



For Immediate Release:
May 25, 2017

ACTION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE REINTRODUCED

*Over 150 Original Cosponsors Introduce National
Service Plan*



Washington, D.C. – Today, **Reps. John B. Larson (CT-01), John Lewis (GA-05), Joe Kennedy (MA-04), and Doris Matsui (CA-06)** reintroduced ***America's Call to Improve Opportunities Now (ACTION) for National Service Act***. This would enhance access to national and community service opportunities, create a more engaged citizenry, and address national priorities in education, infrastructure, healthcare, disaster relief, and poverty. The legislation builds on the work of President John Kennedy, President Bill Clinton, and Senator Ted Kennedy.

"To honor President Kennedy's vision and legacy, it is time for us to renew the commitment to national service. From President Kennedy's iconic, 'Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country,' to his founding of the Peace Corps, he created a legacy that focuses on serving your country. This bill will expand the opportunities for service. The will to serve is there, but due to lack of sufficient funding, organizations like City Year have to turn away applicants," said **Rep. John Larson (CT-01)**. "Service

programs, like AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps and Teach for America give back to their communities by reducing high school delinquency through mentoring programs, increasing graduation rates with literacy programs and responding to natural disasters where local authorities are in need. This bill will reduce the costs of higher education for those who serve by increasing the educational benefit. Those who serve their country deserve to be relieved of the burdens of increasing higher education costs or being saddled with student debt."

"When President Kennedy spoke at American University, he called Americans to do what they could to contribute to the work of peace. Volunteer service is a way that citizens can help this nation accomplish its goals while they visit with each other, get to know each other as well as the cultures and communities that make up this diverse country. It enriches the giver and the receiver, and creates benefits that last far beyond the time of service.

Such a small government investment in these programs, offers our country a tremendous return that can heal wounds and build cities," said **Rep. John Lewis (GA-05)**.

"This country's strength is not built on toughness alone, but on justice, compassion and decency. At a time when the Trump Administration is proposing to eliminate community service programs across the country, the ACTION for National Service Act will reaffirm a deeply American commitment to care for one another in our times of need. From poverty to literacy, it will help deploy this country's greatest natural resource – her people – to tackle our most pressing national challenges," said **Rep. Joe Kennedy (MA-04)**.

"National service strengthens our country's future. President Kennedy encouraged us to put service at the forefront of our duty as citizens. Today, as we honor his legacy, we recommit to providing the next generation with the tools to engage in their communities and meet the challenges we face as a nation. I'm pleased to join Congressman Larson in introducing this important legislation and I look forward to working together to ensure Americans continue to have opportunities to serve," said **Rep. Doris Matsui (CA-06)**.

"This country needs national service now more than ever and I applaud Rep. Larson and Rep. Lewis for recognizing this and taking action," said **General McChrystal, The McChrystal Group**.

"The national service community is grateful to Congressman Larson and our bipartisan champions in Congress who understand the value of national service programs and are committed to expanding and strengthening these opportunities, including through the ACTION for National Service Act. Now more than ever, in the face of the President's FY18 budget proposal, we need congressional leaders to stand up for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps, national service programs that support evidence-based community solutions, prepare young Americans to enter the workforce, and unite us as a nation," said **AnnMaura Connolly, President, Voices for National Service**.

"Service Year Alliance applauds Rep. Larson and Rep. Lewis for their leadership to making a year of service a common expectation and opportunity. The ACTION for National Service Act would make an important contribution to this goal," said **Shirley Sigawa, President of Service Year Alliance**.

For more information on ACTION for National Service, please visit:

<https://larson.house.gov/issues/national-service>

###