

The American Presidency Project

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• George W. Bush

Executive Order 13254 - Establishing the USA Freedom Corps

January 29th, 2002

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. Building on our Nation's rich tradition of citizen service, this Administration's policy is to foster a culture of responsibility, service, and citizenship by promoting, expanding, and enhancing public service opportunities for all Americans and by making these opportunities readily available to citizens from all geographic areas, professions, and walks of life. More specifically, this Administration encourages all Americans to serve their country for the equivalent of at least 2 years (4,000 hours) over their lifetimes. Toward those ends, the executive departments, agencies, and offices constituting the USA Freedom Corps shall coordinate and strengthen Federal and other service opportunities, including opportunities for participation in homeland security preparedness and response, other areas of public and social service, and international service. The executive branch departments, agencies, and offices also will work with State and local governments and private entities to foster and encourage participation in public and social service programs, as appropriate.

Sec. 2. USA Freedom Corps. The USA Freedom Corps shall be an interagency initiative, bringing together executive branch departments, agencies, and offices with public service programs and components, including but not limited to programs and components with the following functions:

- (i) recruiting, mobilizing, and encouraging all Americans to engage in public service;
- (ii) providing concrete opportunities to engage in public service;
- (iii) providing the public with access to information about public service opportunities through Federal programs and elsewhere; and
- (iv) providing recognition and awards to volunteers and other participants in public service programs.

Sec. 3. USA Freedom Corps Council. (a) Establishment and Mission. There shall be a USA Freedom Corps Council (Council) chaired by the President and composed of heads of executive branch departments, agencies, and offices, which shall have the following functions:

- (i) serving as a forum for Federal officials responsible for public service programs to coordinate and improve public service programs and activities administered by the executive branch;
- (ii) working to encourage all Americans to engage in public service, whether through Federal programs or otherwise;
- (iii) advising the President and heads of executive branch departments, agencies, and offices concerning the

optimization of current Federal programs to enhance public service opportunities;

- (iv) coordinating public outreach and publicity of citizen service opportunities provided by Federal programs;
- (v) encouraging schools, universities, private public service organizations, and other non-Federal entities to foster and reward public service;
- (vi) studying the availability of public service opportunities provided by the Federal Government and elsewhere; and
- (vii) tracking progress in participation in public service programs.

(b) Membership. In addition to the Chair, the members of the Council shall be the heads of the executive branch departments, agencies, and offices listed below, or their designees, and such other officers of the executive branch as the President may from time to time designate. Every member of the Council or designee shall be a full-time or permanent part-time officer or employee of the Federal Government. Members shall not be compensated for their service on the Council in addition to the salaries they receive as employees or officers of the Federal Government.

- (i) Vice President;
- (ii) Attorney General;
- (iii) Secretary of State;
- (iv) Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (v) Secretary of Commerce;
- (vi) Secretary of Education;
- (vii) Secretary of Veterans Affairs;
- (viii) Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;
- (ix) Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service;
- (x) Director of the Peace Corps;
- (xi) Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development;
- (xii) Director of the USA Freedom Corps Office; and

(xiii) Director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

(c)

Chair. The President shall be the Chair of the USA Freedom Corps Council, and in his absence, the Vice President shall serve as Chair. The Director of the USA Freedom Corps Office may, at the President's direction, preside over meetings of the Council in the President's and Vice President's absence.

(d)

Honorary Co-Chair. The President may, from time to time, designate an Honorary Co-Chair or Co-Chairs, who shall serve in an advisory role to the Council and to the President on matters considered by the Council. Any Honorary Co-Chair shall be a full-time or permanent part-time employee or officer of the Federal Government.

(e)

Meetings. The Council shall meet at the President's direction. The Director of the USA Freedom Corps Office shall be responsible, at the President's direction, for determining the agenda, ensuring that necessary papers are prepared, and recording Council actions and Presidential decisions.

(f) Responsibilities of Executive Branch Departments, Agencies, and Offices.

(i)

Members of the Council shall remain responsible for overseeing the programs administered by their respective departments, agencies, and offices. Each such department, agency, and office will retain its authority and responsibility to administer those programs according to law;

(ii)

Each executive branch department, agency, or office with responsibility for programs relating to the functions and missions of the USA Freedom Corps as described in section 2 of this order shall be responsible for identifying those public service opportunities and coordinating with the USA Freedom Corps Council to ensure that such programs are, if appropriate, publicized and encouraged by the Council; and

(iii) Upon the request of the Chair, and to the extent permitted by law, the heads of executive branch departments and agencies shall provide the Council with relevant information.

Sec. 4. USA Freedom Corps Office. (a) General. The USA Freedom Corps also shall be supported by a USA Freedom Corps Office (Office), which shall be a component of the White House Office. The USA Freedom Corps Office shall have a Director who shall be appointed by the President. The Director shall be assisted by an appropriate staff within the White House Office.

(b) Presidential Recognition to Participants in USA Freedom Corps Programs. In addition to supporting and facilitating the functions of the Council listed in section 3 of this order, the Office shall support the President in providing recognition to volunteers and other participants in programs and activities relating to the functions and missions of the USA Freedom Corps as described in section 2 of this order.

Sec. 5. General Provisions. (a) The White House Office shall provide the Council and Office with such funding and administrative support, to the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, as directed by the Chief of Staff to the President to carry out the provisions of this order.

(b)

This order does not alter the existing authorities or roles of executive branch departments, agencies, or offices. Nothing in this order shall supersede any requirement made by or under law.

(c)

This order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity, against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

GEORGE W. BUSH
The White House,
January 29, 2002.

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