



# **Legislative Grassroots Network Handbook**

*2010 – 2011*

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## **I. Organization of the ASDA Legislative Grassroots Network**

### **What is the ASDA Legislative Grassroots Network?**

The ASDA Legislative Grassroots Network (LGN) consists of representatives from each dental school dedicated to increasing dental student understanding and involvement in the legislative process, both locally and nationally. It works to inform members of Congress and state legislators about how proposed legislation will affect dental students, dentists, patients and the practice of dentistry. The LGN provides students with the information they need to form opinions on matters concerning dentistry and other health issues. Better understanding of the legislative process prepares students for more active involvement in organized dentistry.

Any student who wants information on dental involvement in legislative issues, or wants to play a role in shaping the legislative decisions that will determine the future of dentistry, is encouraged to join the ASDA Legislative Grassroots Network.

### **How is the Legislative Grassroots Network Organized?**

The Legislative Grassroots Network consists of the following individuals:

- Chair of the LGN
- Vice Chair of the LGN
- Regional Legislative Coordinators (Eastern, Central and Western)
- Board of Trustees member
- Member-at-Large
- ASDA Central Office staff member as Staff Liaison to LGN
- Legislative Externs
- Legislative Liaisons – at local chapters

Leaders involved in the ASDA Legislative Grassroots Network work together to educate ASDA members, the Board of Trustees, the House of Delegates, other dental organizations and government officials about legislative issues important to dental students.

### **Who is monitoring legislative issues affecting dentistry and dental students?**

The American Dental Association (ADA) Division of Government Affairs and the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) are located in Washington, DC. Both monitor national legislation of concern to dentists, dental students and patients, review various pieces of legislation, and determine what impact each will have on the dental profession. The ADA Department of State Government Affairs is located in Chicago and performs a similar function with regard to state legislative issues. These offices serve as resources for information on current or possible legislative issues of interest to the dental profession. Each state and local dental society or association has personnel dedicated to working with local and state government officials on legislative issues. These individuals can be a great resource to legislative liaisons.

The Chair of the LGN is responsible for the activities of the Legislative Grassroots Network. The chair serves as a member of the ADA Council on Government Affairs (CGA) and is responsible for keeping current on national student issues.

The Vice Chair of the LGN serves as ASDA's representative to the American Dental Political Action Committee (ADPAC). He/she represents dental students and ASDA's voice on ADPAC's Board of Directors.

The Regional Legislative Coordinators (RLCs) play a key role in training, motivating and following up with the Legislative Liaisons in their respective regions (Eastern, Central, Western). The RLCs may assist the chapters in planning legislative activities as requested.

Legislative Liaisons (LLs) play the most important role, as they are responsible for the level of legislative action and awareness at their respective schools. They work with their local and state dental societies or associations and other members of the network to keep abreast of important issues and report back to the Regional Legislative Coordinators.

### **What is the Legislative Grassroots Network's Role in Organized Dentistry?**

The Legislative Grassroots Network can help teach students effective and proper procedures for communicating with members of Congress and organize successful email campaigns, as well as motivate fellow dental students to get involved in advocacy on local, state, and national levels. The collective voice of

many students stands to have a much greater impact on legislative decisions than a singular student's voice. Through this network, dental students can influence and shape legislation important to the future of dentistry.

Increased legislative awareness will help fellow students realize the importance of becoming involved. Dental students who become involved in legislative activities while in school will be prepared for a lifelong commitment to enhancing the profession through legislation.

### **Important Contact Information**

#### **ASDA Central Office**

211 East Chicago Avenue

Suite 700

Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: 800-621-8099, ext. 2795 or 312-440-2795

Website: [www.ASDAnet.org](http://www.ASDAnet.org)

Meghan Keelean, Meeting Planner, Staff Liaison to LGN

Email: [Meghan@asdanet.org](mailto:Meghan@asdanet.org)

Phone: 312-440-2845

#### **American Dental Association**

##### **Washington Office**

##### **ADPAC**

1111 14<sup>th</sup> Street, NW

Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202-898-2424

Website: [www.ADA.org/advocacy](http://www.ADA.org/advocacy)

#### **American Dental Association**

##### **Department of State Government Affairs**

211 East Chicago Avenue

5<sup>th</sup> Floor

Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: 800-621-8099 ext. 2525

Website: [www.ADA.org](http://www.ADA.org)

Email: [govtpol@ada.org](mailto:govtpol@ada.org)

#### **American Dental Education Association**

1400 K Street, NW

Suite 1100

Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202-289-7201

Website: [www.ADEA.org](http://www.ADEA.org)

Center for Public Policy and Advocacy

Website: [www.adea.org/policy\\_advocacy](http://www.adea.org/policy_advocacy)

## **II. Positions and Responsibilities**

### **Overview**

The Chair, Vice Chair, and RLCs of the LGN are appointed by the ASDA Board of Trustees to serve one-year terms. Full position descriptions are available on [www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org). These national LGN representatives meet several times per year to plan National Dental Student Lobby Day, complete assignments from the Board of Trustees and House of Delegates resolutions, and address priorities of the association's strategic plan. They also work together to develop new initiatives and resources for chapters related to advocacy and legislative activities.

### **Chair of the LGN**

The Chair of the LGN serves the association by monitoring and reporting on current national legislation of importance to dental students and the profession. The chair is responsible for directing the activities of the ASDA Legislative Grassroots Network and for collaborating on the initiation of legislative activities. The chair serves as a representative for ASDA on the ADA Council on Government Affairs. As such, the chair represents the views of the association and dental students at the council's meetings.

The chair submits written reports to the Board of Trustees concerning current activities, suggestions and reports of formal participation in any ADA or other agency meeting. The chair makes recommendations for new policies or changing policies, as well as for new initiatives in which the LGN and ASDA should become involved. The 2010-11 Chair of the LGN is Brittany Bensch. She may be contact via email at [bensch@uw.edu](mailto:bensch@uw.edu).

### **Vice Chair of the LGN**

The Vice Chair of the LGN serves as a member of the American Dental Political Action Committee (ADPAC) Board of Directors. The Vice Chair represents ASDA at ADPAC Board meetings to report on the legislative interests of dental students and to collect information about legislative initiatives being undertaken by ADPAC. The Vice Chair is the contact person for chapters looking to hold an ADPAC drive at their school.

The Vice Chair is in charge of conducting ADPAC membership drives at national ASDA meetings, and assisting RLCs with ADPAC drives at ASDA Regional Meetings as necessary. Additional responsibilities may be assigned by ADPAC.

See Section 3 for information on holding an ADPAC drive and Section 5 for more information about political action committees and ADPAC.

### **Regional Legislative Coordinator**

There are three Regional Legislative Coordinators (RLCs) who work under the direction of the Chair of the LGN. The RLCs are appointed to serve ASDA districts 1-3 (Eastern), 4-7 (Central), and 8-11(Western). Check the National Leadership Directory at [www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org) for current contact information.

Regional Legislative Coordinators serve as reference personnel for Legislative Liaisons (LLs) by providing information about current activities. The RLC also aids the LLs in contacting legislators and sees that legislative activities are carried out effectively.

The RLCs are a resource of knowledge for LLs to contact regarding how to plan and execute legislative activities, and to connect LLs with each other for collaborative efforts. The RLCs need to be up to date on legislative activities at their chapters, and pertinent legislation in the states of their region.

The RLCs track chapter legislative activities reported by the LLs in quarterly updates.

The RLCs are in charge of conducting ADPAC membership drives at their respective regional meetings.

### **Legislative Liaisons**

Legislative Liaisons (LLs) serve as the Legislative Grassroots Network representative for each local ASDA chapter. The chapter should appoint a qualified student member interested in advocacy and the legislative process, as well as in motivating other members to get involved, to serve as the legislative liaison. In circumstances when there is no LL appointed, the second delegate should assume the responsibilities of the LL. Legislative Liaisons work under the direction of their assigned Regional Legislative Coordinator. Legislative liaisons are responsible for all ASDA-sponsored legislative activities at their dental school. They serve to help students express their political concerns by suggesting guidelines for writing to members of Congress, securing legislators to speak at chapter events, and initiating other activities to involve students in the legislative process.

