

# Legislative Program Action Plan

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## 2021-2022 American Legion Auxiliary Legislative

**LEGISLATION BY DEFINITION** – The Legislative program provides information and assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members to advocate for the legislative agenda of The American Legion Auxiliary.

Remember: Our advocacy began at the local level in our communities, and we must remain diligent locally as well.

One of the most beneficial tools the American Legion Auxiliary has is the ALA Advocacy Guide. It can be downloaded from the [Legislative Program page](#). This will provide you and your unit members an opportunity to learn how to contact your legislators at every level, from the local level, to the state level, to the national level.

### DEPARTMENT LEVEL OBJECTIVES

Objective: Educate Unit membership by explaining the Department's Legislative program

- ❖ Visit [www.legion.org/legislative](http://www.legion.org/legislative) to keep current on legislative priorities. Download the Legion's legislative priority sheets and point papers.
- ❖ Encourage Unit General Mtgs. to address legislative issues as they become known thru the ALA, The TAL and local venues.
- ❖ The priority/drop sheets outline the Legion's priorities and you can "drop" these in your elected official's office.
- ❖ The point papers provide more information on the issues and the Legion's position on them.
- ❖ Encourage members to use [congress.gov](http://congress.gov) to follow the status of any legislation, including who has signed on as a co-sponsor.
- ❖ Counsel Units to keep a running journal of dates and actions taken as the Unit and as an individual, recording volunteer hours as appropriate.

Objective: Be the Unit to host a "Town Meeting with all the Candidates" learning and listening to all candidates.

- ❖ Encourage collaboration between multiple Units, Posts and community in sponsoring a community event.
- ❖ Connect with other civic and community organizations to rally support for the American Legion's legislative priorities and potential American Legion Family membership opportunities. If setting a Meeting with Candidates up for election please make sure to include all

Objective: Encourage members/units to subscribe to the Legion **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/sighup](http://www.capwiz.com/legion/mlm/sighup) to subscribe. Report this to your unit secretary when you do this.

Objective: Order a unit copy of the **ALA Legislative Advocacy Guide** and follow suggestions it contains to help build legislative awareness in your community. This can be downloaded from [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org).

Objective: Use electronic media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram to encourage contact with legislators and government officials when asked. Learn the proper protocol to address them.

Identify your U.S. representative and U.S. senators, and build a relationship with them and their staff locally and in Washington, D.C.

Identify your local and state representatives who are involved with veterans and service members topics in your community and state.

- ❖ Encourage members to add and follow the ALA Facebook page, “ALA National Legislative Group”.
- ❖ Subscribe to e-newsletters of your elected officials to monitor what they consider to be vital to our veterans, military families and national security issues.
- ❖ Follow each elected officials’ website and follow them on social media. Use social media to keep up with your representatives and senators. Most have social media profiles; make sure to follow them there.
- ❖ If you do not have access to the Internet, call the legislators’ district office, and ask to be put on their mailing list.
- ❖ Send a letter of introduction to local, state, and national level officials introducing yourself as an American Legion Auxiliary representative. (template included)
- ❖ Invite a local or state official’s staff member (both parties) to your unit meeting to explain the best way to contact the official.
- ❖ Include legislative issues in unit communications, (newsletters, bulletin boards, and social media.)
- ❖ Invite your Department Chairman to a Unit meeting to explain how the department initiates legislative advocacy and how each unit can play a role.
- ❖ Identify and contact your U.S. Representative and two U.S. Senators to build a relationship with these individuals and their staff members.
- ❖ Complete the Legion’s *Congressional Meeting Report Form* following any meeting with your U.S. Representative, U.S. Senator and/or their legislative members. Visit [www.legion.org/legislative/aar](http://www.legion.org/legislative/aar) to complete the form and give a copy to your Unit Chairman.
- ❖ Attend local town hall meetings to become better informed and to network within your community.
- ❖ Set up meetings to meet with state and national-level public officials to discuss issues facing veterans and their families. Remember, there is strength in numbers, attend as a Legion Family. Please note that all Florida Delegation has a home office in their local area. When meeting with them let them know that you are their constituent.
- ❖ Please contact your Department Chairman or Department President if you have a personal or professional relationship with a U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator that serves on the Veterans Affairs committee and you’d be willing to participate in the ALA Veterans Affairs Legislative

Mini-Council. Each of these members should be willing to contact the officials when called to take action by the Legion on an issue.

### **Legislative Reporting**

- **Mid-Year reports** NO REPORT

- **Year End reports** reflect the program work of units in the department and may result in a national award for participants if award requirements are met. Each Unit is required to submit a narrative report by April 15, 2022, to the Department Legislative Chairman.

