Instructions & Call Scripts for Grassroots Supporters

Context:
Officials from the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) have visited the AmeriCorps agency. That visit has already led to the abrupt "demobilization" of AmeriCorps NCCC and FEMA Corps members, reported by the Associated Press on April 16th. We also know that the vast majority of AmeriCorps agency staff have been put on administrative leave with pay, effective immediately.

As of April 17th at 9am ET, there have not been reports of impacts to AmeriCorps programs beyond NCCC/FEMA Corps. However, DOGE is still at the AmeriCorps agency, and we are concerned that this is on a path to effectively dismantle AmeriCorps and jeopardize critical - and effective - programs that serve local communities.

We urgently need as many voices as possible reaching out to members of Congress and we are mobilizing friends of service – including alumni, parents, community stakeholders, and more – to help us send a strong message about the need to prevent cuts to AmeriCorps funding.

We hope to flood offices with calls in support of AmeriCorps over the next few days – time is of the essence!

As we move forward with these efforts, we want to avoid criticism of the administration and lean into the positive and powerful impact of AmeriCorps and how it supports the important work of local organizations across the country.

Follow these steps to share your alumni story and ask Congress to protect AmeriCorps:

- Visit **Congress.gov and input your zip code** to find your members of Congress and their phone numbers.
    - You may need to input your street address in full, if your zip code is divided between two Representatives. Everyone will have two Senators and 1 Representative.
- Alternatively, you can call the Capitol operator, ask for your lawmakers by name, and be connected directly to their offices.
    - House of Representative Switchboard: 202-225-3121
    - Senate Switchboard: 202-224-3121
- Typically, a staff assistant or intern will answer your call. Some offices have a fully automated answering system, and you may hear a recording play before letting you leave a message.
- If you reach a staff person:
    - Introduce yourself as a constituent.
    - Ask to leave a message for the legislator.
    - Read the script below.

    - If you would like a letter or email addressing your concerns from the office, let them know that you would like a response and repeat your name and contact information before ending the call.
    - When you are finished, be sure to thank the staffer for their time.
- <u>If you reach an answering machine:</u>
    - Introduce yourself as a constituent.
    - Read the script below.
    - If you would like a letter or email addressing your concerns from the office, let them know that you would like a response and repeat your name and contact information before ending the call.

CALL SCRIPT:

Good morning/afternoon. My name is (first and last name) and I'm a constituent from (city/county, state). I would like to share my concerns with (elected official name) about the very upsetting news of steps being taken at the AmeriCorps agency that could deeply cut or eliminate AmeriCorps services in my community.

Drastic cuts to AmeriCorps agency staff will impact non-profit, faith-based, and community organizations that depend on AmeriCorps funding to make a difference in communities across the nation. I am concerned that this reduction in force will impact the agency's ability to execute grants and enroll AmeriCorps members and engage AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers – essentially dismantling the agency and jeopardizing critical resources for your constituents.

Already we are seeing the impacts of force reductions at the agency leading to stop work orders for AmeriCorps NCCC members, which deploys teams of young adults to respond to urgent community needs, including natural disasters.

(*If desired, folks can share personal experience with AmeriCorps or AmeriCorps Seniors - how this work inspired them, the positive results they saw, how it prepared them for college and/or career*).

For the past three decades, Americans of all ages have joined AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps Seniors to respond to an array of challenges. Members have been deployed in rural and urban areas across all 50 states and federal territories, addressing critical and urgent needs such as responding to natural disasters,

connecting veterans and seniors to services, tutoring students, fighting the opioid epidemic, combatting hunger and homelessness, and much more.

If AmeriCorps funding goes away, that means our communities would lose key services and resources. That would be devasting, since the work of AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers is needed now more than ever.

I hope we can count on (elected official name) to help us protect and save AmeriCorps.

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Additional AmeriCorps Background and Talking Points

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

- AmeriCorps is built on the notion that the best local solutions come from the expertise of states and communities, not Washington. Through partnerships with faith-based organizations, nonprofits, and local businesses, AmeriCorps ensures that service efforts are uniquely tailored to the specific needs of each community.

- AmeriCorps members who have stepped up to serve receive opportunities for hands-on job training and skill development, which prepares them for career success in a variety of fields. For seniors serving with AmeriCorps Seniors programs, 88% of volunteers see a decrease in loneliness and isolation. AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors report strong personal attachment to the communities they serve in and look for additional opportunities to volunteer and give back.

- It would be irresponsible and short-sighted to defund AmeriCorps - when the evidence shows it is a good use of taxpayer dollars - improving access to service and resources for Americans across all 50 states, and strengthening communities and workforce development.

- Every federal dollar invested in AmeriCorps is matched by private and local sources, often at rates that exceed the federal investment. Private philanthropy cannot make up the difference in the loss of federal funding, and in fact, losing AmeriCorps could put matching funds at risk.

- AmeriCorps is among the most successful federal investments of this generation—a model public-private partnership with strong bipartisan support.
    - 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 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.