Legislative Liaison Responsibilities include:

1. Attend the ASDA Annual Session.
2. Attend National Dental Student Lobby Day.
3. Attend ASDA Regional Meeting. This is a great opportunity to meet with other LLs, communicate with your RLC and other LGN members.
4. Organize legislative events and activities at your dental school. See Section 3 of this handbook for ideas and instructions.
5. Legislative Liaisons are required to submit quarterly Legislative Grassroots Network Activity reports to their Regional Legislative Coordinator. See Section 4 for information to include in report. Regular communication via email or telephone with the RLC is required. Strong relationships between LLs and RLCs will make the network more effective in its legislative activities and will help members relay a consistent message to legislators.
6. Contribute to chapter awareness about legislative activities at the local, state and national level.
7. Access ADA legislative newsletters online at [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org) on a regular basis. Click on the Advocacy tab for legislative alerts. Personal education on current legislative issues is essential. Watch your email inbox for these updates and distribute to your chapter through newsletters, websites, email, etc.:
  - ADA State Legislative Report
  - ADA Advocacy
  - ADEA Washington Update
  - You can sign up to receive the ADA's Government and Public Affairs Update via email and other action alerts at [www.ada.org/advocacy.aspx](http://www.ada.org/advocacy.aspx)
8. Develop a relationship with the legislative department and staff of the state and/or local dental society, as it may help you develop relationships with legislators.
9. Subscribe to local and state dental society or association newsletters and legislative bulletins. This information is essential to build political awareness.
10. Attend at least one local and/or state dental society meeting (preferably a legislative meeting) each semester.
11. Conduct email-writing campaigns under the supervision of the Regional Legislative Coordinator and Chair of the LGN.

12. Use your resources, school government, ASDA leadership, and other methods to find better ways to educate, inform and motivate classmates about advocacy.
13. Advise your RLC and members of the LGN when there is legislation in your community or state affecting the dental profession, especially if it requires action from dental students and/or ASDA.
14. Train the incoming LL when your term has expired. Notify your RLC of the leadership change. This is extremely important for keeping continuity in the network.

The strength and continuity of the LGN depends entirely on the commitment of the Legislative Liaisons at each school. Legislative Liaisons are the primary providers of information to the student body and must be effective in motivating students to participate in legislative activities.

### **III. Ideas for Political Activities at Local Chapters**

#### **ADPAC Lunch and Learn**

1. Contact the ADPAC office in Washington, D.C. at 202-898-2424 for information on scheduling your ADPAC Lunch and Learn. The Vice Chair of the LGN can also assist you.
2. Set a date for the event and pick a location. During the week lunch hour, a centrally located space on campus is the best option to get the most participants.
3. Invite a speaker to talk about ADPAC, what they do, and why it is important to be a member. Suggestions for speakers include an ADPAC Board member, an ADA Action Team Leader, a representative from the local or state dental association, or another dental policy leader that could motivate students to get involved.
4. There is an ADPAC presentation that the speaker can use as a template at [www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org). Under the Issues tab, scroll over Advocating the Issues and click on ADPAC. This takes you to the ADPAC resources page, and at the bottom is a PowerPoint template.
5. With prior approval, ADPAC will reimburse up to **\$250 for food at the lunch and learn** per school per year. Keep the receipts and contact the ADPAC office for instructions for reimbursement.
6. Publicize the event to your chapter and your school.
7. You may want to hold an ADPAC drive in conjunction with the lunch and learn.

#### **ADPAC Drive**

1. You will be soliciting members for ADPAC donations. This can happen as a one-day event, or as part of a legislative/advocacy week at your school. It is helpful to introduce members to ADPAC before asking for their money. Schedule the date and time to have the presentation. This could take some time, so please plan ahead. Here are some suggestions:
  - a. Give the ADPAC PowerPoint presentation available on ASDA's website. You can modify as needed and tailor to your chapter members.
  - b. Invite the ADPAC District Trustee to speak about legislative issues (contact the Vice Chair for ADPAC contact information, or if you know your ADPAC trustee, go to [www.ada.org/advocacy](http://www.ada.org/advocacy), click on ADPAC in the left menu, and then click on Board of Directors for contact information).
  - c. Invite someone from your state dental society or state dental PAC such as the president, executive director, or legislative staff, to address specific issues in your state.

2. If you don't have your ADPAC kit with drive materials (pins, sign-up forms, and brochures), or don't have enough, contact the ADPAC Washington DC office to request them at least 3 weeks prior to your ADPAC drive so the materials arrive in time.
3. You will need to arrange for a room, laptop, projector and screen for the presentation.
4. This is an ADPAC drive in which you will solicit membership. Student ADPAC membership is ONLY \$5.00 and Capital Club is \$50.00. ADPAC accepts checks (made out to ADPAC), credit cards (Visa and MasterCard only), and cash.
  - a. Automatic enrollment or enrolling students without their consent is illegal (i.e. the class cannot sponsor ADPAC memberships).
  - b. Every student must complete the sign-up form in its entirety.
  - c. Company or business funds are not accepted. Only personal funds are accepted. A student cannot pay for membership on a corporate credit card or with a corporate check.
5. After the drive is complete, send a summary of the number of members who joined at the standard level and Capital Club, the percentage of ASDA members that comprises, and date of ADPAC drive to RLC.
6. Contact the current Vice Chair of the LGN or your Regional Legislative Coordinator if you require assistance.
7. Due to campaign finance regulations, money collected for ADPAC membership drives must be submitted to the ADPAC office within 30 days of collection. Send the sign-up sheets (keep a copy for yourself) and a check (personal or local ASDA chapter) with money corresponding to the number of memberships to:

ADPAC, c/o Cynthia Taylor  
1111 14<sup>th</sup> St, NW  
Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20005

Remember: Your ADPAC drive doesn't end after the presentation. Pass around sign-up sheets in each dental class. Set up a table outside your locker room or in another visible area in your dental school and sign up students over the lunch hour. Help ASDA spread the word about advocacy and meet its goal of 25% of ASDA members as ADPAC student members each year!

## Meet and Greet

A Meet and Greet is an informal event in which your ASDA chapter and local dental community get a chance to interact with lawmakers. Generally, these events last an hour and light refreshments are served.

1. Contact your Regional Legislative Coordinator, your ADPAC Action Team Leader (ATL), and your state and local dental societies. Inform them that you want to organize a Meet and Greet and want their help and participation. To find your ADPAC Action Team Leader, contact Brian Sodergren at the ADA Washington office at [sodergrenb@ada.org](mailto:sodergrenb@ada.org).
  - a. The Action Team Leader is an ADA Member who has a relationship with your representative in Congress.
  - b. State dental societies often have members with excellent relationships with state legislators, some of whom may be patients of state society members.
2. Contact the legislator's office for their availability.
  - a. If you are interested in a member of Congress, the Action Team Leader should be the first person to contact the office of the legislator. At the federal level, when Congress is in session, legislators spend most of their time in Washington, DC. Allow at least two months for scheduling to ensure the member is in his/her home district the date you would like to host the meet and greet.
  - b. State legislators spend the bulk of their time in their home district and are much more available. Even so, their schedules may be tight, so still allow ample time before your expected date.
3. Schedule the date and time. Again, this is a process that may take months, so please plan ahead!
4. Find a location for the Meet and Greet:
  - a. On-Campus—Many school administrators will not approve of a lawmaker being brought on campus, so check with your Dean before planning anything on-campus.
  - b. Off-Campus—An ASDA member's house or a local restaurant/bar are often good locations.
5. Invite everyone—all ADA members and dental students from the district should be invited. If needed, your RLC may be able to assist with getting contact lists.
6. A Meet and Greet is an excellent opportunity to do an ADPAC drive.

## **State Dental Societies**

Developing a relationship with your state dental society can be beneficial on many fronts. First, having a strong working relationship with your state dental association or even the local chapter allows you to team up for various activities such as state lobby day, legislative nights and political meet and greets. Second, dental societies will typically be very open to involving students since dental students are the future of the profession and member dentists are delighted when they see students with genuine interest in the political arena. Third, it is always better to have support from other dental organizations when planning and executing ASDA political events. So, whether it's joining forces for a state lobby day or giving dental students the opportunity to join a legislative council, this interaction with dentists doing politics in the real world is not only eye-opening but exciting.

