



STRENGTHENING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN CONGRESS

Report of the John C. Stennis Congressional Staff Fellows | 110th Congress





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STENNIS CONGRESSIONAL STAFF
FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Stennis Congressional Staff Fellows Program, sponsored by the Stennis Center for Public Service, is a practical, bipartisan leadership development experience for senior-level staff of the United States Congress. Established in 1993, the Stennis Fellows Program brings together chiefs of staff, committee staff directors, legislative directors and other senior staff in a neutral venue to examine the challenges facing Congress as an institution of American democracy and the leadership role played by senior congressional staff in meeting those challenges.

Fellows are nominated by a Member of Congress and a new class of 25-30 Stennis Fellows is selected competitively from each Congress. Each class is balanced with respect to political parties and chambers.

Stennis Fellows meet periodically over a 15-month period with nationally and internationally renowned experts to pursue their agenda. While learning from these guest experts is a unique opportunity, a primary benefit of the program is the learning and relationship building that takes place among the Stennis Fellows themselves.

THE ISSUE:
STRENGTHENING TRUST AND
CONFIDENCE IN CONGRESS

The effectiveness of American democracy relies on trust and confidence in its institutions and processes. While skepticism and scrutiny have been integral to U.S. government since its founding, deeply held and widespread mistrust can weaken the effectiveness of Congress and other institutions of American democracy. Congressional job approval



ratings and measures of public trust in Congress have sunk to historic lows.

The 30 senior-level congressional staff leaders selected as 110th Congress Stennis Fellows came together in search of ways to strengthen trust and confidence in Congress, an institution to which most of the Stennis Fellows have devoted a large portion of their careers. They collectively formed a bipartisan and bicameral team of congressional experts who share a strong commitment to Congress as an institution and are intimately familiar with its current strengths and challenges.

The Stennis Fellows Program is built on the premise that those who serve Congress as staff leaders are uniquely capable of looking ahead to consider the future of the institution. Although the program includes sessions with guest experts who share insights with the Fellows, the most significant and meaningful learning comes from the rare opportunity these top staff leaders have to explore institutional concerns together across the usual boundaries of chamber and party.

THE PROCESS:
DEVELOPING AND PURSUING
A LEARNING AGENDA

The Fellowship began in June 2007 with the Stennis Fellows working together to identify questions

most crucial to improving trust and confidence in Congress. These questions were pursued through roundtable discussions:

- ① *How and why has trust and confidence in Congress changed over time?* This roundtable explored how trust in Congress has varied since the founding, including the close relationship between trust in Congress and broader factors such as the state of the economy and approval ratings of the President.
- ② *How does the media affect trust and confidence in Congress?* This roundtable focused on the fundamental changes taking place in the media, including the emergence of new media and the challenges or opportunities this creates for Congress.
- ③ *How do partisanship, bipartisanship and political campaigns affect trust and confidence in Congress?* In this roundtable Fellows examined the impact of the permanent campaign on governing and whether bipartisanship leads to better results and increased public trust.
- ④ *What are the public's expectations and understanding of Congress, and how does that affect trust and confidence?* This roundtable explored how the public forms its expectations of Congress and whether increased citizen engagement might strengthen public understanding and trust.

These questions comprised the learning agenda for the 110th Congress Stennis Fellows and were examined in roundtable discussions with guest experts. A complete list of the roundtable discussions and other sessions held as the Stennis Fellows pursued these questions is attached as Appendix 1.

THE RESULTS:
STEPS TO STRENGTHEN TRUST
AND CONFIDENCE IN CONGRESS

As the period of Fellowship came to a close, Stennis Fellows met for two days to synthesize what had been learned through roundtable discussions and to identify the most promising ideas to strengthen trust and confidence in Congress. Four broad strategic goals emerged:

- ① *Increase civic engagement*
- ② *Improve the legislative process*
- ③ *Strengthen comity within Congress*

Major obstacles to achieving each of these goals were identified as the Stennis Fellows developed more specific actions that could help move each goal forward:

→ *Create more opportunities for dialogue with the public*, through greater use of field hearings, electronic town hall meetings and other creative communication methods. The Fellows also noted that the new Capitol Visitors Center can be used to engage citizens visiting the Capitol, moving beyond a tourism experience. If, as some guest experts suggested during the program, there is more common ground among citizens than is apparent through the media, better civic engagement could help reduce gridlock in Congress.

