PRINCIPLES FOR REFORMING THE MILITARY SELECTIVE SERVICE PROCESS

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

THE PRINCIPLES FOR REFORMING THE MILITARY SELECTIVE SERVICE PROCESS, PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 114–328, SEC. 555(c)(1)

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To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith Principles for Reforming the Military Selective Service Process, in accordance with section 555 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 (Public Law 114–328), which calls for the President to establish principles for reform of the military selective service process in support of the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

Sections 551–557 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 established the National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service. Section 555(c) requires the President to provide the Commission and the Congress with principles to guide the Commission’s review and recommendations.

Our Nation requires a strong military for our security and for the defense of American values and our interests abroad. While we have successfully transitioned from a conscripted to an All-Volunteer Force comprised of Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard personnel, and backed up by a program of selective service to meet emergency manpower requirements, sustaining this force requires prudent management.

The Nation must be ever mindful of the unpredictable global security environment that requires an effective and efficient means to provide manpower to the national security community, including military and non-military support in a national emergency. Historically, the Nation has maintained Selective Service registration to provide a hedge against the catastrophe not yet anticipated. Registration is a means to sustain preparedness, while also reminding youth that public service is a valued part of United States citizenship.

In conducting the Commission’s review and in developing recommendations, the Commission should ensure close examination of all areas outlined in section 551(b) to include the need for a military Selective Service process; the means by which to foster a greater attitude, ethos, and propensity for military services among United States youth; the feasibility and advisability of modifying the Selective Service process to leverage individuals with critical skills for which the Nation has a need without regard to age or sex; and the feasibility and advisability of tying the Selective Service process to eligibility or entitlement for certain Federal benefits.

The Commission’s recommendations and analysis for sustaining and/or modernizing the Selective Service process should be based upon the principles outlined in sections 555(c)(2). The Commission’s recommendations should also be guided by the following principles established by the President:

1. The Nation must prepare to mitigate an unpredictable global security and national emergency environment and to provide manpower by which the agencies responsible for military, national, or public service requirements can identify, recruit, and employ individuals from the entire population with skills necessary to augment existing manpower within those agencies.

2. The Nation benefits from citizens who value civic responsibility and service. Any system, process, or program should assist the government in fostering conditions that afford opportunities
and pathways to service for persons able to employ those critical
skills necessary to augment skill sets during conflict or national
emergency, including creating opportunities to incentivize vol-
unteerism.

3. Any system, process, or program used to identify, register, ac-
cess, and employ individuals to augment the existing federal civil-
ian sector, military, and private sector (including the non-profit
sector) should draw upon the Nation’s diversity by ensuring qual-
ified United States youth across all demographics have the oppor-
tunity to participate in military, national, and public service.

4. Any system, process, or program used to identify, recruit, and
employ additional skill sets should be effective in times of peace,
war, and other levels of conflict or emergency response. Associated
initiatives, systems, and processes must be seamless, robust, and
able to expand and contract as needed. They also should ensure the
means to create pathways through service that leverages enhanced,
empowered, and experienced expertise across the spectrum of
science, technology, engineering, mathematics, national security,
cyber linguistics and foreign language, education, health care, and
the medical professions.

5. Any system, process, or program should assist in incentivizing
military, national, and public service, as well as exposing the op-
portunities for critical education and technical training opportuni-
ties via the U.S. Armed Forces, federal and private sector, and vol-
unteerism that set conditions to advance individual engagement;
academic and technical development; and engagement in industry
that leads to a well-rounded and contributory society.

6. Any system, process, or program used to identify, register, ac-
cess, and employ individuals for the purpose of sustaining or aug-
menting the military, national, or public service must be grounded
in fiscal sustainability to ensure its long-term viability and reli-
bility to the Nation. It should also utilize best practices based on
existing public and private sector systems/processes.

Together, these principles form a useful foundation to guide the
Commission’s review and development of recommendations with re-
spect to the Selective Service process and means to increase partici-
patation in public service to support the needs of the Nation.