



NARFE
FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

NARFE Advocacy Leader Guide

**A Practical Handbook on How to Be an
Effective Grassroots Advocacy Leader**

Introduction

A core mission of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) is **advocacy**. Our advocacy entails protecting the earned pay, rights and benefits of all federal/postal employees, retirees and annuitant survivors.

Grassroots advocacy is everyone’s responsibility. Every NARFE member plays a significant role in the association’s legislative outreach. To support its national legislative priorities, NARFE developed an advocacy leaders program that relies on members at the federation and chapter levels to volunteer as legislative chairs (LC), congressional district leaders (CDL) and senatorial leaders (SL). These advocacy volunteers are responsible for grassroots activity and engaging other federation and chapter members in grassroots activities.

This guide should be used as a reference for fulfilling advocacy leader duties.

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Section One

Overview and Responsibilities of NARFE Federation and Chapter Legislative Chairs, Senatorial Leaders and Congressional District Leaders

The legislative chair

As a federation or chapter legislative chair, you are the focal point for legislative action and know-how for your organization. You serve as a liaison between your members, leadership, your elected officials and advocacy staff at NARFE headquarters. You provide expertise and direction for members, motivating them and coordinating effective grassroots action.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Recruit the right members to serve as SLs and CDLs, ensuring that they can carry out their responsibilities and meet service requirements.
- Ensure SLs and CDLs have access to advocacy skills-building training.
- Ensure federation and chapter members are informed about NARFE legislative priorities and grassroots campaigns by working with headquarters advocacy staff and sharing available issue updates and other resources.
- Oversee member engagement grassroots campaigns.
- Build relationships with members of Congress and their staff.

SUPPORT FOR NARFE FEDERATION AND CHAPTER LEGISLATIVE CHAIRS

Federations and chapters may have different ways of supporting their LCs. While some smaller organizations might not need an entire team of advocates, others might find that delegating outreach is not only easier for the LC, but also helps encourage member participation and develops a willingness for others to take on a leadership position. The following suggestions may assist LCs in carrying out their advocacy duties.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The committee is composed of a representative of each congressional district with a chairperson selected from within the committee. Sometimes the chairperson is the federation or chapter LC, and sometimes a separate person is elected to serve as the committee chair (e.g., the vice president). In organizations where a SL/CDL structure is not utilized, the committee is responsible for carrying out NARFE's grassroots agenda and reaching out to congressional offices on behalf of the federation and chapter.

AREA OR DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Some organizations have area or district vice presidents responsible for legislative outreach, while others have individuals specifically tasked with legislative outreach on behalf of the NARFE members within a certain geographical boundary. Regardless of how your federation is organized, establish a clear communication path. Know how you can reach NARFE members, and make sure they can reach you. Have written expectations for those carrying out advocacy activities. Sometimes, a phone tree can be useful—especially in urgent situations, such as an upcoming vote.

Who are NARFE senatorial leaders and congressional district leaders?

NARFE members, through approval of a resolution at the 2016 National Convention and in the 2017 Strategic Plan, have embraced establishing congressional district leaders (CDLs) and senatorial leaders (SLs) within their federations. This guide covers why your federation should establish CDLs and SLs.

A CDL or SL is a NARFE federation position. The NARFE member recruited to serve in this position is the main point of contact between a legislator's office and the NARFE members within that congressional district or state (for senators).

THE MISSION OF CDLS AND SLS

The mission of CDLs and SLs is to develop and strengthen the relationship with your member of Congress and his or her staff to advance NARFE's legislative priorities. This guide builds on the previous guide on establishing CDLs/SLs and covers the necessary prerequisites and job duties of CDLs/SLs. The prerequisites ensure an effective advocacy program.