A key to using dialogue effectively is to recognize how it is different from ordinary conversation. In a dialogue participants momentarily suspend status and decision-making, bring assumptions into the open in a non-judgmental way,



and listen to each other with greater empathy than in ordinary conversation. After working together to develop their dialogue skills, Stennis Fellows experimented with applying dialogue on the job and reported the results to other Fellows. Generally they found that dialogue helped in a wide variety of practical circumstances, especially when it could be applied before the debate or negotiation had been fully engaged. It is a powerful tool for building trust.

Focusing on the next generation should be a priority — helping young people learn about Congress through creative and interactive educational opportunities. This effort might include reaching out to become more involved with existing youth programs in Washington. Senior congressional staff leaders



need to take a more active role in making sure young people who come to Washington as part of intern or youth programs have an opportunity to learn how Congress really works. Steps also should be taken to improve congressional intern programs by identifying best practices and helping congressional offices develop more effective programs.

At a more basic level, it is important to do a better job of providing non-partisan information to the public and the media about how Congress works and about issues before Congress. For example, the Senate Budget Committee has run special programs for the press and interested congressional staff about how bills are scored and how the reconciliation process works. Other committee staffs can work with the media in a similar way, providing more answers to questions and briefings on how the process works. The Congressional Research Service and the Offices of the Senate and House Parliamentarians can also play a more active role in providing non-partisan briefings to the media and the public.

→ *Find ways to reduce the impact of the "permanent campaign" and increase the focus on governing.* It will be difficult to strengthen public trust and confidence in Congress unless the impact of the "permanent campaign" can be reduced. Guest experts repeatedly emphasized to the Fellows how public trust is eroded by the perception that Congress is a collection of self-interested individuals engaged in a perpetual campaign rather than a cohesive legislative body. Fellows also have experienced how the demands of campaigning can impact the time and attention available for legislating.

Fellows could only begin to examine ways to address this issue. Options they explored included steps to shorten the campaign season, and rule changes to focus the work of the institution more on the business of Congress and to reduce opportunities

for partisan posturing. Striking a better balance between the demands of governing and those of campaigning is critical to the future of the institution and needs to be examined in greater depth. This could be a focus for a future class of Stennis Fellows.

➔ *Build trust, comity and bipartisan working relations within Congress. An*

essential part of increasing the focus on governing and strengthening public trust in Congress will be to enhance trust, comity and bipartisan working relations within the institution. Real legislative accomplishments have already been achieved through bipartisan initiatives of the Alexander/Lieberman group of Senators and the bipartisan chiefs-of-staff group in the Senate. Progress

could be made through greater use of bipartisan delegation meetings (at the state or regional level) and more bipartisan work in committees.

To further strengthen trust and comity within the institution, bipartisan gatherings for Members and staff could be increased through regular meetings and programs. Bipartisan travel that is related to legislation and oversight could also be encouraged. And special efforts should be made to encourage the building of bipartisan relationships among incoming freshmen Members — for example, visiting each other's districts or states together and joint visits to schools and college campuses. When Members work together across party lines to achieve real results, public confidence increases. ■



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Fitzhugh Elder
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Christopher J. Yianilos
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John Warner

PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO STRENGTHENING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE

As the 110th Congress Stennis Fellows explored broad strategies to strengthen trust and confidence, they also reflected on the individual responsibility of leaders to perform duties in ways that advance that goal. As one Fellow reflected, the best way to strengthen trust and confidence in Congress *"is to model the institutional behavior I would like to see through my own actions: show respect and be positive about the institution."*

Many Stennis Fellows expressed a new and deeper understanding of the need to engage their fellow citizens about the role of Congress in American democracy. *"I can make a better effort*

to generate interest in public service when I speak with children and students...it is incumbent upon us all to be as open and honest as possible about

the workings of our government...and strive to be more responsive to public inquiries."

Some noted that efforts can be made to let the public know *"how many people on the Hill are working hard trying to do the right thing"* while refraining from the tendency to *"reflexively criticize the institution."*

Stennis Fellows also emphasized the impact they can have individually by building relationships across party lines. *"I can make a genuine effort to build both professional and social relationships with my colleagues in the other party,"* one said, and *"stop demonizing those on the other side of the aisle,"* added another.

Fellows also noted that they can spread the use of genuine dialogue in Congress as a means of achieving positive legislative results. *"Congress has one path to winning public*

trust and confidence - producing results on issues facing America. Spreading the use of dialogue can help overcome conflict and reach agreement."

