

## 2016-2017 American Legion Auxiliary Program Action Plan Legislative

### What is this program and why do we have it!

The Legislative Program provides information and assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion.

### What can you do?

#### 1. Encourage and empower members to be more knowledgeable to take action on The American Legion legislative priorities.

##### Ideas:

##### Member

Subscribe to the Legion's *Legislative Action Alerts* to receive notification when they Call on all Legion Family members to take immediate action on a topic. Visit [www.capwiz.com/legion/mlm/signup](http://www.capwiz.com/legion/mlm/signup) to subscribe. Report to your unit chairman when you have done so.

Subscribe to the Legion's *Legislative Update* to stay informed on veteran and military legislative issues. Report to your unit chairman when you have subscribed.

Order a copy of the *ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide* through your unit or your Department Headquarters and follow the suggestions it contains to help build legislative awareness in your community. The guide can also be downloaded from [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org).

Visit the Legion's legislative website, [www.legion.org/legislative](http://www.legion.org/legislative), to keep current on Legislative priorities. The site also contains the Legion's legislative priority sheets and point papers, available for download.

The priority/drop sheet outline the Legion's priorities and you can "drop" these in your elected official's office.

The point papers provide more information on the issue and the Legion's position.

Actively post the American Legion's legislative priorities on social media.

Identify your U.S. Representative and two U.S. Senators and build a relationship and rapport with these individuals and/or members of their staff.

Subscribe to e-newsletters of your elected officials to monitor what they consider to be their priorities and to make sure that veteran/military and national security issues are among them. Follow them on social media as well. (See each elected official's website for details on how to sign-up and social media links.)

Connect with other civic organizations to communicate the American Legion's legislative priorities for potential support and membership opportunities.

Attend local information town hall meetings to become better informed and to network with other community and civic organization.

Meet with state and national-level public officials to discuss issues facing veterans and their families. If possible, attend meetings with other Legion Family members and service members.

Remember, we're putting a face on legislative topics. We can share the human reality on how issues affect veterans, service members and their families.

Complete the Legion's ***Congressional Meeting Report Form*** following any meeting with your U.S. Representative, U.S. Senator and/or their legislative staff members. Visit [www.legion.org/legislative/aar](http://www.legion.org/legislative/aar) to complete the form.

Let your department Legislative chairman or department president know if you have a personal or professional relationship with a U.S. Representative and/or U.S. Senator that serves on the Veterans Affairs committees or a member of his/her legislative staff and that you'd be willing to participate in the ALA Veterans Affairs Legislative Mini-Council. Each of these members should be willing to contact the representative, senator or staff member when called to action by the Legion on an issue.

## **Unit**

Order and distribute the ***ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide*** from your Department Headquarters and distribute to members.

Hold a unit meeting to go over the steps outlined in the ***ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide*** and discuss the legislative process.

Invite a staff member of your U.S. Representative and/or Senator to a unit meeting so he/she can explain the best way to contact the official

Include legislative priorities in unit communications (social media, newsletters).

Work with your Legion counterpart to make arrangements for Legion Family members to meet with respective Congressional delegation while on recess and in home districts.

Choose a different legislative priority each month and allow time at each unit meeting for members to draft letters and communicate the importance of legislation related to veterans and their families. Watch for **Legislative Action Alerts** for any pressing priority.

Invite your department chairman to a unit meeting to explain how the department initiates legislative advocacy and how each unit can play a role.

Work with your Legion Family to host a "Meet the Candidate" night. Make veterans/military issues the primary topic for discussion. (See the How to Sheet for details).

## **Legislative Reporting**

### **Mid-Year Reports**

Mid-Year reports are due from the units to the District chairman by December 1, 2016.

Mid-Year reports are due from the District chairmen to the Department chairman by December 15, 2016.

### **Year-End Reports**

Year-End reports are due from the units to the District chairman by April 1, 2017.

Year-End reports are due from the District chairmen by April 15, 2017.

## **Legislative Awards**

Each award application must include a cover sheet found in this program Plan. All awards will be announced at National Convention during the Legislative pre-convention meetings.

**Unit Award:** Unit Legislative Award

**Type of Award:** Citation

**Presented to:** One unit in each division (5 overall awards)

Please refer to the national website for award details. [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org)

Units should submit their entry to the department chairman by May 1, 2017.

Attach an Award cover sheet, including the name of the award, as well as the name of the contact information for the department and unit Legislative chairman.

## **How To Sheets**

- How To Host A "Meet the Candidate" Night is attached.

## **Additional Resources:**

1. [www.ALAforVeterans.org](http://www.ALAforVeterans.org) on the Legislative page:
  - ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide

- How to Fill Out the Congressional Contact Form
  - How to Contact Legislators to Advocate for Veterans, Service members and their families
2. [www.legion.org/legislative](http://www.legion.org/legislative) (The American Legion's Legislative Center):
- Legislative Testimony Information
  - Point Papers, Priority Sheets, Letters of Support
  - Congressional Contact Report Form

Follow us on Facebook:

- ALA National Headquarters: [www.facebook.com/ALAforVeterans](http://www.facebook.com/ALAforVeterans)
- ALA Legislative Facebook group:
- [www.facebook.com/groups/2013alalegislativecommittee](http://www.facebook.com/groups/2013alalegislativecommittee) or search for "ALA National Legislative Group Page"

For God and County,  
Robin J. Burk  
Legislative Chairman  
610 SW College Park Rd  
Port St. Lucie, FL 34953  
[legislative@alafll.org](mailto:legislative@alafll.org)  
561.371-7240

Committee Members:  
Edie Porter, Unit #40, Ft. Pierce  
772-532-5679

## LEGISLATORS

All contact information is listed on the website:

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/sections/representatives/representatives.aspx>

Search for representatives in your District and local area.

