

Report on Friends Committee on National Legislation

For Subcommittee on Benevolences, CHFM. April, 2022.

Submitted by Nancy Milio, Member, General Comm, FCNL

The Friends Committee on National Legislation [FCNL] is a nonprofit lobbying organization [501c4; donations not tax deductible]. The FCNL Education Fund [FCNLEF] is a nonprofit educational organization [501c3; donations tax deductible]. The annual revenues of about \$6mil are donated 2/3's to FCNLEF, 1/3 to FCNL. This increasing ratio poses a financial strain on the lobbying effort of FCNL, which asks donors to contribute whenever possible to FCNL rather than to the tax deductible FCNLEF.

For 79 years, FCNL has brought Quaker values to bear on national policy through congressional testimony, Capitol Hill visits, grassroots lobbying, and educational initiatives.

It is governed by a General Committee of 190 Quakers from Quaker Meetings, churches and organizations across the country. It employs a staff of 60, including 20 registered lobbyists.

Current legislative priorities are briefly: peacebuilding, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation; curtailing endless war; sentencing reform; migration justice; solutions to climate change; gun violence prevention; economic justice; and Native American issues. Specific priorities for each new biennial Congress are reviewed and revised every 2 years through submissions by Quaker Meetings, churches and organizations. They are then reviewed by the Policy Committee taking into account the resources, expertise and likely emergence of issues in the forthcoming Congress.

The grassroots network, present in most States, brings constituent perspectives into congressional offices in Washington at two major lobbying events each year and in local district offices throughout the year.

As a result of the national racial reckoning, and working with a consultants group, headed by black women over 18 months, FCNL developed a work program on diversity and inclusion. One major result is creation of a new senior-level position and department to help better become the beloved community which is the aim of the organization for itself.

The Associate General Secretary for Community and Culture will lead FCNL's efforts to build a strong culture of belonging and shared values within the organization. Working closely with other leaders in its growing network, the AGS for Community and Culture will be a driving force behind FCNL's anti-racism, justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work as it grows internally and expands our network. This leadership position will support FCNL's engagement with different communities of young adults, Quakers, and people of other backgrounds who are energizing, educating, and transforming the Quaker-led community as it becomes more anti-racist, just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive .

Operationally, FCNL continued to use Zoom to conduct its lobbying, during which staff still sometimes work from home. This more digital approach to lobbying has added to the move toward developing more fully the online content and usability of its website.

FCNL has four properties under its management, in addition to its LEED awarded [highest environmentally-friendly] headquarters. The Welcome Center is used for Congressional briefings as well as weekly public worship; an adjacent apartment building, which houses shortterm "weighty" Quakers and staff offices; Friends Place on Capitol Hill, a 501c3, managed by FCNLEF, formerly William Penn House. It is used as a training center for FCNL and other non-profits. The underlying aim of Friends Place is to reveal and deal with white supremacy/racism within Quakerism and the nation.

We have a new General Secretary, Brigit Moix. She was once an intern at FCNL, then lobbyist, later obtained a graduate degree in International Studies, followed by work in Darfur. Most recently she led a Washington peace organization. A search committee met last year, vetted candidates through an internal

process, including approval by the General Committee at the Annual Meeting in Nov. 2021 [which was held via Zoom over 5 days].