"Congress has one path to winning public trust and confidence – producing results on issues facing America. Spreading the use of dialogue can help overcome conflict and reach an agreement."

STENNIS CONGRESSIONAL STAFF
FELLOWS' REFLECTIONS

WHAT HAS BEEN MOST SIGNIFICANT OR MEANINGFUL ABOUT THE STENNIS FELLOWSHIP EXPERIENCE?



Jane Alonso — *Legislative Director*
 Office of U.S. Senator Susan Collins

The Stennis Fellows Program presented me with a wonderful opportunity to get to know other Hill staffers from a wide variety of backgrounds. If it is true that the life of a Hill staffer can sometimes be insular, it certainly isn't true for a Stennis Fellow. Stennis forced us to think beyond the scope of our desks to tackle problems that transcend party, position, and chamber. It is this type of experience that forms the foundation for progress on any challenging issue that Congress needs to address. I firmly believe that the relationships that are formed as a result of this program will pave the way for breakthroughs in future public policy debates.



Michael Anderson — *Chief of Staff*
 Office of U.S. Representative Don Young

Without question, the tremendous value of the Fellowship is the importance of relationships in getting things done not just on the Hill, but also off the Hill. It IS the basis for the bipartisanship that can turn things around in our Congress and allow statesmanship to once again be nurtured in its halls. But more importantly, those relationships must not necessarily be formed based on just congressional topics or issues, but on a more personal basis of shared experiences, shared interests, and shared time. We saw this during the Stennis Fellowship... and if the staff can put political ideologies aside to dialogue and develop courses of action...our Members can do it too!



Elise Kenderian Aronson — *Chief of Staff*
 Office of U.S. Representative Jim Saxton

The most meaningful aspect of the Stennis Fellowship experience has been the chance to better understand the views of those from all parts of the political spectrum. In particular, I was struck by how similar our views were on many levels. I had expected that there would be little common ground among us and yet, after spending time together, putting labels aside, and engaging in a respectful, honest dialogue, it was clear that opportunities to agree were more common than not.

In addition, I truly enjoyed having the chance to get to know many in the program that, under normal circumstances, I don't think I would have been able to meet. It was refreshing to learn more about them as "regular" people with their own thoughts and opinions, instead of staffers whose jobs are to represent their boss' views.



Mary Jane Collipriest — *Chief of Staff*
 Office of U.S. Senator Robert Bennett

"I have a new word in my lexicon. Two words have become one when said in the context of this tremendous experience - stennisfellow as in 'I'm a stennisfellow,' or 'he's a stennisfellow.' I have grown professionally and personally from the opportunities provided by the Stennis program. These opportunities to associate with, learn from, and enjoy a talented, diverse group of colleagues have been invaluable and a source of great insight, increased awareness, and expanded perspective. I'm a grateful beneficiary of the Stennis program and proud to enjoy the moniker of 'stennisfellow.'"



Sean P. Conway — *Chief of Staff*
 Office of U.S. Senator Wayne Allard

The most significant experience of the Stennis Fellowship was the opportunity to meet and interact with fellow congressional staffers from across the aisle and to learn and see things from their perspective. I was also amazed at how much we have in common regardless of our philosophical leanings or which legislative body we represented. We found out from each other that we have the same concerns, same day-to-day problems and each is deeply committed to doing a good job for the American people.



Greg Dean — *General Counsel*

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

My boss, Senator Enzi, often discusses his 80/20 Rule - on any controversial issue everyone can agree on approximately 80 percent of the solution and we should focus on that 80 percent as the starting point for a solution and not on



Deborah Estes — *Senior Counsel*

U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

Getting to know incredibly dedicated and talented colleagues from across the aisle and the other side of the Capitol has been inspiring to me. It was a pleasure brainstorming ideas with all of them. In addition, I was extremely impressed by many of the experts the Stennis Center was able to bring in to talk to the Fellows about our learning agenda. The weekend at Princeton - with leading political scientists, historians, dialogue experts and politicians like Gov. Whitman - was especially useful and thought provoking.



Debra Gebhardt — *Chief of Staff*
 Office of U.S. Representative Tom Petri

The best part has been getting to know staff I wouldn't normally meet. We represent every part of the political spectrum, but have a common bond of shared staff experiences. The honesty of the discussions has been a bit surprising but welcome - and we laughed a lot! I now have many new contacts on both sides of the aisle and Congress, which I have taken advantage of already.



