



June 28, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
and Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
and Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs Aderholt and Baldwin, and Ranking Members DeLauro and Capito:

The undersigned organizations representing governor-appointed State Service Commissions, and national and local nonprofits, are joining together to request \$30 million through the statutory funding formula for the Volunteer Generation Fund (VGF), a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS, operating as AmeriCorps). Formally named the George H.W. Bush Volunteer Generation Fund, it was established by the bipartisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act in 2009 to strengthen the nation's volunteer infrastructure to address pressing community needs like disaster preparedness and recovery.

The goals of Volunteer Generation Fund as described in the Serve America Act are to assist nonprofit, faith-based, and other civic organizations and states by expanding and improving the capacity of such entities to utilize volunteers. It was also intended to spur innovation and efficiencies in volunteer recruitment and management practices, with the goal of increasing the number of volunteers, and enable the people of the U.S. to effect change in our communities by participating in active volunteer and citizen service.

Since its creation, regular appropriations for VGF have not exceeded the FY23 appropriation of \$8.5 million despite being authorized up to \$100 million. The Serve America Act requires a 50% formula to the states and a 50% competition to nonprofits and State Service Commissions but appropriations bills to date have restricted the statutory formula to only the grant competition, with no formula funds for the states. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) appropriated an additional \$20 million for use over three years and allowed for a grant competition. The ARP-funded competition yielded more than 160 applications from nonprofits and State Service Commissions, far exceeding the appropriation.



A \$30 million allocation for the VGF in FY24 that removes the appropriations restriction and allows for the statutory funding formula to be used will ensure that all our states receive formula funding while ensuring a robust grant competition for any nonprofit volunteer organization. Per a 2022 study on the impact of COVID-19 on Volunteer Engagement conducted by University of North Carolina-Charlotte, 47% of respondents said they had reduced their volunteer engagement since the onset of the pandemic. In the same study, 75% of respondents said the total number of volunteers and 70% of respondents stated the total number of volunteer hours had declined at their organization.

Further, AmeriCorps partners with the Census Bureau to produce the *Current Population Survey Civic Engagement and Volunteering Supplement*. AmeriCorps uses that data to publish a biennial *Volunteering and Civic Life in America* report. AmeriCorps' report echoes the decline noted above - formal volunteering, the percentage of Americans who volunteered through organizations - dropped by seven percentage points from 30 percent in 2019 to 23.2 percent in 2021. The next few years will be crucial to rebuilding volunteerism.

VGF is the only federal funding source dedicated to building nonprofit volunteer engagement capacity. As reported by 16 State Service Commissions, a subset of those funded in FY18-20, VGF subgrants provided funding to 349 unique local organizations to recruit, manage, and train volunteers. In FY19 this resulted in 36,958 volunteers recruited or managed; 199,433 hours served by the above recruited/managed; 1,799 organizations that received capacity building services; and 998 organizations that increased their effectiveness, efficiency, and/or program scale/reach, as reported by nine of the funded state service commissions.

For example, VGF has supported critical state and nonprofit activities as included below, which would only be expanded to every state and more nonprofits through robust funding and the statutory funding formula for the program:

- In West Virginia, VGF is prioritizing building volunteer infrastructure across the state by providing capacity-building subgrants. These grants do not have a match requirement so as to not be a barrier to application for smaller, rural and/or underserved organizations.
- In Wisconsin, VGF has supported the development of six regional Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) that align with the six Wisconsin Emergency Management regions. The COADs provide critical support and resource connections in times of disaster.
- In Maine, VGF is building volunteer infrastructure for local organizations through Service Enterprise, a change management model with a high return on volunteer investment, and other volunteer management training opportunities.