## **Organize a State Lobby Day**

1. Call the state dental association to inquire if they have an organized state lobby day.
2. If they do, ask if they allow students to participate. If not, start your own state lobby day with your chapter. If you are in a state with multiple dental schools, contact the other chapter(s) to collaborate.
3. Research when your state legislature is in session so you can find an ideal time to lobby. Confirm dates with a student from each class to ensure there are no exams during the day you are considering. Planning an event can take months, so allow plenty of time to publicize and market the event, as well as get students signed up and ensure the school and/or state dental association's support.
4. Talk to your school administration. Ask your dean for his or her support. Often there are educational or financial issues facing the school that would be perfect lobby day issues.
5. Once you have chosen a date, call your state government to find out if that is an ideal time to meet with both senators and representatives.
6. Contact your state dental association for their support and assistance. Ask for their help identifying dental-related issues currently pending in the legislature.
7. Invite the legislative staff of your state association to come speak to everyone attending. The staff member can provide vital information and training on how to contact a legislator for an appointment, what to say during your appointment, and speak to you about key issues in dentistry.
8. If you are in a state with multiple dental schools, contact the other schools to find a central location near the legislators' offices for a training session before appointments. Get the venue for the training secured before registering students.

9. Get students signed up. Create a registration form with home address (preferable if dental school is in their home state) as well as school address if they are from out of state.
10. Start to schedule appointments with legislators or legislative assistants early to ensure adequate time. On each state government website, you can type in the address of the student to find out who represents that student.
11. Organize the training day/session to learn about the issues, answer questions, and practice speaking with legislators about the issues by holding a “mock” lobbying session.
12. Coordinate transportation to the legislative offices. If they are in your hometown, it may be as easy as public transportation. Your school may have vehicles you can rent for the day. Otherwise, check local transportation companies for buses.
13. Organize an info-pack for lobbying. Include a map to the capitol, tips for appointments, key issue handouts to leave with senators/ reps, list of offices, talking points, and thank you notes.
14. Remember that state association policies do not always coincide with ASDA national policies. If you are using ASDA’s name for the event, make sure the issues you are lobbying are in accordance with ASDA national policies and guidelines. Contact your RLC or district trustee if you have questions about this.

### **Attend National Dental Student Lobby Day in Washington, D.C.**

National Dental Student Lobby Day is a joint event with ASDA and the American Dental Education Association (ADEA). All issues lobbied at the event are jointly agreed upon by both associations.

1. Inform your administration that you would like to participate. Know how much time out of school the meeting requires. Often, our lobbying efforts promote their efforts also!
2. Fundraise. Ask for help from your school administration or state and local dental societies. Fees tend to be around \$75 for the registration fee and \$240 per night for a hotel room (conference is two nights), plus transportation (car/airfare).
3. Stay informed. Keep up with legislative updates so you will be aware of the political climate and some potential issues.
4. Register for the conference and book the hotel rooms. Registration forms and travel info will be available via the ASDA website and are generally sent to the first and second delegates of each chapter. Please adhere to deadlines because the hotel is not flexible with the set reservation deadlines.

5. Make appointments. Visit the appointments page on ASDA's website to view appointments already made by other chapters. To avoid overlap, the official ASDA policy is that highest priority for appointments goes to students at the dental school in the legislator's state.

In states with more than one dental school, the RLC will help the LLs coordinate appointments to avoid double-booking. For students who wish to meet with a legislator in a state other than the one in which they attend dental school:

- a. If the state has a dental school, the highest priority for appointments goes to the dental school in that state. The student can only attend an appointment set up by the dental school; the student cannot initiate their own appointment. Contact the RLC to get in touch with the LL at the school, or check the appointments page for information.
  - b. If the state has no dental school, the student is encouraged to make an appointment with that legislator but also check with the Legislative Liaisons from neighboring states. Check the appointments website for possible overlap.
6. Contact your legislator. The best methods are via email, fax, or telephone. You should contact them 4-6 weeks in advance of Lobby Day. Go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) for contact information. Congressional offices are busy, so if you don't get a response right away, don't be discouraged; try again or try a different method of communication. When writing an email or fax, keep it to one page.

Begin with:

The Honorable (Full Name)

United States House of Representatives/United States Senate

(Building and Number)

Washington DC 20515

In the letter, be brief and courteous. Here is a sample letter:

*I am writing on behalf of dental students at \_\_\_\_\_ (school). We are participating in National Dental Student Lobby Day in Washington, DC on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). I am interested in setting an appointment with you to discuss a few issues important to dental students and the dental profession. I am requesting 15-30 minutes of your time. Please advise if you are available to meet with us on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). If you are unavailable, would a member of your legislative staff be able to speak with us? I appreciate your time and look forward to hearing from you.*

*Sincerely,*

*Name*

*School and Graduation Year*

7. Study the issues. Talking points will be available about one week before the conference. Research the legislators you plan to meet, the committees on which they sit, and their stance on the issues. The key to successful lobbying in Washington is a strong grasp of the issues. You are not expected to be an expert – you are a dental student. The Congressional staff recognizes that, but the more you know, the better prepared you will be. Visit [www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org) for up-to-date information about the issues and the meeting.
8. Confirm your appointment. Call the office to confirm the appointment one or two days before. Be prepared to have flexibility with your schedule because Washington often operates on a last minute basis.
9. Remember, when you are attending National Dental Student Lobby Day, you are lobbying on behalf of ASDA and ADEA. In order to avoid confusion, stick to the agreed-upon issues and messages. If your personal views differ, you are free to meet with your legislator on a different day separate from National Dental Student Lobby Day. Present the issues with a personal touch. For example, if one of the issues is Student Loan Interest Deduction, speak to the fact that you are graduating dental school with upwards of \$170,000 in student loan debt and the interest deduction is important to you.
10. Follow-up. Follow up with a thank you note. Use this opportunity to provide any follow up information to questions asked during the appointment, and reinforce the dental student position on the issues.

### **Conduct an Email-Writing Campaign**

Traditional letter-writing campaigns to Senators and Representatives have now taken the form of email-writing campaigns. The ADA has put a very effective system in place, accessible to everyone at [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org) → ADVOCACY → Legislative Action Center (<http://capwiz.com/dental/home>)

1. Enter your zip code to find out which legislator covers your district.
2. Choose which legislators to whom you will be writing (Senate/House or both).
3. For specific issues that require immediate action, the form letter is provided. Add a personal note at the bottom; it carries more weight than just a form letter.
4. Fill out sender information.

5. Send your letter and forward the link to other classmates/faculty/friends/family to write their legislators.
6. You may receive an action alert email from a member of the Legislative Grassroots Network, or sign up for action e-list yourself by going to [www.capwiz.com/dental](http://www.capwiz.com/dental) (You can write your legislator any time; action alerts are sent out when a vote is pending on an issue related to dentistry and your action is needed in a timely fashion.)

#### **IV. Legislative Liaison Activity Report**

Please email your responses to the following statements or questions to your Regional Legislative Coordinator quarterly and as requested:

1. Please report on your chapter's LGN activities since the last update (Lunch & Learn, ADPAC Drive, etc.)
2. Have you written any articles for your chapter newsletter? If yes, include text.
3. What contact have you made with your state dental association since the last update? Have you attended any meetings? Please explain.
4. What activities are planned for the upcoming months (please include dates scheduled)?
5. What can your RLC do to help you achieve your goals?

## **V. Political Action Committees (PACs) and ADPAC Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is a PAC (specifically, ADPAC)?**

Political Action Committees (PACs) permit individuals who have similar concerns to participate in the legislative process by collecting and channeling funds to help elect candidates with interests common to those of the PAC. Federal law limits the amount individuals and groups may contribute to federal campaigns; however, organizations are permitted to establish Political Action Committees to solicit voluntary contributions from certain eligible groups as specified by law to contribute these to preferred candidates. PACs help such local, state and federal candidates to fund their campaigns. Since financing a campaign can be very costly, candidates often seek every possible means of support. There are about 4,000 PACs in existence at the federal level today.

