

FCNL Representative's Report to SCYM RM 2024

The 2024 T Quaker Public Policy Institute (QPPI) and General Committee meeting took place from November 13 to 16 in Arlington, VA and online. Lobbying in person in Washington D.C. was held on 13 and 14 November. The topic was the six Joint Resolutions of Disapproval (JRD) concerning the transfer of offensive weapons to Israel. SCYM Representative to FCNL Bill Sweet and FCNL Representative at Large Lon Burnam and three current or former Advocacy Corps and/or Advocacy Team members from Texas did a lobby visit with staff in Senator Cruz's office. The appointment with Senator Cornyn was canceled at the last minute. Bill Sweet lobbied his House Member, Henry Cuellar, TX-28, adding climate change to the JRD "ask". Lon lobbied several Congressional offices.

The Annual Meeting of FCNL General Committee followed QPPI, Friday morning through Sunday noon. SCYM Representatives Suzanne Cole-Sullivan and Bill Sweet attended in person. Larry Kelly-Mahaffey and Liz Yeats attended virtually. Will King canceled at the last minute because of a family situation (happily resolved). Other SCYM Friends Cassie Hardee and Lois Way were seen online at times.

Reports from the Annual Meeting Planning, Development, Finance, Field, and Nominating Committees were received. The draft Legislative Priorities developed by the Policy Committee were presented and discussed. After discernment, the final draft of the Legislative Priorities was approved and can be found at:

https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/fcnlactionkit/images/FCNL_Legislative_Priorities_119th_Congress.pdf

Legislative Priorities give guidance to FCNL staff and volunteers in their work with the incoming Congress.

The body also received recommendations developed by the Governance Working Group which proposed combining standing committees to reflect the growth of the organization (both staff and volunteers), make use of our improved communication through email, text, and online meetings, and conserve funds and energy with less travel. These recommendations were approved and will go into effect over the next fiscal year. Changes include the frequency and way by which the General Committee will meet. The General Committee will begin meeting every other year on Zoom, saving funds and the environment. More information about these major changes can be found at: [https://s3.us-east-](https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/fcnlactionkit/images/Proposals_on_FCNL_Standing_Committee_Changes_Nov_2024.pdf)

[1.amazonaws.com/fcnlactionkit/images/Proposals_on_FCNL_Standing_Committee_Changes_Nov_2024.pdf](https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/fcnlactionkit/images/Proposals_on_FCNL_Standing_Committee_Changes_Nov_2024.pdf).

Last fiscal year contributions fell short by 2 million dollars of a 12 million dollar budget, drawing down needed reserves. This is consistent with the experience of most other nonprofits. The reorganization should help to save funds but staff cuts may be necessary. Staff guidance remains important in this time when there is an increased need for FCNL's advocacy.

Senator Cory Booker received this year's FCNL Justice Award and the FCNL Peace Award was awarded to Senator Rand Paul. Representative Barbara Lee of California spoke after being awarded the FCNL Compass Award for her extraordinary support of peace and justice throughout her time in Congress. FCNL received a peace award this year from the US Memorial Peace Foundation. More information about the awards can be found at:

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2024-11/quaker-lobby-honors-senators-paul-and-booker-annual-meeting>

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2024-11/quaker-lobby-celebrates-rep-barbara-lees-lifetime-service-peace>

<https://www.fcnl.org/updates/2024-11/quaker-lobby-honored-receive-us-peace-prize>

It was heartwarming to gather with so many Friends in person and online, a reassurance that there are many in this country who continue to advocate for peace and justice. We need to be grateful that FCNL has grown exponentially over the years. It was reported that:

"While its mission has remained constant, FCNL is now a very different organization than it was twenty or thirty years ago. There was a time when most Friends' direct contact with FCNL was through the printed monthly newsletter. Some might call in to hear pre-recorded updates. Those seeking closer engagement usually found it through appointment to the General Committee and service on standing committees. Many committee meetings were held in person in Washington, DC. Today, access and exchange of information happens daily through email, the website, and social media. One hundred forty local Advocacy Teams distributed across the country provide

closer in-person contact and lobbying support. Even multi-day meetings are increasingly in hybrid format or fully remote.

Over this same period FCNL staff has grown and has increased in breadth and depth of expertise. Twenty years ago, there was a single domestic policy lobbyist; today we have five. For many years, a single Field Secretary served the FCNL network of around 20,000 people; now our network of around 200,000 is served by the Strategic Advocacy team of nine and a Communications team of five. A few decades ago, we had a fund-raising team of just three people; today there are nine. We now manage a total staff of around 65 people, three buildings, and three distinct organizations, all supported by professional human resources, finance, information technology, and administrative staff. These are just a few examples of the dramatic changes in our organization.”¹

Respectfully submitted by the SCYM Reps to FCNL General Committee and others who serve FCNL in our geography doing the work of Quaker advocacy for justice and peace so needed in these times.

¹ https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/fcnlactionkit/images/Proposals_on_FCNL_Standing_Committee_Changes_Nov_2024.pdf