- In Louisiana, VGF has assisted in expanding the state's disaster volunteer capacity with 964 people being trained in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the last three years.
- In New Hampshire, VGF is bringing together 13 local, community based organizations to expand their capacity to recruit, manage, support, and retain individuals to serve in high quality volunteer assignments. Participating organizations will have access to training and collaboration opportunities in addition to direct funding.
- In Utah, they have expanded youth service opportunities through the implementation of the Pathways of Public Service and Civic Engagement framework.
- In Iowa, they are utilizing VGF for multiple areas of need including new initiatives around disaster response, strengthening rural communities, and empowering youth as Iowa's newest volunteer force.
- In Georgia, VGF is addressing rising food insecurity due to the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting youth development through service.
- In Illinois, VGF is supporting Illinois' Civics in the Classroom initiative that is working to have every middle school and high school student take part in curriculum-based service-learning programming as a requirement for graduation.
- VGF also expands job prospects, especially for youth without a diploma and rural residents. A landmark 2013 study by AmeriCorps found volunteers have 27% higher odds of finding a job than non-volunteers, which was stable regardless of economic conditions.

States and the broad nonprofit community need stable funding to rebuild and maintain volunteer infrastructure in the face of increasing natural disasters, after the COVID-19 pandemic, and to continue to address critical needs in our communities. We again respectfully urge your support a \$30 million statutory formula appropriation for VGF in FY24 to ensure all our states and the national and local nonprofit volunteer organizations can access this important program. Thank you for your ongoing support of volunteers and national service in our communities, and we look forward to working with you more on this important issue.

Sincerely,

**Organization**

ALIVE (Association of Leaders in Volunteer Engagement)  
America Learns  
Campus Compact  
Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration  
MENTOR

**States Served**

Nationwide  
Nationwide  
Nationwide  
Nationwide  
Nationwide



National Youth Leadership Council	Nationwide
Perkins School for the Blind	Nationwide
Public Impact Advisors	Nationwide
States for Service Coalition of America's Service Commissions	Nationwide
Volunteer Commons	Nationwide
Youth Service America	Nationwide
McMahon Consulting Group	AL, CA, CO, KY, MD, PA, WA, WY
Engage Arkansas-Arkansas Service Commission	AR
Association for Volunteer Administration in Central Arizona	AZ
Southern Arizona Volunteer Management Association	AZ
Steward Healthcare	AZ
Napa County Office of Education	CA
Northern Santa Barbara County United Way	CA
iCouldBe	CA, OH, MO, TX
Family Tree	CO
American University	DC
Habitat for Humanity	DE
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast	FL
House of Hope	FL
Columbus Literate Community Program Inc.	GA
Piedmont Columbus Regional Auxiliary	GA
Safe Kids Columbus	GA
Catherine McAuley Center	IA
Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service (Volunteer Iowa)	IA
The Fellowship Cup	IA
Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley	IA
Volunteer Louisiana	LA
HandsOn Suburban Chicago	IL
Macon County Conservation District	IL
University of Illinois Extension	IL
Elizabeth B. Ballard Community Center	KS
Kansas Volunteer Commission	KS
United Way of South Central Kentucky	KY
Boston Cares	MA
Cambridge Volunteer Clearinghouse	MA



Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts	MA
LUK, Inc.	MA
Massachusetts Service Alliance	MA
Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires	MA
PIE3	MD
STEMvolunteering.com	MD
United Way of Frederick County	MD
U.S. Dream Academy, Inc.	MD, DC, TX, CA, FL, PA,
Danforth Livable Communities	ME
SeniorsPlus	ME
Volunteer Maine	ME
Adrian Public Schools	MI
Advancing Macomb	MI
Alcona Community Schools	MI
Allen Neighborhood Center	MI
Art of Group Conversation	MI
Blue Water Immunization Partnership	MI
Business Men & Women Social Club Of Detroit	MI
Camp Newaygo	MI
Capital Area College Access Network	MI
Chandler Park Neighborhood Association	MI
Clark Park Coalition	MI
Crossroads Charter Academy	MI
Diane Pepler Resource Center	MI
Disaster Services Corporation SVDP-USA, Detroit-D4, Hamtramck, Macomb County	MI
Donation with Love Foundation	MI
Flint & Genesee Literacy Network	MI
Goodwill Industries of West Michigan	MI
Grow & Lead: Community and Youth Development	MI
Hearts for Homes	MI
Highland Park, Parks Recreation Department	MI
Hospice of the EUP	MI
Interfaith Center for Racial Justice	MI
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers	MI



Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative	MI
Lift up a child	MI
Live Rite Structured Recovery Corp	MI
Macomb Foster Closet	MI
Macomb Immigrant Service Center	MI
Michigan Community Resources	MI
Michigan Community Service Commission	MI
Oakland County Michigan Works-Troy	MI
Otsego County United Way	MI
Partridge Creek Farm	MI
Peace Tree Parks	MI
Senior Services	MI
Single Family Living	MI
St Patrick Church	MI
Susie Q's Kids	MI
T. Rose	MI
The Greening of Detroit	MI
The Reading People / Capital Area Literacy Coalition	MI
TrueNorth Community Services	MI
United Way of Bay County	MI
United Way of Genesee County	MI
United Way of Marquette County	MI
United Way of Northwest Michigan	MI
United Way of South Central Michigan	MI
Wayne State University Center for Urban Studies	MI
We 3 Queens Community Outreach Inc	MI
WSU CUS	MI
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Inc., Zeta Beta Zeta Chapter	MI
Hammer Residences, Inc	MN
The Sanneh Foundation	MN
Minnesota Alliance for Volunteer Advancement	MN and Nationwide
AmeriCorps St. Louis	MO
Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service	MS
HandsOn Northwest North Carolina	NC
TNVLC	NC



VolunteerNC	NC
ServeNebraska	NE
New Jersey Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster	NJ
Rutger University-Camden	NJ
United Way of Greater Mercer County	NJ
TD Bank	NJ, NY, FL
Jersey Cares	NJ, NY, PA, CT, DE
The Animal Foundation	NV
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northern Nevada	NV
Buliding Opportunities For Minorities Nevada	NV
The Good Deed Project	NV
HopeLink of Southern Nevada	NV
Nevada Volunteers	NV
Opportunity Village	NV
Seniors in Service	NV
Truckee Meadows Parks Foundation	NV
Big Apple Greeter, Inc	NY
BRC	NY
New York Association for Volunteer Administration	NY
United Jewish Council of the East Side	NY
United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region	NY
Volunteer New York!	NY
Akron Zoo	OH
Five Rivers MetroParks	OH
Holden Forests & Gardens	OH
Mid-Ohio Food Collective	OH
ServeOhio	OH
Kaleidoscope Fiscal Consulting	OH, NM, WI, SC
OregonServes Commission	OR
United Way of Columbia County	OR
Rhode Island Blood Center	RI, MA, CT
United Way of the Piedmont	SC
The Appalachian Regional Coalition on Homelessness	TN
American YouthWorks	TX
Communities In Schools of San Antonio	TX



Higher Up Texas	TX
Interfaith Ministries For Greater Houston	TX
Irving Arts Center	TX
OneStar Foundation	TX
The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston	TX
Volunteer Houston	TX
West Houston Assistance Ministries	TX
United Way of Cache Valley	UT
UServeUtah State Service Commission	UT
Alamo Addiction Recovery Center, Inc.	VA
Blue Ridge Medical Center	VA
Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging	VA
Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center	VA
The DREAM Program	VT, MA, NH, PA
501 Commons	WA
City of Vancouver	WA
Habitat for Humanity of East Jefferson County	WA
Nonprofit Association of Washington	WA
Providence Hospice of Seattle	WA
Serve Washington	WA
White Center Food Bank	WA
Journey Disaster Response Team	WI
River to Ridge Disaster Resilience (R2RDR.org)	WI
Wisconsin National & Community Service Board	WI
United Way of Dane County	WI
United Way of Wisconsin	WI
Tygart Valley United Way	WV
ServeWyoming	WY