The American Dental Association Political Action Committee (ADPAC) is a separate and autonomous organization not affiliated with any political party. ADPAC collects individual contributions and channels them to political candidates concerned about dentistry and dental education. Through ADPAC, dentists and dental students have an opportunity to support candidates sympathetic to the specific interests of the profession.

The best way to ensure that dentists are active in the legislative process is to provide dental students with information and opportunities to participate in the legislative process. As a legislative liaison, you can play an important role in increasing the political effectiveness of dental students at your chapter.

### **What does ADPAC do?**

Through the financial contributions of member dentists, ADPAC works to elect congressional candidates who understand the importance of dentistry and the link between oral health and overall health. Regardless of party affiliation, ADPAC supports candidates who will be strong advocates for dentists and the patients they serve. ADPAC supports members and potential members of Congress who favor such legislative issues as improving access to care, increasing student loan interest deductions, and expanding community dental health programs, just to name a few. Across the country, grassroots dentists work to establish and maintain meaningful relationships with their members of Congress. Combining resources via ADPAC gives dental students the chance to have a significant and collective impact on political forces affecting their professional lives. ADPAC also provides educational opportunities for dentists who are interested in running for public office at local, state and national levels.

### **Why is it important to become an ADPAC member as a dental student?**

What is happening on Capitol Hill today will almost certainly affect how you will practice dentistry 20 years from now. Legislation can affect where we will practice, who will compensate us, what materials we will use, and how we will practice. In the words of Dr. Jeff Parrish, former Chair of the ADPAC Board, "Our political involvement is as critical as any continuing education we might take." Joining ADPAC demonstrates that you are aware of the importance ADPAC plays in the future of our profession. This is the best investment we could possibly make in ourselves and our future!

### **What is the difference between hard and soft dollars?**

Hard dollars are from individual, personal, private accounts or cash. Soft dollars are from dentists' accounts set up for their incorporated practices. Thus, students always give hard dollars and those funds are used to support various candidates' campaign committees.

### **Where exactly does my ADPAC money go? Is it common knowledge? Who decides who is a "dental friendly" lawmaker?**

If you contribute "hard dollars" (which students would because they are not yet incorporated), it is primarily given to various candidates' campaign committees. ADPAC keeps a list of where the contributions go, and you can contact your ADPAC board member to access that information. Lawmakers are determined to be "dental friendly" based on positive reviews and feedback from both dentists in their local areas and lobbyists that work for the ADA and have personal experience with those member of Congress.

### **Why do we need a political action committee?**

We need a PAC because, for good or for ill, that's how campaigns are generally funded: by PAC money and individual donations. Every group of any political significance has a PAC. It does not "buy" us votes or even access, but it increases our chances of making our case in front of a member of congress.

### **Is any money given to specific parties?**

ADPAC will give to the Republican National Committee (RNC) or Democratic National Committee (DNC), but it's not a significant amount compared to the overall amount.

**Is it possible for ADPAC to do recurring payments from credit cards, or is there a way for students to pay for all four years at once?**

No, ADPAC does not do recurring payments on credit cards. Voluntary student sign up must be on a year to year basis.

## **VI. Contacting and Communicating With Legislators**

Your communications with legislators about specific issues will be more effective at certain times than other times. As an idea progresses towards a law, there are many opportunities for it to change. Keeping in mind that, generally, the further a bill moves along the legislative process, the less likely it is to be changed, you can follow the outline below to make your communications most effective.

### **Federal Level**

It is important to get involved in the discussion when a new bill is introduced and referred to the appropriate committee. The committee needs to understand the importance of the bill for it to get the committee's approval and make it to the floor from the vote. Communicating with the committee members would help ensure the committee reviews the bill and approves it to go to the House or Senate floor for debate and voting. If the email-writing campaign is effective, hearings will be scheduled so that possible outcomes of the bill can be discussed.

Another critical time to contact legislators is during the bill's deliberations. The legislator must be informed of your views so that they can be considered in his or her testimony in front of the committee or Congress. Your legislator can make a difference during the floor debate. If you provide the facts and views of students, he or she may be able to introduce favorable amendments to the bill.

### **State Level**

In order to be effective at the state level, it is important to know the source of the legislation. You may wish to contact the sponsor or express the views of your chapter through an email-writing campaign directed to the sponsor. Keep in mind that the sponsor may not have anticipated an adverse reaction, or may be unaware of alternative solutions.

When a bill is sent to the standing committee, public hearings are held to discuss the impact and outcome of the bill. This is a good time to get in touch with the legislator to offer constructive criticism or to suggest alternative solutions.

The Governor has the power of veto or "line-item veto" (note: not every state allows line-item veto for their governor). Expressing your views to the Governor may make the difference whether the bill will be signed or vetoed. Good hard facts are of great importance when expressing your views. Suggestions on effective email-writing and communication techniques can be found later in these guidelines.

### **Locating Members of Congress**

A great way to locate your representatives from both the House and Senate is to access [www.House.gov](http://www.House.gov) and [www.Senate.gov](http://www.Senate.gov) for their contact information. To reach a legislator's office by phone, you may call the United States Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask for the appropriate office.

### **Meeting with Members of Congress**

You may meet personally with your lawmaker and his or her staff to discuss a specific issue or to introduce yourself as a politically active dental student who lives or goes to school in the district.

Remember, as an officer of the association, you must be clear whether you are representing your own views or the views of the association. You are required to contact the ASDA headquarters office if you wish to express the association's position on any issue. You may express your own personal views on any issue at any time.

Below are some tips for meeting with members of Congress:

1. To request a meeting with your lawmaker, write him/her an email or fax a request explaining the anticipated time, date and purpose for your visit. List the bill number of the bill you would like to discuss if appropriate. Estimate how much time you would like and be flexible. If you have already established a relationship with your lawmaker, you may contact him/her by phone.
2. If your lawmaker is not available, welcome the opportunity to meet with a designated staff aide. Typically in a congressional office, staff aides are assigned to study and report on the status of certain issues and bills related to a specific topic, such as healthcare.
3. Concentrate on one issue only. Provide a one-page summary of the issue bulleting your key points (on appropriate letterhead). Be sure to include your name, address and phone number at the top of your summary.

4. Know the facts about the issue prior to the meeting. While you don't need to be an expert on the topic, you must be prepared to discuss how an issue affects you, your dental school and your profession.
5. Be concise and well organized. You will likely have only 15-20 minutes for the meeting.
6. Communication is a two-way street. Do not lecture. Give the lawmaker or aide time to respond.
7. Be understanding. Do not expect the legislator to make a commitment to a position before all the facts are known. Do your best to present your side favorably. Be gracious. Do not impugn the legislator's integrity or motives.
8. If you don't know the answer to a question, tactfully offer to respond at a later date. Then, follow up with a reply in a timely manner. This is a great opportunity to initiate a second contact with the lawmaker and/or aide.
9. Follow up with a thank you note (faxed) or email. Repeat the key points that were discussed. Respond to any outstanding questions and include any information that was requested during the appointment.
10. All visits should be reported to your Regional Legislative Coordinator who is responsible for reporting on chapter legislative activities.

### **Writing Members of Congress**

The most efficient way to communicate with members of Congress is email. The use of traditional mail has decreased because screening for toxic substances delays mail up to 3 weeks. Below are some tips for writing an email that is as clear, accurate and effective as possible.

1. Address only one issue in each email, and be concise.
2. If your email pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it accordingly.
3. If you are a constituent, tell them!
4. If you know your legislator, even vaguely, include this fact in the first paragraph. For example "I really enjoyed your speech at the Knights of Columbus meeting last week." This may help your email stand out from the hundreds that legislators receive each week.
5. State your reason for writing in the first paragraph. If you know how your legislator stands on an issue, acknowledge this position.