The Capitol (Tallahassee) 850-488-7146  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Governor Rick Scott, [rick.scott@myflorida.com](mailto:rick.scott@myflorida.com)

Contact the White House

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>

President Obama is committed to creating the most open and accessible administration in American history. To send questions, comments, concerns, or well-wishes to the President or his staff, please use the email contact form.

You can also call or write to the President:

The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500  
Please include your e-mail address

Phone numbers

Comments: 202-456-1111  
Switchboard: 202-456-1414  
Fax: 202-456-2461

Thousands of letters to the President arrive at the White House everyday and the President does receive samples of his incoming correspondence.

Original and insightful messages are forwarded to experts and advisors who influence the President and his policies.

Take a few minutes to share your ideas with the White House. The result will be a better-informed, more representative leadership and a better-served population.

To increase the chance that your letter will be read, you should:

Write the letter in your own words

Offer original insight

Get to the point quickly

Be concise

Include an attention-grabbing example (remember: you are competing for the attention of the busiest person in the world)

Mention any credentials you have that might lend weight to your arguments  
Make it personal, describing why the issue matters to you and how it affects you  
Ask for a reply, making sure to include your name and address  
Be polite and take a firm position  
Be confident in your understanding of the issue and remember that the President (or his staff) may know less than you do about the topic.  
Let the President know that you are a member of the American Legion Auxiliary.  
If you're sending an e-mail, put your letter in the body of the e-mail and use spell-check  
You can also e-mail the Vice President or First Lady to share your thoughts.

**Florida US Senators and Members, House of Representatives, Washington, DC**  
**(202) 224-3121**

<https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>

Nelson, Bill (D) 202-224-5274

<http://billnelson.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm>

Rubio, Marco (R) 202-224-3041

<http://rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact>

Directory of Representatives

Also referred to as a congressman or congresswoman, each representative is elected to a two-year term serving the people of a specific congressional district. The number voting representative in the House is fixed by law at no more than 435, proportionally representing the population of the 50s state. Currently, there are five delegates representing the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. A resident commissioner represents Puerto Rico.

Learn more about representative at The House Explained.

***This November, we will be electing a new President, Senator and numerous representatives. Please update your contact information after the election so that your information is current as of January 1, 2017.***

Refer to the Department website for a chart of helpful legislative websites.

**UNIT LEGISLATIVE MID-YEAR REPORT 2016-2017**

**Due Date to District Chairman: December 1, 2016**

Unit Name and Number: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Legislative Chairman's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many times did Unit members contact (phone calls, emails, letters, faxes, visits, etc.) their national elected officials about Legislative priorities of the American Legion? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Please provide details and specific topics/priorities on a separate sheet.
2. What legislative activities (town hall meetings, legislative receptions) did Unit members attend in their communities and department? Please describe on a separate sheet.
3. How did Unit members develop relationships with their elected officials? Please Describe on a separate sheet.
4. How did Unit members communicate the legislative priorities of The American Legion in their communities? Please describe on a separate sheet.
5. Did your Unit discuss the Legislative program at meetings and how they can contact their representatives? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many Unit members subscribed to receive alerts from capwiz.com/legion about the American Legion's recommendations about upcoming legislative action? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Did your Unit host a "Meet the Candidate" Night? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Report any additional legislative activities completed during 2016-2017 on a separate sheet.

SEND REPORT TO THE DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN BY DEC. 1, 2017.

Robin J. Burk  
561-371-7240  
legislative@alafll.org

**UNIT LEGISLATIVE YEAR-END REPORT 2016-2017**

**Due Date to District Chairman: April 1, 2017**

Unit Name and Number: \_\_\_\_\_ District #: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit Legislative Chairman's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many times did Unit members contact (phone calls, emails, letters, faxes, visits, etc.) their national elected officials about Legislative priorities of the American Legion? \_\_\_\_\_.  
Please provide details and specific topics/priorities on a separate sheet.
2. What legislative activities (town hall meetings, legislative receptions) did Unit members attend in their communities and department? Please describe on a separate sheet.
3. How did Unit members develop relationships with their elected officials? Please Describe on a separate sheet.
4. How did Unit members communicate the legislative priorities of The American Legion in their communities? Please describe on a separate sheet.
5. Did your Unit discuss the Legislative program at meetings and how they can contact their representatives? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many Unit members subscribed to receive alerts from capwiz.com/legion about the American Legion's recommendations about upcoming legislative action? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7/ Did your Unit host a "Meet the Candidate" Night? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
8. Report any additional legislative activities completed during 2016-2017 on a separate sheet.

**SEND REPORT TO THE DISTRICT LEGISLATIVE CHAIRMAN BY APR. 1, 2017.**

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561-371-7240  
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