Joseph Goffman — *Legislative Director*
 Office of U.S. Senator Joseph Lieberman

As Hill staff, we are working in an extremely polarized political environment. Yet, during our months together as Stennis Fellows, I found that it was nearly impossible to tell which of us worked for Democrats and which for Republicans. Instead, what emerged is the reality that can lie behind both the visible conflicts and the repeated calls for bipartisanship. Specifically, we came together to focus on a challenging problem-solving task, and put our minds and hearts into the effort. That exemplifies what the legislative process represents: the coming together of people representing diverse backgrounds, experiences and points of view to learn together and to take on a joint problem-solving activity.

the 20 percent where we disagree. The Stennis Fellowship program has been invaluable in demonstrating to me that the 80 percent goal is achieved through trust and respect. From day one, Stennis Fellows quickly put away their jobs, titles, and party affiliations to work together as one to achieve a common goal. I came to realize that this was only possible because we trusted and respected each other. If Congress had Stennis Fellows working on every issue then the 80/20 Rule would be obsolete as the Fellows would achieve a 100 percent goal every time.



Kellie Donnelly — *Deputy Chief Counsel*
 U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

For me, the most meaningful aspect of the Stennis program has been the relationships I've formed with the other Fellows. The Stennis Fellowship has provided a bipartisan and bicameral forum in which staffers who never otherwise would meet are encouraged to learn from one another's experiences. By moving beyond party identity, I've found that we all share a lot of common ground - most notably a fierce loyalty and respect for this great institution. The Stennis program has strengthened my admiration for those Members and staff who dedicate themselves to public service and I look forward to future Stennis opportunities.



Fitzhugh Elder — *Minority Clerk*
 Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development,
 Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies
 U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

One would think that in a deliberative body, we would spend most of our time deliberating. The reality is that the competing demands on our time leaves little for deliberation. The Stennis program created a wonderful environment to thoughtfully discuss substantive issues facing Congress. I have greatly enjoyed getting to know staff from different parties, chambers, and backgrounds. My participation in the Stennis Fellows program has been one of the most satisfying professional experiences in my career.



Elizabeth MacDonough — *Senior Assistant Parliamentarian*
Office of the U.S. Senate Parliamentarian

The Stennis program was a remarkable experience. It brought together a group of people from varied personal and professional backgrounds with a wealth of experience working on Capitol Hill and provided them with an opportunity to explore and discuss several serious issues facing Congress. The environment created by the structure of the program as well as the work of its organizers and guest speakers helped to foster trust among the Fellows and allowed us to express ourselves openly in addressing the topics selected for discussion. We were able to appreciate the things we have in common, in our work and attitudes, and have thoughtful and meaningful dialogue about our differences. I truly value the relationships I have formed through this program, believe it has enriched my life and work experience on Capitol Hill and cannot recommend it highly enough to others.



Adam Magary — *Chief of Staff*
Office of U.S. Representative Don Manzullo

The Stennis Fellowship presents a unique opportunity for senior staff with diverse backgrounds and sometimes adversarial responsibilities to come together for a shared purpose and work together towards a singular goal. The experience illuminates the possibilities when assumptions are left at the door and a true understanding of differences is sought. Senior staff are provided a forum to establish important relationships with colleagues from the other body and the other party and equipped with tools that can be utilized to address legitimate differences of opinion or policy in a constructive rather than destructive way.



Susan McAvoy — *Chief of Staff*
Office of U.S. Representative Leonard Boswell

The Stennis Fellowship Program creates an environment for thoughtful discussion - allowing for disagreement among the participants, but with the understanding that consensus is the end goal. This art of compromise, which seems to be lacking in Congress, worked here. Working in Congress has been a tremendous privilege, and while this year's focus was examining how to strengthen public trust in Congress, the Stennis Program showed me that one can disagree, one can be partisan, but in the end, one can reach a goal for the good of the group. Congress, take note.



Michael McCord — *Professional Staff Member*
U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services

Being part of this group of dedicated, talented professionals has deepened my understanding of, and appreciation for, the full



range of experiences and responsibilities involved as Congress attempts to act in the public interest. I was struck by the delicate balance of hope, dedication, and devotion to problem-solving (all of which I expected) with pessimism and concern about how often the institution we've devoted so much of our careers to fails to meet our goals for bipartisanship (process) and accomplishment (results). I would strongly recommend the Stennis Fellows program to any veteran Hill staffer.



