

STATES for SERVICE

CORPS Act — 117th Congress



On April 15, 2021, the CORPS Act (Cultivating Opportunity and Response to the Pandemic through Service Act) was reintroduced by **Senator Chris Coons (D-DE)** and **Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS)** in the 117th Congress. They were joined in introducing the bill by 15 co-sponsors:

- **Senator Coons (D-DE) - Lead Sponsor**
 - Senator Baldwin (D-WI)
 - Senator Booker (D-NJ)
 - Senator Duckworth (D-IL)
 - Senator Durbin (D-IL)
 - Senator Kelly (D-AZ)
 - Senator Klobuchar (D-MN)
 - Senator Reed (D-RI)
 - Senator King (I-ME)
- **Senator Wicker (R-MS) - Lead Sponsor**
 - Senator Blunt (R-MO)
 - Senator Cassidy (R-LA)
 - Senator Collins (R-ME)
 - Senator Cornyn (R-TX)
 - Senator Graham (R-SC)
 - Senator Hyde-Smith (R-MS)
 - Senator Rubio (R-FL)

The CORPS Act proposes an **\$8 billion investment** in national service programs, members, and state service commissions over a three-year period in order to contribute to our nation's economic recovery. The CORPS Act also enables national service to contribute to recovery by growing a more diverse group of participants and local nonprofit programs, improving the quality of service experiences through increased living allowances and education awards, stabilizing existing programs, and targeting COVID-impacted communities and economic recovery projects.

"America's Service Commissions is proud to endorse the bipartisan CORPS Act as it is reintroduced in the 117th Congress," said **Kaira Esgate, CEO of America's Service Commissions (ASC)**. "This bill is a bold-but-realistic proposal to make AmeriCorps, state service commissions, national service and volunteer programs a cornerstone of our nation's long-term economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Expanding national service opportunities and benefits is essential to making service accessible to all and engaging a diverse group of Americans who want to serve our country and gain valuable job skills and experience in the process. The CORPS Act also provides governors and their state service commissions the flexibility they need to get these national service resources out the door to local communities and nonprofits quickly and efficiently. Our network stands ready to implement the CORPS Act across all states and territories during the COVID economic recovery period."

Recent articles:

The Hill - [National service is a bipartisan priority](#)

CNN - [This program puts people to work serving America. Now it's going to jump in size](#)

ROI Study - [New Research Shows an Unprecedented Return on Investment from AmeriCorps and Senior Corps](#)

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CORPS ACT Bill Summary— 117th Congress

The bill would enable the following policies to take effect from the date of enactment through the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (September 30, 2024):



Authorization to Expand National Service

Authorizes \$8 billion in funding to be spent through FY24 to strengthen and expand the signature national service programs – AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Seniors and the Volunteer Generation Fund.



AmeriCorps Living Allowance and Cost Per MSY

Increases the AmeriCorps State and National and AmeriCorps VISTA living allowances to 175% of poverty for a single individual (\$22,540 in 2021), and removes the cap on cost per member-service-year (MSY) for programs. Requires that the federal AmeriCorps agency award supplemental grants to fund the increased living allowance plus additional associated costs.



Special Education Award

Allows AmeriCorps members to earn a concurrent (or second) education award that is equal the same value as their regular education award — \$6,345 for members enrolled by September 30th and \$6,495 for members enrolled after September 30, 2021.



Tax Exemptions

Permanently exempts both the AmeriCorps living stipend and the Segal Education Award from federal income tax.



Direct Placement Authority

Establishes a pilot program allowing state service commissions to directly place AmeriCorps members in state-based national service programs.



Augmentation and Expansion Grants

Allows for expansion grants and grant augmentations to meet the compelling needs of grantees.



Recruiting a Diverse Corps

Prioritizes awarding expansion grants and directly placing AmeriCorps members with diverse entities that are: 1) Serving communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19; 2) Using culturally competent and multilingual strategies to provide services; and 3) Recruiting members to serve in the communities that they are from.



Match Waivers and Other Flexibilities

Provides critical flexibilities to stabilize national service programs during the economic crisis and to allow them to grow and respond to dynamic local recovery needs, including:

- Waives program matching requirements for the duration of the COVID recovery period.
- Addresses some seasonal and summer limitations within VISTA and NCCC.
- Expands eligibility requirements for AmeriCorps Seniors.
- Increases operating support for education award-only programs to \$1,600 per member with a waiver up to \$2,000.



Agency Reporting on Improvements

Requires that CNCS submit a report that includes recommendations for improving grant programs, to include:

- Recommendations for improving the cost reimbursement and fixed price grants programs.
- Analysis on establishing a new unit within CNCS to assist or manage background checks and the new member enrollment process.
- Examination of flexibilities for state service commissions to strengthen the work of commissions and subgrantees.

With questions, please contact our policy team at policy@statecommissions.org.

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