PREREQUISITES TO SERVING AS A CDL/SL

- Have an established email address and access to the Internet.
- Knowledge of NARFE's legislative priorities or willingness to learn.
- Willingness to invest time in advocacy skills-building training that includes basics on the legislative process, effective ways to communicate with lawmakers and relationship-building strategies.
- Willingness to communicate with your lawmaker and congressional staff through in-person/virtual meetings, emails/letters, phone calls and interaction at community events.
- Willingness to learn how to use NARFE's Legislative Action Center to send messages directly to lawmakers. The Legislative Action Center is NARFE's only way of tracking member communications with lawmakers; our advocacy efforts are successful when all members utilize it.

- Willingness to participate in NARFE’s advocacy events and activities, such as LEGcon, Grassroots Advocacy Month, letter-to-the editor campaigns, issue letter-writing campaigns and other calls-to-action.
- Be nonpartisan as a representative of NARFE.

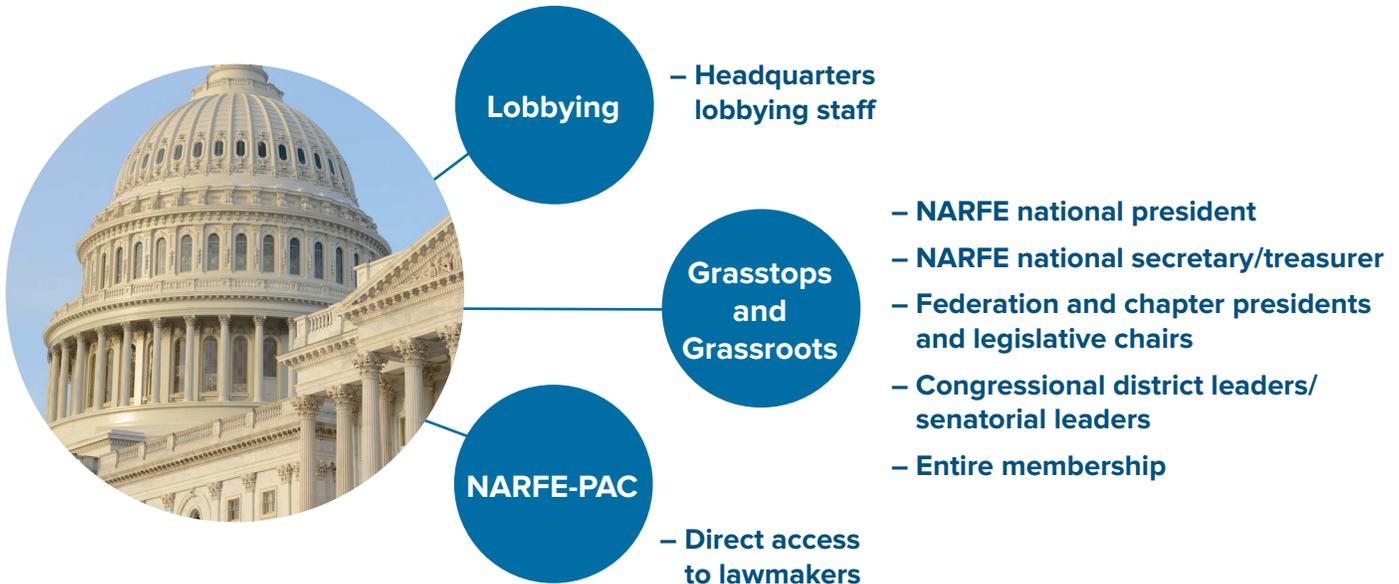
CDL/SL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Respond to NARFE’s grassroots action alerts, which are shared through NARFE’s *NewsLine* newsletter, *NARFE Voices* grassroots newsletter, *NARFE Magazine*, *NARFE Insider* and the Legislative Action Center on the advocacy webpage.
- Work with the federation or chapter legislative chair on an action plan to mobilize members in the district and state to engage in the campaign.
- If scheduling meetings with lawmakers and staff, work with advocacy staff at headquarters on the issue “ask,” talking points and other relevant information.
- Send thank you emails as follow-ups after meetings or engagements at events with a lawmaker and staff.
- Meet with lawmakers during scheduled congressional recesses when they travel back to their home districts and states.

