



October 29, 2020

Dear President Trump and Vice President Biden,

We write to you today as Americans deeply concerned about the success of our society. Lack of trust and understanding of one another has become one of the greatest challenges confronting our nation, and is where the extreme polarization facing America today is deeply rooted. We must begin to rebuild that trust and understanding, a sense of responsibility for our neighbors, and a future that includes all Americans — and it is going to take more than rhetoric about unity to be successful. As part of that effort, we believe that we must invest in a significant expansion of national service to help bridge these deep divides and bind all Americans together in common purpose.

The next generation of Americans is eager to be part of the solution to the many challenges currently facing our country. They're taking to the streets to protest racial injustice, using their voices to demand action on climate change, and raising their hands to help their fellow citizens and neighbors through the pandemic. In short, they believe in our country and are already invested in fighting for a better future for our country and the world. We can expand opportunities to serve in a manner that is truly accessible to all young Americans while investing in their futures and fostering a generation of engaged citizens.

By expanding national service, we will be giving young Americans more ways to pursue their passion for addressing pressing national interests and putting their talents and desire for change into action. We will also be investing in a solution that has the power to bring people together across lines of difference in the years — and generations — ahead.

Just as those who serve in the military build bonds with fellow service members that are stronger than their political, racial, or economic differences, service alongside someone in a classroom, food bank, or national park, builds a similar bond that transcends background and preconceptions. Serving together in common purpose builds empathy and understanding towards fellow citizens and teaches collaboration as a powerful tool to solve problems and leverage differences.

Additionally, national service can build important experiences for the next generation of leaders and help them to be more engaged, more likely to volunteer and vote, create more active citizens, and inspire lifelong civic participation. According to a survey of AmeriCorps alums, 79 percent of alumni are already involved or plan to become actively involved in their community post-service.

Investing in a significant expansion of national service is critical to tackling the growing polarization and lack of trust and understanding in America. Whichever of you is our president in 2021, we ask that you prioritize national service and ensure that this opportunity is truly available to all young Americans. That means not only expanding the number of positions available for young people, but ensuring that those positions are accessible to all through a livable wage, wraparound services, and opportunities to develop skills and experiences that will set this new generation of leaders up for success.

The Serve America Together campaign's [policy platform](#) includes additional recommendations for making national service — whether civilian, military, or public service — a common expectation and

opportunity for every young American. We view this as an important starting point and are open to building on this framework.

We call on you to commit to prioritizing a significant expansion of national service accessible to all young Americans, should you be elected to serve as president to help bring Americans together and fuel a much-needed civic renewal in America.

Sincerely,

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