Terri McCullough — *Chief of Staff*
Office of U.S. Representative Nancy Pelosi

The Stennis Fellowship provided me with the gift of thoughtful, unhurried discourse with colleagues from throughout the spectrum of political views in order to achieve a common goal. It reinforced in me the belief that we can best strive for what we believe to be the common good by interacting directly and frequently with all different types of people, actively listening to their concerns, and always facing with the utmost seriousness the responsibility of legislating. It also renewed my pride in the work that we do every day to respect and uphold the Constitution and to assist constituents. I look forward to engaging in continued dialogue both with my colleagues and the people we work every day to represent as a means to strengthen confidence and trust in the Congress.



Kriston Alford McIntosh — *Deputy Director*
U.S. Senate Democratic Steering and Outreach Committee

The most meaningful aspect of my Stennis Fellowship experience has been the opportunity to build relationships with the other Stennis Fellows, especially those outside of my caucus and chamber. Having the opportunity to hear so many diverse perspectives and to tap into the wealth of institutional knowledge that exists within our group has been invaluable. The Stennis Fellowship experience serves as an excellent affirmation of the fact that in order to achieve our goal of strengthening public trust in the institution of Congress, we must have the active participation of and commitment from both parties and chambers.



Chad Metzler — *Legislative Director*
Office of U.S. Senator Herb Kohl

This experience of talking with like-minded individuals who care so much about the integrity of the institution was eye opening. I learned a lot about the obstacles we face when we try and govern, but also came away believing that the people I met were up to the task. It made me more optimistic and reenergized in my role as a staffer.



Michele Nellenbach — *Senior Professional Staff Member*
U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

I was surprised by the extent to which everyone regardless of party or chamber had a shared view of what the core problems are. Our day-to-day working environment is unfortunately partisan and it is all too easy to fault the other party. Through the Stennis Fellowship, we quickly came to understand that we all share very similar experiences and easily identify the same macro-picture problems with the tone and comity of the Congress. We got through the partisanship almost immediately and could then look objectively at the Congress as a whole.



Julie Little Nickson — *Chief of Staff*
Office of U.S. Representative Barbara Lee

After the first hour together I knew Stennis was special because I had not once thought about the party affiliation of any of my colleagues. Amazingly, that remained the case throughout our Fellowship. Instead of focusing on party, ideology, or policy divisions, we came together to focus on what united us: a love for the institution and a commitment to strengthening it. Simply put: it was an extraordinary and unique experience. One I did not think fully possible, but was delighted to learn otherwise.



Beverly Pheto — *Clerk*
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations

The most meaningful part of the Stennis Fellowship is the ability to share experiences and discuss strategies and challenges with others who work in similar jobs in the Congress. The Stennis



Fellowship also affords us the luxury of stepping-back from our day-to-day jobs and reflecting on broader issues that affect the institution.



Cheryl Janas Reidy — *Director for Revenues and Budget Review*
U.S. Senate Committee on the Budget

The Stennis Fellowship experience was, in a word, invigorating. The Fellowship fostered professional and personal growth through activities that were fairly hard work - but hard work that was collegial, stimulating, refreshing, fun and rewarding and that I looked forward to and wanted to continue even when it was time to be finished. I truly appreciate the chance to get to know other senior congressional staff members, the thoughtful interaction we experienced, and the friendships we've formed.



Mary Frances Repko — *Senior Policy Advisor*
Office of the U.S. House Majority Leader

For me, the most significant part of the Fellowship was learning that I was part of a continuum in my Hill vocation, that I'd come from a long line of hard working, serious professionals, who too had chosen to work in the Congress for similar reasons. In addition to having shared experiences with other staff, it was extremely valuable to learn that historically the institution itself has struggled with what it means to be accountable, to do a good job, and to be viewed by the public as doing so.



Karissa Willhite — *Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy*
Office of U.S. Senator Bob Menendez

Without a doubt, one of the most valuable aspects of the Stennis experience was the relationship-building opportunity it provided. But beyond that, it was a great learning experience that forced each of us to take a step back, look at things from a little different perspective, and make more of an effort to find common ground among people with very different views. As I reflected upon the experience, I realized that the very process we used to study the challenges facing Congress actually taught us many of the skills we need to address those challenges.