6. Be courteous and to the point, and use examples to support your position. Explain how the issue would affect you (or the group you are representing), your family, dental education and the community. Your own personal experience is the best supporting evidence.
7. Be constructive. If you oppose something, offer a positive alternative. The legislator is looking for solutions.
8. Do not indicate whether or not you voted for the lawmaker and never threaten to withhold a vote in the future based on the outcome of the issue. Do not remind the legislator that you are a taxpayer.
9. After the vote on the bill, regardless of the outcome, be sure to send a note thanking them for considering your position. A word of appreciation will create a favorable atmosphere for future communications.
10. Be sure the email is addressed correctly. Emails should be formatted as a formal letter would. Refer to the elected official as "The Honorable." Address the email and salutation as follows:

- To Members of the US House of Representatives:

*The Honorable (full name)*\_\_\_\_\_

*United States House of Representatives*

*Washington, DC 20515*

*Dear Representative* \_\_\_\_\_:

- To Members of the US Senate:

*The Honorable (full name)*\_\_\_\_\_

*United States Senate*

*Washington, DC 20510*

*Dear Senator* \_\_\_\_\_:

- To Members of the State Senate:

*The Honorable* \_\_\_\_\_

*Member of the Senate*

*State Capitol*

*Dear Senator* \_\_\_\_\_:

- To Members of the State House of Representatives or assembly:

*The Honorable* \_\_\_\_\_

*Member of the House of Representatives*

*State Capitol*

*Dear Representative* \_\_\_\_\_:

- Note: When writing to the Chair of a Committee, it is proper to address them as: Dear Mr. Chairman or Madam Chairwoman; when writing to the Speaker of the House, it is proper to address him/her as: Dear Mr./Ms. Speaker.

### **Handling the Legislator's Response**

Legislators' responses often fall into the following categories:

*Noncommittal*—Sounds appreciative and warm, but lacks a clear statement of position or does not discuss the issue, i.e. "I will monitor the situation closely."

*Agreement*—Usually wholehearted and enthusiastic.

*Disagreement*—Usually carefully constructed and respectful.

Your follow up response is what really gets attention. It shows that you are serious about the issue and that you will continue to monitor the legislator's actions. When writing a follow up email, use the guidelines provided above, and try to cite local newspaper coverage or other responses that support your point of view.

If you receive a disagreement response from the legislator you may choose to express gratitude for "being forthright in stating your position." You may also ask some questions to weaken their position, such as "Are you aware of...?", "Whom did you consult...?", or, "Can you provide supporting evidence for that point?"

If the response you receive is of agreement, you should write a letter reinforcing the position. This could also be a starting point from which you can ask the legislator to take specific actions that support your shared position, whether it be public speaking, contacting the appropriate committee, or some other action. Letting the legislator know that you are spreading the word of his or her support of the position will be appreciated.

If you are writing to a member of Congress, it is wise to send a copy to his or her local office, since this action will help assure that a meaningful response is formulated in Washington. This contact information is available at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

### **Communicating By Phone**

This method of communication is important when your lawmaker is expected to vote on an issue soon. Many of the strategies outlined in the section on email - writing also apply to telephone calls. Always address the legislator as "Senator", "Representative", or "Congressman"; or "Mr.", "Mrs.", or "Ms." unless he or she is a close personal friend and you feel comfortable using their first name.

Most likely, your call will be taken by a congressional staff member or aide. Ask to speak to the aide who handles your particular issue. After identifying yourself, tell the aide that you would like to leave a brief message, such as "Please tell Senator/Representative (Name) that I support/oppose (name of bill – H.R. \_\_\_\_ or S.\_\_\_\_)." You may request a written response to your telephone call.

Be candid; the lawmaker recognizes your self-interest and you need not apologize for it. Be honest. Tell him or her what you think and why. Be brief and to the point. Your time with the lawmaker or aide is limited and you must make the most of it.

## **Congressional Staff Roles**

Each Member of Congress has staff to assist him/her during a term in office. To be most effective in communicating with members of Congress, it is helpful to know the titles and principal functions of key staff.

### *Chief of Staff or Administrative Assistant*

The Administrative Assistant or Chief of Staff is usually the person in charge of overall office operations including assignment of work and supervision of key staff. This person reports directly to the member of Congress. He/she usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests.

### *Legislative Director, Senior Legislative Assistant, or Legislative Coordinator*

The Legislative Director is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. In some congressional offices there are several Legislative Assistants and responsibilities are assigned to staff with particular expertise in specific areas. For example, depending on the responsibilities and interests of the member, an office may include a different Legislative Assistant for health issues, environmental matters, taxes, etc.

### *Press Secretary or Communications Director*

The Press Secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain open and effective lines of communication between the member, his/her constituency and the general public. The Press Secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands and special requirements of both print and electronic media, and how to most effectively promote the member's views or position on specific issues.

### *Appointment Secretary, Personal Secretary, or Scheduler*

The Appointment Secretary is usually responsible for allocating a member's time among the many demands that arise from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements and constituent requests. The Appointment Secretary may also be responsible for making necessary travel arrangements, arranging speaking dates, visits to the district, etc.

### *Caseworker*

The Caseworker is usually assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing replies for the member's signature. The Caseworker's responsibilities may also include helping resolve problems constituents present in relation to federal agencies such as Social Security and Medicare issues, veteran's benefits, passports, etc. There are often several Caseworkers in a congressional office.

### *Other Staff Titles*

Other titles used in a congressional office may include: Executive Assistant, Legislative Correspondent, Executive Secretary, Office Manager and Receptionist.

## **VII. Congressional Committees and Subcommittees Important to Dental Students**

### **Senate Committee on Appropriations**

<http://appropriations.senate.gov/>

### **Senate Committee on the Budget**

<http://budget.senate.gov/>

### **Senate Committee on Finance**

<http://finance.senate.gov/>

### **Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions**

<http://help.senate.gov/>

### **House Committee on Appropriations**

<http://appropriations.house.gov/>

### **House Committee on the Budget**

<http://budget.house.gov/>

### **House Committee on Education and Labor**

<http://edlabor.house.gov/>

### **House Committee on Energy and Commerce**

#### **Subcommittee on Health**

<http://energycommerce.house.gov/>

### **House Committee on Ways and Means**

#### **Subcommittee on Health**

<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/>

### **VIII. Internet Resources for the Politically-Active Dental Student**

For up-to-date legislative news and information, access the following websites:

#### **Dental Organizations:**

##### **American Student Dental Association—[www.asdanet.org](http://www.asdanet.org)**

Look for current Legislative Grassroots Network news and information in the members-only section, as well as the links to government agencies and other dental organizations.

##### **American Dental Association—[www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)**

Enter the members-only section and check out the Advocacy page. Click on the Legislative Action Center to get action alerts.

##### **American Dental Education Association—[www.adea.org](http://www.adea.org)**

Access information about recent happenings in the News section.

#### **Federal Government:**

US House of Representatives—[www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

US Senate—[www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

White House—[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research—[www.nidcr.nih.gov](http://www.nidcr.nih.gov)

US Department of Education—[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

#### **State Government:**

##### **State Net—[www.statenet.com](http://www.statenet.com)**

State Net delivers vital data, legislative intelligence and in-depth reporting for people who care about the actions of government. This organization monitors all pending bills and regulations in the 50 states and Congress.

**Reference:**

**THOMAS—[thomas.loc.gov](http://thomas.loc.gov)**

You'll find up-to-the-minute news on congressional bills and legislative acts.

## **IX. The Federal Legislative Process**

Many pieces of legislation have the potential to have a significant impact on the profession and practice of dentistry. Therefore, it is important to understand how policy is formed and approved. Most measures that become public law are introduced as bills. Thousands of bills are introduced during each session of Congress, but few are ever enacted into law. Legislators must deal with and understand hundreds of different issues and decide how to vote, in order to represent the best interests of their constituents and the country.

### **Subcommittee and Committee Activity**

This is the level at which law is formulated and balanced with public comment. Public comment must occur before the bill goes to the floor of Congress if any modification is to be made to the proposed law. Once a health or dentistry-related bill reaches the floor of the House or Senate, it is rarely modified.

