solutions.
- Work for legislation that addresses poverty, structural economic inequity, and health care inequity.
- Strengthen environmental protections and advance environmental justice in the United States and around the globe.
- Counter the imminent threat of further climate change and support science-evidence-based mitigation and adaptive remedies.