Christopher J. Yianilos — *Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director*
Office of U.S. Senator John Warner

The most significant experience I have had with the Stennis Fellowship is the opportunity to forge relationships with other Fellows. House or Senate, Democrat or Republican, all of us have gained trust, confidence and friendships through this program that will enable us to better serve our Members and the institution of Congress. ■

CONCLUSIONS

The strategic goals and action steps identified by the Stennis Fellows to strengthen trust and confidence in Congress are not meant to be comprehensive, but rather to be a contribution to moving Congress onto a more promising course. Each Stennis Fellow expressed a personal belief in the institution they serve despite their own disappointments and frustrations. As the Stennis Fellows shared experiences and concerns, the Fellows discovered a

common bond of commitment to the institution and a renewed pride in the opportunity they have to serve. The 110th Congress Stennis Fellows recognize that through their leadership collectively and individually they can make a difference in strengthening public trust and confidence in Congress.

All of the steps recommended by the Stennis Fellows reflect a fundamental conclusion: strengthening trust and confidence in Congress will depend on achieving real results and on improving dialogue both within the institution and with the public.

This conclusion also reflects the powerful experience of the Fellowship itself. The Fellows came from different parties and chambers and from different backgrounds and points of view. Few knew each other at the outset. But over the course of the Fellowship, using dialogue, they built trust and strong working relationships, and found a considerable amount of common ground on ways to better the institution. The Fellows see dialogue as a practical way to strengthen trust and confidence and hope to share their experience with others. ■

APPENDIX I

MEETINGS OF THE 110TH CONGRESS STENNIS STAFF FELLOWS

① The Fellows first met in June 2007 and worked together to define their Learning Agenda during July 2007.

② To set the stage for pursuing their Learning Agenda, the Fellows participated in an October workshop on "Dialogue Essentials" led by Steven Rosell and Frances Michener from Viewpoint Learning.

③ The Fellows then pursued their Learning Agenda in four roundtables with outstanding resource persons:

How and Why Has Public Trust and Confidence in Congress Changed Over Time? (December 3, 2007 – The Freedom Forum, Washington, DC)

- Dr. Joseph Cooper, Professor of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University

- Thomas E. Mann, W. Averell Harriman Chair and Senior Fellow

in Governance Studies at The Brookings Institution

- Norman J. Ornstein, Resident Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute

- Former Representative Constance Morella, until recently Ambassador to the OECD

How Does The Media Affect Public Trust and Confidence in Congress? (February 29, 2008 – The Freedom Forum, Washington, DC)

- Jan Schaffer, Executive Director, J-Lab: The Institute for Interactive Journalism

- David Rogers, Politico.com, former reporter for The Wall Street Journal

How Do Partisanship, Bipartisanship, and Campaign Tactics Affect Public Trust and Confidence in Congress? (April 4, 2008 – Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey)

- Christine Todd Whitman, former Governor of the State of New Jersey, and President, The Whitman Strategy Group

- Don Wolfensberger, Director, Congress Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars



- Larry Bartels, Director, Center for the Study of Democratic Politics, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University

What Are The Public's Expectations and Understanding of Congress, and How Does That Affect Trust and Confidence? (April 5, 2008 – Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey)

- John Hibbing, Professor, University of Nebraska

- Ruth Wooden, President, Public Agenda Foundation

④ The Fellows visited the USS JOHN C. STENNIS aircraft carrier at sea in May 2008.

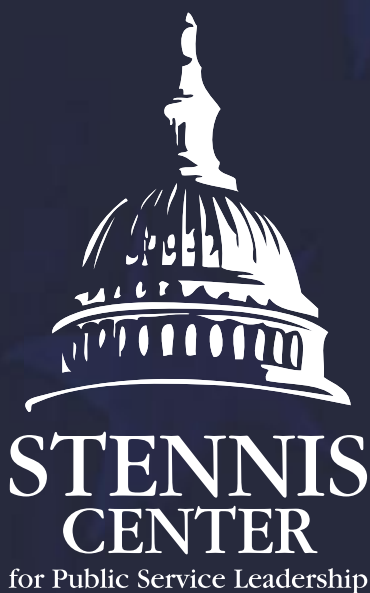
⑤ The Fellows worked together at a two-day retreat at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in May 2008 and at a subsequent half-day session in The Capitol in July 2008 to synthesize what they had learned and to produce this report. ■



STENNIS CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE LEADERSHIP

The Stennis Center for Public Service Leadership was created by Congress in 1988 to promote and strengthen public service leadership in America. The Stennis Center is headquartered in Starkville, Mississippi, with an office in Washington, D.C.

The Stennis Center's mandate is to provide development and training for leadership in public service, including Congressional staff, and to attract young people to careers in public service leadership. The Stennis Center accomplishes its mission through conferences, seminars, special projects and leadership development programs.



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