

**Washington, D.C.** - National Service Day on Capitol Hill

Washington, Sep 16, 2005 - On Wednesday, September 14, 2005, US Rep. David Price (NC-04), a co-founder of the National Service Caucus, participated in the "Voices for National Service" event on Capitol Hill. His remarks are below:

"Good morning! I was glad to participate in the first "Voices for National Service" event a few years ago, and it is a pleasure to be with again you for this year's "Voices" event.

"The first "Voices" event was born out of a difficult time for the national service community, including funding cuts that had serious repercussions for AmeriCorps programs. We weathered that storm and emerged stronger for it, partly because of your organization's ongoing activities.

"The group assembled here this morning is a wonderful reflection of the spirit of the Corporation for National and Community Service, its broad spectrum of support, and the difference each of you make in the lives of millions of Americans.

"I have seen that spirit put into in action countless times in my home state of North Carolina. AmeriCorps has played an important role there, and we have one of the largest number of AmeriCorps members per capita in the country.

"We especially depend on national service programs and volunteers to mobilize instantly during times of crisis, like the frequent hurricanes my state experiences. Ophelia is forecasted to make landfall on the Outer Banks today, and volunteers there will be ready for it.

"The importance of your work is already on full display now. Many families along the Gulf Coast, facing poverty and a lagging economy before Katrina, are no longer just struggling to make ends meet. In the wake of this devastating storm, some must rebuild their lives entirely. And they will only be able to do it with you: inspirational people who commit their lives to helping others.

"But I know you're also making a difference every day, often in much less obvious ways. Learn and Serve America, AmeriCorps, and Senior Corps are all outstanding programs with a proven track record of meeting the critical needs of our communities.

"In exchange for the selfless work you do, the federal government must hold up its end of the bargain, providing your programs with the resources you need.

"One of the positive outcomes of the funding troubles AmeriCorps faced a few years ago was the establishment of the National Service Congressional Caucus. I am proud to be one of four co-chairs of that caucus, along with Representative Ford, whom you heard from earlier, and Congressmen Shays and Osborne.

"AmeriCorps faced a threat earlier this year during consideration of the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill, through which national service is funded, and we were able to head off some serious potential damage. The threat was in the form of an amendment that would have used AmeriCorps as an offset for increased funding for another program, cutting \$70 million from the program in FY 2006.

"The Caucus found out about the amendment only as it was offered, but we quickly sprang into action to rally support for AmeriCorps. And I am proud to say that, with the help of our friends at City Year and others in the AmeriCorps community, we were able to handily defeat that amendment on a vote of 102 to 298. It is my hope that the size of this vote will send a message to members who ought to think twice before seeing AmeriCorps as an expendable budget item.

"As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I will continue fighting for increased funding for these programs that will give you and our communities the resources they need. And the Caucus will continue to partner with you to advocate healthy program funding and program changes that will strengthen and sustain national service opportunities.

"I thank you again for your service. And your country thanks you, too."

# "Voices for National Service:" Remarks by David Price

September 16, 2005

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