

2023 Report to Yearly Meetings

Dear Friends,

FCNL continues to carry the witness of the Spirit through nonpartisan national advocacy. I would like to share with you highlights of our work in 2023, made possible by your dedicated engagement, financial contributions, and spiritual support.

Faithfully Persisting for the World We Seek

FCNL's advocacy focuses on **peace**: creating conditions in which violence is less likely and injustice can be nonviolently repaired; **justice**: for all our neighbors; and an **earth restored**: building a just and sustainable low-carbon society that leaves no communities behind.

In the past year, FCNL has played critical roles in these areas:

Bringing congressional attention to U.S. complicity in the Saudi-led war in Yemen. Led by the more than 2,000 Advocacy Team members across the country, FCNL helped drive efforts to end support for the Saudi-led coalition responsible for a massive humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Bipartisan resolutions in both the House and Senate called for an end to unauthorized U.S. support of the war. Although U.S. support for the Saudis continues, momentum continues to build in opposition.

Addressing the legacy of Indian boarding schools. Quakers were among those who collaborated with the U.S. government in the 19th and 20th centuries to run schools intended to "assimilate" Native children into white society. Now, FCNL is focusing on building congressional support for bipartisan legislation to establish a Truth and Healing Commission to uncover what took place. This legislation has been the focus of the young organizers in the 2022–23 Advocacy Corps.

Advancing environmental justice and addressing climate change. FCNL was part of nearly two years of advocacy resulting in far-reaching climate legislation becoming law. The Inflation Reduction Act (P. L. 117-169) puts the United States on the path to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40% in the next eight years. This bill, along with the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P. L. 117-58), increases investment in supporting communities most impacted by pollution.

Compensating for Nuclear Testing Exposure. A program to compensate people exposed to radiation through U.S. nuclear tests, so-called "downwinders," was set to expire in July 2022. FCNL worked to secure passage of legislation to extend the program for two years and to broaden the eligibility to include additional states affected by the more than 200 above-ground nuclear tests the United States conducted in the 1940s.

We also continue to advocate for diplomacy and peacebuilding to bring about a just solution to the **war in Ukraine**. See [fcnl.org/issues](https://www.fcnl.org/issues) for additional advocacy updates.



▲ FCNL's Clarence Edwards, Amelia Kegan, and Bridget Moix gather at the White House to celebrate the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act.

Discerning FCNL Priorities and Policy Directions

More than 250 meetings, churches, and individuals took part in setting FCNL's **legislative priorities for the 118th Congress** (2023-24). See fcnl.org/priorities for the approved statement.

This year, FCNL's Policy Committee is requesting **input around how FCNL's policy statement should address issues of reproductive health care, including abortion**. Friends are encouraged to gather in discernment and share how their community is led. See the link to "Discernment on Reproductive Health Care and Abortion" at fcnl.org/governance for more information and resources. Send responses to policycommittee@fcnl.org.

Shifting the Narrative for Peace

Through the **Dismantling Racism and Militarism in U.S. Foreign Policy** project, FCNL's Diana Ohlbaum and Salih Booker from the Center for International Policy took apart the "racism-militarism paradigm" that sees the world in a rigid racial hierarchy and embraces militarism as the most effective way to maintain social order. Through expert consultations and community discussion, FCNL is advancing efforts to dismantle these systems. Read the report and find out more at fcnl.org/drm.

This systemic focus extends throughout the organization. FCNL's **recommitment to anti-racism, anti-bias, justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion** in all aspects of our work is reflected in our statement, available at fcnl.org/ajedi. It guides our internal systems and practices as well as our lobbying and other activities.

Strengthening Our Democracy

FCNL is working to reduce partisanship, transform relationships, and promote substantive policy change

to strengthen our democracy and address the root causes of division and partisanship in our country. Political polarization and entrenched systems of oppression threaten U.S. democracy, as well as FCNL's advocacy and effective government equipped to respond to the challenges of our country and world.

FCNL brings its 80 years of experience in nonpartisan, relationship-based advocacy. It is uniquely placed to **strengthen cooperative, nonpartisan civic engagement and build bridges across political divisions to advance policy solutions**.

We are deepening bipartisan relationships with Congress by drawing on the skills of our grassroots advocates in deep listening. We are also building new partnerships with networks such as Braver Angels, Faiths United to Save Democracy, and the TRUST Network.

Principled Hospitality on Capitol Hill

In February 2023, **Friends Place on Capitol Hill**, formerly known as William Penn House, marked its first anniversary of welcoming overnight guests. The Quaker learning center and guesthouse has hosted 90 groups and more than 1,600 guests. As part of the local migrant solidarity mutual aid network, Friends Place has also hosted more than 600 migrants bussed from the southern border. More at friendsplacedc.org.

FCNL's work in the year ahead will be full of challenges and opportunities. We are grateful to have a strong foundation on which to build. Thank you for your prayers, participation, and support, and—above all—for your faithfulness.

In peace,



Mary Lou Hatcher

Clerk, FCNL General Committee
Lehigh Valley Monthly Meeting
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting