



## **“America’s Call To Improve Opportunities Now for National Service Act”**

### **Section by Section**

**America’s Call To Improve Opportunities Now for National Service Act (ACTION)** will further the federal government’s commitment to expanding and supporting service programs across the United States, greatly expanding the educational benefits offered to those who serve, making that benefit free from federal taxation, and providing federal service programs with consistent, enhanced funding to enable all those who wish to serve the opportunity to do so. ACTION will further support the great work of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), by elevating the agency to Cabinet-level status under the new name of the National and Community Service Administration (NCSA) and will commit to supporting one million federal service opportunities a year, within ten years.

#### **SEC. 1. Short Title**

ACTION - America’s Call To Improve Opportunities Now for National Service: To establish a National and Community Service Administration to carry out the national and volunteer service programs, to expand participation in such programs, to expand participation in such programs, and for other purposes.

#### **SEC. 2. Table of Contents**

References except as expressly provided are considered to be a reference to the National and Community Service Act of 1990.

#### **SEC. 3. Establishment of National and Community Service Administration**

Describes the replacement language and title change from “a Corporation for National and Community Service” to “the National and Community Service Administration an independent executive agency”. All functions remain the same under the amended, National and Community Service Act of 1990 except the title change.

#### **SEC. 4. Advisory Board**

A seven member board will be established to make recommendations to the Administrator of the National and Community Service Administration. Each member's term will be for five years. They will work with the Administrator in an advisory role to further the mission and goals of the agency, as well as provide oversight and operational support.

The Advisory Board's seven members will be selected with input from the executive and legislative branches of the government, furthering the goal of making service a national and federal priority,:

- Three members will be appointed by the President including one individual between the ages of 18-25 and has served in a school based or community-based service learning program or is a participant in a supervisory program.
- One member shall be chosen by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- One member shall be chosen by the minority speaker of the House of Representatives
- One member shall be chosen by the majority leader of the Senate.
- One member shall be chosen by the minority leader of the Senate.
- The board will meet four times each year, with one of the four being designated an 'annual meeting' to discuss long-term and strategic goals.

#### **SEC. 5. Administrator**

The Administrator for the National Community Service Administration will hold the same rank and duties as the Chief Executive Officer under the Corporation for National and Community Service, but will be elevated to Cabinet-level status.

#### **SEC. 6. National Service Educational Award**

Qualified individuals will receive an enhanced educational award (previously based on the Pell Grant)

- Qualified individuals are those who have completed one full term of service and are enrolled or accepted in an institution of higher education or applicable training program, or a recent graduate.
- The benefit amount will be equal to twice the amount of tuition of the institution of higher education where the individual is enrolled or has attended, and is not to exceed twice the average in-State tuition at that State's public institutions of higher education.

- The service benefit will not affect a student's eligibility for other grants, loans or assistance to an institution of higher education.
- The new enhanced benefit will enable young people to save for their college education after service or help graduates pay down their student loans.
- The ability of older national service volunteers to transfer their educational award to their child, foster child, or grandchild is preserved.

### **SEC. 7. Interagency Working Group**

The Director will lead an interagency working group to evaluate the eligibility for tuition and student loan repayment assistance for participation in other national or volunteer service programs, to evaluate the feasibility of granting a limited Federal hiring preference to an individual who has completed at least one full term of service, and to examine ways to increase the participation rates of volunteers age 55 and order.

### **SEC. 8. National Service Foundation**

A National Service Foundation will be established to manage the gifts and any other charities given to the National and Community Service Administration. The Foundation will serve as a non-profit entity to administer education awards, further the mission of the Administration and greater opportunities for volunteers. It will be tax exempt by federal, state and local taxation. The foundation board will consist of 6 private citizen members for duration of six year terms. It is suggested that the board contain an individual who is between the ages of 18 and 25, and an individual with experience in the Senior Corps.

### **SEC. 9. Authorization of Appropriations**

Authorization to carry out the programs and activities under this Act and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. Ten-year-goal, amounts should be sufficient to provide or facilitate volunteer service opportunities and programs for not fewer than one million full-time national service volunteers per year before the end of the ten year period beginning at the date of the enactment of this act.

**SEC. 10. Exclusion From Gross Income of AmeriCorps Educational Awards**

The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by adding AmeriCorps Educational Awards. The AmeriCorps Educational Awards shall not be subject to federal taxation.

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