### **The Legislative Grassroots Network's Role in the Legislative Process**

Lawmakers receive information on new legislative proposals from many sources. The media, trade and professional associations, public interest groups and labor unions frequently lobby Congress and serve as key sources of information for legislators. Such individuals find it hard to ignore the views of these organizations, which collectively represent the views of many of their constituents. Through means such as email-writing campaigns and lobby days, ASDA's Legislative Grassroots Network can communicate the views of dental students to legislators so that these can be considered when legislation is being developed on a particular issue.

### **Sources of Bills**

Knowing the source of proposed legislation can reveal a lot about its purpose and outcome. A bill can be introduced by a member of the House, the Senate, or both. Members of Congress are the most obvious source of bills. In addition, corporations, labor and management groups, as well as consumer groups may participate in writing a bill. The most prominent promoter of legislative ideas is the President of the United States, who defines a legislative program yearly in the State of the Union and budget addresses. Congressional committees can also write their own bills.

## **Assignment of Bills to Committee**

After a bill is introduced, the Speaker of the House of Representatives or President of the Senate refers it to the proper committee. Each committee has jurisdictional responsibility for several general areas, and divides itself into subcommittees for more specific issues within those areas.

## **Committee Action**

Congressional committees are one of the most important phases of the legislative process. They function to process and investigate the submitted bills as well as to investigate the need for new legislation. When a bill is referred to a committee, the chairman refers it to the appropriate subcommittee. The members of the subcommittee decide if the bill is worth consideration and, if so, in what manner. Committees rely to a large extent on hearings and invite public officials, business representatives, private citizens, experts and other interested groups to offer their opinion. After reviewing a bill, the committee may vote to report the legislation favorably to the House or Senate, and explain their justification for doing so. If the committee fails to report the bill, it "dies." Most bills are blocked at this stage.

## **Scheduling**

The House Rules Committee determines how much time will be allowed for debate of specific bills and whether amendments will be permitted. This voting takes place before the bill can be considered on the House floor. Most often, denial of the rule for the House action by the Rules Committee will halt further action on the bill. The Senate, on the other hand, does not use a Rules Committee. Instead, the Senate Majority Leader determines if and when a bill comes to the floor for debate.

## **Floor Action**

The House and Senate utilize two principal types of votes, voice and roll call or recorded. Voice vote is for routine and non-controversial matters; roll call is used for more substantive issues. Most votes are decided by a simple majority vote.

## **Second Chamber Action**

When the first Chamber, either the House or Senate, passes a bill, it then sends it to the presiding officer of the other Chamber for action.

## **Conference**

Conference Committees are made up of members from both the House and Senate who work to reach a compromise on a specific bill. The members analyze the bill in full detail and vote on its amendments. If conflicts are resolved, a conference report is issued; if not, the bill "dies in conference."

## **Final Floor Action**

This step is merely a formality since at this point legislators can no longer offer amendments. However, it is necessary for both the House and the Senate to pass the final bill with all revisions.

## **Executive Action**

After adoption by the House and Senate, the bill is sent to the President who has ten days to sign or veto it. If signed, the bill becomes law that same day. However, the date of enforcement of the law may differ from the date it is approved. If the bill is vetoed, it goes back to Congress, which has an opportunity to override the veto.

## **Congressional Override**

When a vetoed bill goes back to Congress, the two Chambers have an opportunity to decide whether the law should be enacted without Presidential approval. To do this, two-thirds of the members in both Chambers must vote in favor of the decision to override the President's veto.

## **Congressional Power Centers**

Primarily two major power structures, political party leaders and committee leaders, influence the legislative process. Committee chairmen derive their power from control over bills referred to their committees, and may determine whether or not bills will ever be considered. They can delay, block or expedite action with few restrictions. Committee chairmen can also select who will participate in the floor debate on the bills. Increasingly there are informal sources of power arising within the Congressional decision-making process. These are groups or caucuses of members sharing the same views on an issue. Groups such as the Congressional Black Caucus, Democratic Study Group and the Environmental Study Conference serve as information and control centers on certain issues, and can become powerful blocks on bills they deem

important. Today, hundreds of these groups introduce amendments and conduct issue campaigns independent of any party organization.

## **X. The State Legislative Process**

State legislatures can have a significant impact on the dental profession, since many state laws determine how dentists may practice. Although there are basic elements common to each state's legislative process, great variation exists from state to state. In order to influence the law-making body effectively, it is essential to understand the procedures and practices followed in each state.

Bills may originate from a state legislator, the executive branch, special interest group, professional or trade association or a respected constituent. Once drafted, the bill is referred to a standing committee. Some states appoint a committee to review all bills and make committee assignments. Before recommending a bill, a committee usually holds a series of public hearings and the bill is often amended. A subcommittee may also be appointed for this purpose. A committee can recommend, defeat or postpone a bill indefinitely. If the bill receives a favorable recommendation from the standing committee, it moves for a floor vote. Most states allow amendments to a bill during the third reading.

The next step is the floor vote where the fate of the bill is decided. If passed, the bill is sent to the other Chamber (if applicable) and similar steps are executed. A conference committee is named, in the case of two Chambers, which may pass different forms of the same bill. The conference committee issues a report that must be approved by both Chambers. If a compromise is reached or the bill is passed, it is sent to the Governor who can sign the bill into law, allow it to become law without signing it or veto the bill and return it to the legislature with an explanation for the veto. Some Governors may exercise the "line-item veto" which allows them to veto selected provisions of the bill while allowing the remaining provisions to become law.

## **XI. Glossary of Terms**

### **Act**

The term for a bill that has passed both houses of Congress and has been signed by the President or passed over his veto, thus becoming law.

### **Adjournment Sine Die**

Adjournment without definitely fixing a day for reconvening; literally "adjournment without a day." Usually used to connote the final adjournment of a session of Congress.

### **Advisory Opinions (AOs)**

Federal Election Commission responses to questions it has received relating to specific situations. These responses provide guidelines for PACs that may have similar questions.

### **Affiliated Committees**

All authorized committees of the same candidate or all committees established, financed, maintained or controlled by the same corporation, labor organization, person or group.

### **Appropriations Bill**

A bill that gives legal authority to spend or obligate money from the Treasury. It grants the actual money from the Treasury or grants the actual monies approved by authorization bills, but not necessarily the total permissible amount under the authorization bill.

### **Authorization Bill**

Authorizes a program, specifies its general aim and conduct, and unless "open-ended," puts a ceiling on monies that can be used to finance it.

### **Bill Language**

The substance of a bill; the law as written and approved; the laws (legally binding).

### **Bills Introduced**

In both the House and Senate, any number of members may join in introducing a single bill or resolution. The first member listed is the sponsor of the bill, and all members' names following are the bill's cosponsors. In reality, many bills are committee bills and are introduced under the name of the chairman of the committee or subcommittee merely as a formality. All appropriation bills fall into this category, as do many of the bills, particularly those dealing with complicated, technical subjects. A committee frequently holds hearings on a number of related bills, and may agree on one of them or on an entirely new bill.

### **Bills Referred**

When introduced, a bill is referred to the committee that has jurisdiction over the subject matter of the bill. Bills are referred by the Speaker in the House and the Presiding Officer in the Senate. Appeals may be made from their decisions.

**Budget**

This document is sent to Congress by the President in January of each year. It estimates government revenue and expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year and recommends appropriations in detail. The President's budget message forms the basis for congressional hearings and legislation on the year's appropriations.

**Candidate Committee**

A political committee established by a candidate for the primary purpose of raising funds to support the candidate's campaign.

**Caucus**

Any group or meeting organized to further a special interest or cause. In US politics, a meeting of party members within a legislative body to select leaders and determine strategy.

**Challenger**

An incumbent candidate's opponent.

**Chamber**

Meeting place for the total membership of either the House or the Senate, as distinguished from the respective committee rooms.

**Clean Bill**

After a committee has finished a major revision of a bill, the changes plus what is left of the original bill may be assembled into a new measure and introduced as a "clean bill." The new measure, which carries a new number, is then sent to the floor for consideration.

**Clerk of the House**

Chief administrative officer of the House of Representatives with duties corresponding to those of the Secretary of the Senate. (See Secretary of the Senate.)

