

**Working Group Meeting  
Bridge Minutes  
April 12, 2025**

Friends,

Because of technical difficulties we were unable to hold our Working Group meeting on April 12. Our sincere apologies. We decided to reschedule the meeting to May 3. In the meanwhile, however, let us convey to you what we were planning to address during the April meeting.

1. We continue to focus on how to address the controversial issues raised by the current Administration. We remind ourselves that we are a Spirit-led Meeting and as Paul L. frequently emphasizes the importance of connecting with the Divine when addressing the issues in the temporal world.
2. Our focus areas are not unlike those that FCNL addressed during last week's webinar, entitled: *Effective Advocacy in a Chaotic Era*.

During that presentation Bridget Moix and Amela Kegan divided the issues into 3 'buckets,' all of which we are familiar with:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Democracy is not a state, it is an act.</b> <i>John Lewis</i></p>
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a. Bucket 1: Legislation in Congress:

- The *Budget Reconciliation Bill* will potentially result in draconian cuts to the Medicaid and SNAP programs, and also aims at rolling back the Biden clean energy funding. The Bill wants to increase funding for deportations and militarization efforts, as well as increase tax breaks for the wealthy.

FCNL explained that Congress now must proceed with the act of 'writing the Bill', meaning defining the specifics of how those dollars will be spent or allocated. **That said we still have time to strongly advocate against this Bill - until May 24.**

- We all hear the stories of horrible enforcement of the deportation mandate. Just after our scheduled meeting Patty Lyman shared a document that clearly lays out what the conditions are in the CECOT prison. It also includes a list of names of known men who were deported there without due process and have no criminal activities. See attached document. We need to connect with our elected officials to strongly express our opposition to this practice.

- About rolling back clean energy funding (ie. IRA funding): again, let's connect with our elected officials to express our opposition

Note: Phil will give a sermon on April 27 at the Eagle Harbor Church on Bainbridge, focusing on climate change in the context of communal living.

b. Bucket 2: The gutting of the federal government and USAID

About the latter, FCNL reports that Republican lawmakers are in favor of restarting USAID programs for they fully realize the importance of helping people around the world. However, according to internal reports, many legislators are afraid to speak out publicly.

It is important that we push Congress to regain the power of the purse.

We must take the influence of economic interests to heart for they deeply affect the lives lots of Americans and people around the world.

c. Bucket 3: The importance of our judicial system

Our judicial system plays a critical role in fending off tyranny. We hope to see enforcements of contempt orders and will monitor the Supreme Court's support for the Constitution.

We've had a number of opportunities during prior meetings to share how we personally keep up the hope during these trying times. The FCNL staff also engaged in such reflections. Here is what they shared:

- "I realize that I am standing on the shoulders of so many who preceded us in advocacy. We are being cheered on by our ancestors."
- "This is what we are being called to do now."
- "Our values, our testimonies, guide the way."
- "We are not alone. We are in community, standing in solidarity."
- "We can learn from other countries who have been through dictatorships."

FCNL listed some action tips we can use to voice our opposition. They also encourage us to join others in rallies (providing the environment remains safe).

1. [Call or email members of Congress](#) with a personal message.

2. [\*\*\*Drop by a congressional office\*\*\*](#) as members of Congress are home for the April recess. You can leave behind resources on [\*\*\*Medicaid/SNAP\*\*\*](#), [\*\*\*clean energy tax credits\*\*\*](#), [\*\*\*just migration\*\*\*](#), and [\*\*\*foreign aid\*\*\*](#).
3. Write a letter to the editor or op-ed. [\*\*\*Here are some tips!\*\*\*](#)
4. [\*\*\*Schedule a lobby visit\*\*\*](#) with a Congressional office to increase the impact of your visit.

Bridget Moix shared the following: She and other peace activists from around the world, recently attended a training in Poland – Auschwitz to be precise. They were made aware of the fact that Hitler initially sent political opponents, students, gays, monks, to the concentration camp, but that this internment practice rapidly expanded to large swaths of the population, resulting in the genocide of Jewish people. We must remain awake!

**Our next Working Group meeting will be on May 3 at 4 PM.** We will continue to focus on the issues listed above. We also hope to include the following topics in our agenda:

- White Christian Nationalism and the concept of “suicidal empathy;”
  - The recent activities of our Right Relations subgroup;
  - WA Budget crisis;
  - The Quaker Voice legislative report;
  - The Quaker EarthCare Witness report.
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