

AmeriCorps: A Model of Efficient and Effective Government

Talking Points and Messaging

Overview: For the last three decades, AmeriCorps members have responded to our country's most immediate and critical needs. They are the "people power" that local nonprofit, faith-based, and community organizations rely on to deliver services and make a difference in local communities. While helping others, AmeriCorps members gain in-demand job skills and complete their service with increased employability and pathways to higher education, preparing a cohort of Americans to succeed in the workforce.

Each year, roughly 75,000 AmeriCorps members and 140,000 AmeriCorps Seniors are deployed to address locally-determined needs in rural and urban communities across all 50 states, such as responding to natural disasters, tutoring students, combatting hunger and homelessness, connecting veterans to services, fighting the opioid epidemic, and much more.

17-to-1 Return on Investment:

- As a public-private partnership, AmeriCorps is a unique example of federal government efficiency and tax dollar stewardship. For every federal dollar invested, AmeriCorps generates \$17 in U.S.-wide economic value through private matching funds and the services its members provide to students and seniors, veterans and their families, and disaster victims.
- AmeriCorps is a model for the entire federal government, proving that modest federal investment combined with the passion and expertise of the private sector and civil society can achieve enormous results for American taxpayers.

Financial Accountability and Private Sector Engagement:

- AmeriCorps grantees must secure matching funds, drawing significant investment from the private sector, foundations, nonprofits, and state and local governments. AmeriCorps aligns with free market principles by focusing on public-private partnerships, helping individuals develop job skills without unnecessary government expansion.
- This structure ensures accountability, minimizes reliance on federal dollars, and fosters public-private partnerships.

Strengthening Workforce Readiness:

- AmeriCorps programs provide hands-on job training and skill development, particularly in high-demand fields like education, public safety, disaster response, and healthcare.
- Participants gain practical, upwardly mobile experience that prepares them for private-sector jobs and reduces dependency on government aid.

Promoting Economic Mobility & Self-Sufficiency:

- AmeriCorps gives individuals, especially young people and veterans, a structured opportunity to gain experience, earn education stipends, and transition into the workforce and civilian life.
- Many AmeriCorps alumni move on to private-sector jobs or start their own businesses, reinforcing the importance of personal responsibility and economic independence.

Supporting Local & Faith-Based Solutions:

- AmeriCorps doesn't believe that one-size-fits-all. Instead, AmeriCorps partners with local nonprofits, businesses, and faith-based organizations to address community workforce needs, ensuring solutions are tailored to local economies rather than dictated by Washington.
- These partnerships promote volunteerism and civic responsibility, reducing reliance on federal welfare programs.

Addressing Labor Shortages & Critical Industries:

- AmeriCorps members fill gaps in essential industries, such as teaching, disaster recovery, and skilled trades, helping to address national labor shortages.
- Programs focused on apprenticeships and vocational training help young people enter American industries that need qualified domestic workers, reducing the burden on government assistance programs.

Critical Role in Disaster Recovery:

- AmeriCorps works hand-in-hand with FEMA and other government agencies to provide **on-the-ground assistance** during disasters.
- Recent examples include the agency's invaluable role in recovery efforts after **Hurricane Helene**, where members helped victims rebuild their lives and communities.
- AmeriCorps' ability to rapidly mobilize skilled teams during emergencies saves lives, reduces long-term recovery costs, and provides immediate relief when it's needed most.

Supporting Veterans and Their Families:

- AmeriCorps invests in organizations and programs that directly support veterans and their families, helping them transition back into civilian life, find housing and jobs, and access mental health services.
- These efforts align with core Republican values of honoring and serving those who have sacrificed for our country.

Bipartisan Governance and Congressional Support:

- **Bipartisan Board of Directors:** AmeriCorps is governed by a bipartisan board of directors, with members nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. This structure ensures a balanced, nonpartisan approach to decision-making and accountability.
- However, the current board has several vacancies, with no Republican members currently in place. To uphold the agency's bipartisan integrity, the incoming Administration should prioritize appointments to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) board, ensuring balanced representation.
- **Broad Bipartisan Support in Congress:** AmeriCorps has consistently enjoyed strong bipartisan support from House and Senate lawmakers. Members of both parties recognize the program's efficiency, ability to address critical community needs, and significant return on investment.
- **State Leaders Endorse AmeriCorps:** Republican and Democratic governors alike have championed AmeriCorps as an essential partner in addressing state and local needs.

Strengthening Communities, Reducing Long-Term Costs:

- AmeriCorps builds stronger communities by reducing long-term dependency on government aid through solutions that address root problems, such as housing, education, and emergency preparedness.
- For example, partnerships with organizations like **Teach for America**, **Habitat for Humanity**, and **City Year** multiply the impact of every federal dollar, improving outcomes for students, families, and underserved communities.

Conservative Principles in Action:

- **Efficiency:** Maximizing limited federal dollars through matching requirements and private-sector partnerships.
- **Accountability:** Requiring grantees to meet rigorous performance standards.
- **Self-Reliance:** Empowering communities to solve their own problems with local solutions and private partnerships.

Conclusion:

AmeriCorps has demonstrated exceptional efficiency, strong private-sector collaboration, and high-impact results. With strong bipartisan support in Congress and a governance model rooted in balance and accountability, AmeriCorps delivers measurable results while providing critical services to veterans, disaster victims, and communities across the nation.

Supporting AmeriCorps is not just an investment in service—it's an investment in **fiscal responsibility, community resilience, and American values.**

Update as of 1/28/2025: On January 27, 2025, the White House Office of Management and Budget announced that all federal agencies should temporarily pause federal grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs while they undergo review of compliance with President Trump's previous executive orders. AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors grant programs operated by the Corporation for National and Community Service are included in a list of thousands of programs targeted by the freeze.

The federal grants made through AmeriCorps are necessary for states and localities to address their most pressing challenges in a way that meets the needs of their communities. From support for returning veterans to natural disaster relief, to tutoring students and addressing the opioid epidemic, this pause on federal payments puts at risk critical supports that build community resilience in a fiscally responsible way.

We strongly encourage you to provide concrete examples about how any delay in the disbursement of grant funds for AmeriCorps activities may impact your organization and leave neighbors without services they need. For example – if you are unable to recover funds for expenses incurred, will you reach a point where your organization be unable to pay AmeriCorps member living allowances, staff salaries, other benefits? Will this disruption to cash flow impact your ability to pay bills and cover operating expenses such as evaluation, training, supplies, and rent? How do you predict it will impact the delivery of services in your local community?