**Closed Rule**

Prohibits amendments not approved by the Committee bringing the bill to the floor. A modified closed rule permits only amendments approved by the Rules Committee. An "open rule" permits any amendment. Today, closed rules are unusual.

**Cloture**

The process by which a filibuster can be ended in the Senate, other than by unanimous consent. A motion for cloture can apply to any measure before the Senate, including a proposal to change the chamber's rules. It requires the signature of 16 senators for introduction and the votes of three-fifths of the entire Senate membership (60 if there are no vacancies), except that to end a filibuster against a proposal to amend the Standing Rules of the Senate a two-thirds vote of senators present and voting is required. It is put to a roll-call vote one hour after the Senate meets on the second day following introduction of the motion. If voted,

cloture limits each senator to one hour of debate. A proposal must come to a final vote after 100 hours of debate.

### **Committee**

A subdivision of the House or Senate that prepares legislation for action by the parent chamber, or makes investigations as directed by the parent chamber. There are several types of committees. (See Standing, Select or Special.) Most standing committees are divided into subcommittees, which study legislation, hold hearings and report their recommendations to the full committee. Only the full committee can report legislation for action by the House or Senate.

### **Common Cause**

A self-styled citizens' lobby organization that opposes PACs and supports public financing of congressional campaigns.

### **Concurrent Resolution**

A concurrent resolution, designated H Con Res or S Con Res, must be adopted by both houses but does not require the signature of the President and does not have the force of law. Concurrent resolutions generally are used to make or amend rules applicable to both houses or to express the sentiment of the two houses. A concurrent resolution, for example, is used to fix the time for adjournment of a Congress. It also might be used, for example, to convey the congratulations of Congress to another country on the anniversary of its independence.

### **Conference**

A meeting between the representatives of the House and Senate to reconcile differences between the two houses over provisions of a bill. Members of the conference committee are appointed by the Speaker and the President of the Senate and are called "managers" for their respective chambers. A majority of the managers for each house must reach agreement on the provisions of the bill (often a compromise between the versions of the two chambers) before it can be sent up for floor action in the form of a "conference report." There it cannot be amended and if not approved by both chambers, the bill may go back to conference under certain situations, or a new conference may be convened. Elaborate rules govern the conduct of the conferences. All bills that are passed by the House and Senate in slightly different form need not be sent to conference; either chamber may "concur" in the other's amendments.

### **Congressional Record**

The daily, printed account of proceedings in both House and Senate chambers. Highlights of legislative and committee action are embodied in a Digest section of the Record. Members may edit and revise remarks made on the floor during debate, so that quotations reported by the press are not always found in the Record.

### **Congressional Terms of Office**

These begin on January 3 of the year following a general election and run two years for representatives and six years for senators.

**Connected PACs**

Political action committees that are formed by sponsoring organizations such as corporations, labor unions, trade and professional associations, cooperatives and corporations without stock. The sponsoring organization may pay the administrative and fund raising costs out of general treasury money.

**Continuing Resolution**

When a fiscal year begins and Congress has not yet enacted all the regular appropriation bills for that year, it passes a joint resolution "continuing appropriations" for government agencies at rates generally based on their previous year's appropriations.

**Contribution**

Anything of value given to (or provided on behalf of) a candidate or political committee to influence a Federal election.

**Disbursement**

Any purchase or payment made by a political committee.

**Eligible Employees**

Executive and administrative personnel who may be solicited by a corporate PAC.

**Enacting Clause**

Each bill starts "Be enacted that..." A successful motion to "strike the enacting clause" kills the measure.

**Engrossed Bill**

The final copy of a bill as passed by one chamber, with the text as amended by floor action and certified by the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate.

**Enrolled Bill**

The final copy of a bill that has been passed in identical forms by both chambers. It is certified by an officer of the house of origin (House Clerk or Senate Secretary) and then sent on for signatures of the House Speaker, the Senate President and the President. An enrolled bill is printed on parchment.

**Executive and Administrative Personnel**

Employees of a corporation who are paid on a salary rather than an hourly basis and who have policy making, managerial, professional or supervisory responsibilities.

**Expenditures**

The actual spending of money as distinguished from the appropriation of it. Expenditures are made by the disbursing officers of the administration; appropriations are made only by Congress. The two are rarely identical in any fiscal year; expenditures may represent money appropriated one, two or more years previously.

**Family**

Family includes the mother, father, sons and daughters who live in the same household. The families of eligible employees may participate in a corporate PAC.

**FEC**

The Federal Election Commission, the agency that administers the laws governing our federal election process.

**FECA**

The Federal Election Campaign Act, the primary body of law governing the federal election process.

**Filibuster**

A time-delaying tactic used by a minority in an effort to prevent a vote on a bill that probably would pass if brought to vote. The most common method is to take advantage of the Senate's rules permitting unlimited debate, but other forms of parliamentary maneuvering may be used. The stricter rules in the House make filibusters more difficult, but they are attempted from time to time through various delaying tactics arising from loopholes in House rules.

**Fiscal Year**

Financial operations of the government are carried out in a 12-month fiscal year, beginning on October 1 and ending on September 30. The fiscal year carries the date of the calendar year in which it ends.

**Floor Manager**

A member, usually representing sponsors of a bill, who attempts to steer it through debate and amendment to a final vote in the chamber. Floor managers are frequently chairmen or ranking members of the committee that reports the bill. Managers are responsible for apportioning the time granted to supporters of the bill for debating it. The minority leader or the ranking minority member of the committee often apportions time for the minority party's participation in the debate.

**Frank**

A member's facsimile signature on envelopes, used in lieu of stamps, for his/her official outgoing mail, which is postage-free.

**General Election**

The final election to determine which candidate will be elected to office.

**Hearing**

Committee sessions for hearing witnesses. At hearings of legislation, witnesses usually include specialists, government officials and spokesmen for persons affected by the bills under study. Hearings related to special investigations bring forth a variety of witnesses. Committees sometimes use their subpoena power to summon reluctant witnesses. The public and press may attend "open" hearings, but are barred from "closed" or "executive" hearings. The committee announces its hearings, from one day to many weeks in advance, and

may invite certain persons to testify. Persons who request time to testify may be turned down by the committee, but most requests are honored. Both houses have rules against conducting committee hearings in secret, but the House's are much more stringent.

**Hopper**

A box on the House Clerk's desk where bills are deposited on introduction.

**House**

The House of Representatives, as distinct from the Senate, although each body is a "house" of Congress.

**Incumbent**

The person currently holding public office.

**Independent Expenditures**

Money spent to advocate the election or defeat of a candidate that is not made with the cooperation or prior consent of any candidate or candidate committee. There are no limits on the amount of money that can be spent in this fashion. Independent expenditures are most often made by non-connected PACs.

**In-kind Contribution**

Services, goods or property offered free or at less than the usual charge to a political committee.

**Joint Committee**

A committee composed of a specified number of members of both the House and Senate. Usually a joint committee is investigative in nature, such as the Joint Economic Committee. Others have housekeeping duties such as the Joint Committee on Printing and on the Library of Congress.

**Joint Resolution**

A joint resolution, designated H J Res or S J Res, requires the approval of both houses and the signature of the President, just as a bill does, and has the force of law if approved. There is no real difference between a bill and a joint resolution. The latter is generally used in dealing with limited matters, such as a single appropriation for a specific purpose. Joint resolutions also are used to propose amendments to the Constitution. They do not require a presidential signature, but become part of the Constitution when three-fourths of the states have ratified them.

**Lame Duck**

A legislator who has announced his or her intent not to run for re-election; or a legislative session held after a general election but before those elected have been sworn into office.

**Law**

An act of Congress that has been signed by the President, or passed over his veto by Congress; for example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (HR 7152) became Public Law 88-352 during the 88th Congress.

**Legislative Day**

The "day" extending from the time either house meets after an adjournment until the time it next adjourns. Because the House normally adjourns from day to day, legislative days and calendar days usually coincide. But in the Senate, a legislative day may, and frequently does, extend over several calendar days. (See Recess)

**Legislative Veto**

A procedure permitting either the House or Senate, or both chambers, to review proposed executive branch regulations or actions and block or modify those with which they disagree. The specifics of the procedure may vary, but Congress generally provides for a legislative veto by including in a specific piece of legislation a provision that administrative rules or actions taken to implement the legislation are to go into effect at the end of a designated period of time unless blocked by either or both houses.

**Lobby**

A group seeking to influence the passage, defeat, or modification of legislation. Originally the term referred to persons frequenting the lobbies or corridors of legislative chambers in order to speak to legislators. The definition of a lobby and the activity of lobbying is a matter of differing interpretation. By some definitions, lobbying is limited to attempts at direct influence by personal interview and persuasion. Under other definitions, lobbying includes attempts at indirect influence, such as persuading members of a group to write or visit their representative or senators or attempting to create a climate of opinion favorable to a desired legislative action.

**Majority Leader**

Chief strategist and floor spokesman for the party in nominal control in either chamber. He or she is elected by party colleagues and is virtually program director for that chamber, since he or she usually speaks for its majority.

**Majority Whip**

In effect, the assistant majority leader in the House or Senate. The job is to help marshal majority forces in support of party strategy and legislation.

**Marking Up a Bill**

Going through a measure, in committee or subcommittee, taking it section by section, revising language, penciling in new phrases, etc. If the bill is extensively revised, the new version may be introduced as a separate bill, with a new number.

**Maxing Out**

Contributing the maximum amount permitted by law to a candidate's campaign. For PACs the limit is \$5,000 per candidate per election. For individuals, the limit is \$1,000 per candidate per election. Individuals may give up to \$5,000 to a PAC.

**Minority Leader**

Floor leader for the minority party. (See Majority Leader)

**Minority Whip**

Performs duties of whip for the minority party. (See Majority Whip)

**Motion**

Request by a member for any one of a wide array of parliamentary actions. The member "moves" for a certain procedure, or the consideration of a measure or a vote, etc. The precedence of motions, and whether they are debatable, is set forth in the House and Senate manuals.

**Multi-candidate Committee**

A political committee with more than 50 contributors that has been registered with the FEC for at least 6 months and has made contributions to five or more candidates for federal office. Most corporate PACs are multi-candidate committees, which qualifies them to contribute up to \$5,000 per candidate per election.

**Non-connected PACS**

Political action committees that operate as independent entities without sponsoring organizations. These PACs may solicit any American citizen, but administrative and fundraising costs must be paid with the dollars raised.

**Nonparty Committee**

Any political committee that is a connected or non-connected PAC and not sponsored by a political party or a candidate.

**Open Seat**

An election contest with no incumbent candidate.

**Override a Veto**

If the President disapproves a bill and sends it back to Congress with objections, Congress may override the veto by two-thirds vote in each chamber. The Constitution requires a recorded vote. The question put to each house is: "Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?" (See also Pocket Veto and Veto)

**Pairing**

If a member of Congress cannot be present to vote, he or she will attempt to find someone on the opposite side of the issue to be a pair. Then the latter member is obligated not to vote and the positions of both are recorded as a pair.

**Party Committee**

Any fundraising committee organized by local, state or national political parties.

**Petition**

A request or plea sent to one or both chambers from an organization or private citizens' group asking support of particular legislation or favorable consideration of a matter not yet receiving congressional attention. They are referred to appropriate committees and are either considered or not, according to committee decisions.

**Pocket Veto**

The act of the President in withholding approval of a bill after Congress has adjourned. When Congress is in session, a bill becomes law without the President's signature if no action is taken upon it within 10 days, excluding Sundays, from the time the President receives it. But if Congress adjourns sine die within that 10-day period, the bill is killed without the President's formal veto, if it is not signed by the President.

**Political Action Committees (PACs)**

All non-candidate and non-party political committees, including those that have no sponsoring organization.

**Political Committee**

Candidate committees, state and local political party committees, organizations and associations, and PACs can be defined as political committees.

**President of the Senate**

Presiding officer of the upper chamber, normally the Vice President of the United States. In the Vice President's absence, a president pro tempore (president for the time being) presides.

**President Pro Tempore**

The chief officer of the Senate in the absence of the Vice President. He or she is elected by fellow senators. The recent practice has been to elect to the office the senator of the majority party with the longest continuous service.

**Primary**

An election to determine which candidate from a major political party will meet the opposing party's candidate in the general election.

**Public Financing**

An effort to replace the present system of campaign finance with taxpayer-financed campaigns.

**Quorum**

The number of members whose presence is necessary for the transaction of business. In the Senate and House, it is a majority of the membership (when there are no vacancies, this is 51 in the Senate and 218 in the House). A quorum is 100 in the Committee of the Whole House. If a point of order is made that a quorum is not present, the only business in order is either a motion to adjourn or a motion to direct the sergeant-at-arms to request the attendance of absentees.

**Receipt**

Anything of value (money, goods, services or property) received by a political committee.

**Recess**

Distinguished from adjournment in that a recess does not end a legislative day and, therefore, does not interfere with unfinished business. The rules in each house set forth certain matters to be taken up and disposed of at the beginning of each legislative day. The House, which operates under much stricter rules than the Senate, usually adjourns from day to day. The Senate often recesses.

**Reconciliation**

A process requiring congressional committees to reduce funds for existing and new federal programs under their jurisdiction to meet overall spending and revenue levels established by budget resolution.

**Report Language**

Information that tells what Congress intended by the law and may spell out the direction certain agencies should follow. Often appears as a committee or conference report. These documents may or may not be presented with the bill and are not legally binding.

**Resolution**

A simple resolution, designated H Res or S Res, deals with matters entirely within the prerogatives of one house or the other. It requires neither passage by the other chamber nor approval by the President, and does not have the force of law. Most resolutions deal with the rules of one house. They also are used to express the sentiments of a single house, as condolences to the family of a deceased member or to give "advice" on foreign policy or other executive business (Also see Concurrent and Joint Resolutions).

**Restricted Class**

Those individuals within an organization who may be solicited at any time for contributions to the organization's PAC and who may receive partisan communications from the organization.

**Rule**

The term has two specific congressional meanings. A rule may be a standing order governing the conduct of House or Senate business and listed in the chamber's bill of rules. The admission to the floor, voting procedures, etc. are examples of such rules. In the House, a rule also may be a decision made by its Rules Committee about the handling of a particular bill on the floor. The committee may determine under which standing rule a bill shall be considered, or it may provide a "special" rule" in the form of a resolution. If the resolution is adopted by the House, the temporary rule becomes as valid as any standing rule, and lapses only after action has been completed on the measure to which it pertains.

**Run-off Election**

An election held when no one candidate of a single political party receives a majority of the votes cast in a primary election.

**Secretary of the Senate**

Chief administrative officer of the Senate, responsible for direction of duties of Senate employees, education of pages, administration of oaths, receipt or registration of lobbyists and other activities necessary for the continuing operation of the Senate.

**Select or Special Committee**

A committee set up for a special purpose and, generally, for a limited time by resolution of either House or Senate. Most special committees are investigative in nature.

**Separate Segregated Fund**

A connected political committee established by a corporation, labor organization or incorporated membership organization to accept voluntary contributions that are used to support federal candidates. The term "political action committee" is the popular expression for a separate segregated fund.

**Speaker**

The presiding officer of the House of Representatives, elected by its members.

**Special Election**

An election held to fill a vacancy caused by the death or resignation of an incumbent.

**Special Session**

A session of Congress after it has adjourned sine die, completing its regular session. Special sessions are convened by the President of the United States under the constitutional powers of the executive office.

**Standing Committees**

Committees permanently authorized by the House and Senate rules. The standing committees of the House were last reorganized by the Committee Reorganization Act of 1974. The last major reorganization of Senate committees was in the Committee System Reorganization Act of 1977.

**Veto**

Disapproval by the President of a bill or joint resolution, other than one proposing an amendment to the Constitution. When Congress is in session, the President must veto a bill within 10 days, excluding Sundays, after it has been received; otherwise it becomes law with or without the President's signature. When the President vetoes a bill, it is returned to the house of its origin with a message stating the President's objections. The veto then becomes a question of high privilege. (See Override Veto) When Congress has adjourned, the President may pocket veto a bill by failing to sign it. (See Pocket Veto)