Include pictures taken at any legislative activities with city, state or national representatives.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

1. How did you educate members in the legislative issues promoted by The American Legion and how did your members employ those methods?
2. What legislative activities (town hall meetings, legislative receptions) did members attend in their communities and departments? What suggestions did members have to improve those activities? Please describe.
3. How did members develop relationships with their elected officials? Please describe.
4. Please describe how members were able to connect with their local and state officials and what were their successes.
5. How did you promote your members to sign up to receive Action Alerts by using Capwiz?

### **DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN LEGISLATIVE AWARDS BY APRIL 15, 2022**

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

- Hanging Ten Award – award for outstanding legislative program in the division
- Make A Splash Action in Advocacy – award for unit by membership grouping with most points earned

Taking time to share your story about the positive impact your Unit had on our mission is worth doing.

It helps us tell the world who we are, what we do and why we matter.

Materials and Guidelines:

- Entries must include the [award cover sheet](#).
- For the most outstanding overall legislative program in the division
- Unit with most points earned.
- Each entry must be typewritten in narrative form
- Include pictures and newspaper articles.
- Units should submit their entry to the Department Legislative Chairman by May 2, 2021.

Legislative Chair with the most points received will win the Hanging Ten Award. You will not be eligible without your year-end written narrative.

**100 Points awarded for each of the items below that you have completed:**

- Holding a meet and greet (copy of flyer, invitation, and a photo must be attached.)
- Hold a mock debate (can be as simple as which is a better color pink or yellow)
- Volunteering at the polls, (elections in November)
- Speaking at a county meeting
- Speaking at a city meeting

**50 points awarded for each of the items below that you have completed:**

- Advocate by getting your members involved in a Honor Flight event.
- Call to action (copy of the email reply from the Elected Official)
- Send name, email & phone number of unit Legislative chairman to the Department Chairman
- Attendance of county meetings
- Attendance of city meetings
- An innovated idea of your own to promote a Bill of the 115th Congressional meetings
- Submitting ideas to Department Chair for the Department Newsletter
- Involve your Unit or District Public Relation Chair at any of the above events (articles, photos, press release, etc.)
- Promote CAPWIZ. <http://capwiz.com/legion/issues/alert/?alertid=73873626> Ex. Newsletter, social media, ect.
- Give Legislative reports at your unit meetings.

Mail to: Terry Gallagher  
1301 W bell St  
Avon Park, FL 33825  
Email to: [legislative@alaf1.org](mailto:legislative@alaf1.org)  
Questions: 863-448-2726

## **NATIONAL**

### **Unit Award: Unit Legislative Award**

Type of Award: Citation

Presented to: One Unit in each Division (5 overall awards)

#### **Materials and Guidelines:**

- Entries must include the award cover sheet located in this program plan.
- For the most outstanding overall legislative program in the division.
- Each entry must be typewritten in narrative form and must tell the story of legislative activism and how it made a difference in the lives of veterans and their families.
- Include pictures and news articles.
- **Units must submit their entry to the Department Chairman by May 16, 2022** • Attach a cover sheet, including the name of award and name and contact information for the

Department and Unit Legislative Chairman.

#### **Additional Resources You Can Use**

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

3. Follow us on Facebook:

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

ALA, Let's Advocate!

[Sign Up for The American Legion's Legislative Action Alerts](#)

As part of our keeping the promise to support our mission, are you doing everything you can to advocate The American Legion's legislative priorities to Congress?

Members just like **you** have been active in the legislative agenda of The American Legion since the beginning. And our efforts **have** made an impact! Did you know that the authors of the original G.I. Bill credit the American Legion Auxiliary with getting the majority of the petition signatures of support?

Sign up to receive The American Legion's Action Alerts, and you will receive an email when a vote is nearing Congress and the Legion Family needs you! The Legion will provide a pre-written message for you to send to your members of Congress with a few clicks.

It's easy — Click the button below and enter your contact information to [sign up](#). You'll be on your way to advocating that veterans, service members and their families receive the care and services they've earned and need.

**Be the voice that takes Action - at the local level you can make a difference on legislation on behalf of our veterans, service members, and their families!**

From Past National President O.D. Oliphant getting members mobilized to override the veto of President Coolidge on the Adjusted Compensation Act in 1924, which provided benefits to our World War I veterans, and members getting petitions signed to pass the G.I. Bill in 1944, we've made a difference. So, yes, advocacy by members on the local level can and does make a difference! Let's continue to be steadfast in this tradition as we head into our next 100 years!

Remember: Keeping the Promise begins with each one of us, and we can only keep the promise if we become involved. Add your voice to the tens, hundreds, thousands, and millions of other voices advocating for our veterans, service members, and their families. There is strength in numbers. YOUR voice does matter. YOUR voice, MY voice, OUR voices – together we can make a difference! Your voice, combined with the thousands of other supporters of this issue, will help shape the outcome and our future!

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