Section Two

NARFE's Advocacy Approach

Grassroots and grasstops actions by members are the cornerstone of an effective national legislative advocacy program. NARFE's three-legged advocacy strategy includes lobbying, member engagement in grassroots and grasstops activities, and NARFE-PAC, the association's political action committee.



Lobbying

Lobbying is done by NARFE headquarters advocacy staff who put NARFE's legislative agenda before leaders in Congress and the administration; they collaborate with coalitions, congressional committees and other groups in DC to stay in the know and obtain important information that they can bring back to you. Lobbying is also done at the local level by federation and chapter advocacy leaders who engage with their members of Congress when the lawmakers return to their home districts and states during district work periods.

Grassroots and grasstops activities

GRASSROOTS

NARFE grassroots takes a ground-up approach to influencing lawmakers. It involves the mobilization of its entire membership, which is only successful if there is collaboration among headquarters, federations and chapters.

When NARFE members speak up about how their lives are affected by an issue, like the Windfall Elimination Provision, they localize the issue

and effectively allow lawmakers to make decisions that are best for their constituents.

Grassroots activities include:

- Sending emails to lawmakers through NARFE's Legislative Action Center.
- Making phone calls to legislative offices.
- Scheduling meetings with lawmakers or staff in person or virtually.
- Writing letters to editors of community newspapers to raise public awareness about an issue.
- Interacting with legislators at town halls, meet and greets, and other community events.

GRASSTOPS

NARFE grasstops advocacy engages members who have relationships with or bring extra influence to the people responsible for policymaking. NARFE grasstops leaders include the national president, national secretary/treasurer, regional vice presidents and advocacy leaders who uncover, build and leverage relationships to advance NARFE's legislative priorities.

NARFE-PAC

NARFE-PAC is the political arm of NARFE that supports Fed-friendly candidates and incumbents in Congress. It raises and spends money to elect members of Congress who support the federal community. Also, it provides an additional voice for NARFE members and an audience to get NARFE's view across.

The PAC:

- Helps build strong relationships with lawmakers through local fundraisers and ones in DC. These events allow for much-needed facetime with legislators and their staff.
- Provides an additional voice for NARFE members to get our views across.

Section Three

Best Practices for Effective Communication With Lawmakers and Staff

Constituent-lawmaker communication has evolved over the years and continues to do so at a rapid pace. A survey of congressional staff showed that the following methods for constituent communication are most effective, especially if the lawmaker is undecided about an issue:

- In-person visits/virtual meetings.
- Personalized emails/letters.
- Letters to the editor.
- Social media.
- Interactions at town halls and other community events.
- Phone calls.

When Congress is acting on a piece of legislation that affects federal employees and retirees, NARFE turns to federation and chapter advocacy leaders to mobilize members and engage them in the above activities. Members are notified through NARFE media like its weekly newsletter, *NewsLine*, monthly publication *NARFE Voices*, bimonthly *NARFE Insider* and in *NARFE Magazine* directing members on the issue and what the association needs lawmakers to do.

Before conducting any of the following tactics, keep in mind why you're lobbying. Remember why you are communicating with the lawmaker and staff—if you don't speak up about how your life is affected by an issue, who will? The secret to a successful advocacy effort is authenticity. **You are the expert; know your limits and play to your strengths.** Keep those three things in mind, and you'll do great!

In-person or virtual meetings with the lawmaker

By far, the most effective way to articulate your views to your elected official and to affect the outcome of legislation is to sit down and speak with your lawmakers face-to-face. While these personal visits are extremely productive, they also require the most amount of planning to ensure success. When planning a personal visit, refer to the following guidelines.

- Submit a written meeting request to the lawmaker's scheduler. Some offices prefer that constituents fill out and submit an online webform from the legislator's website, while others prefer an email. Before you request a meeting, call the lawmaker's office to find out the procedure for scheduling a meeting. A meeting request should include the following information:

- Begin your letter by identifying yourself as his or her constituent, as lawmakers only want to meet with their constituents.
- Be sure to include your address. If you are requesting a group meeting, at least one person in the group must be a constituent.
- Include the date and time of the meeting. It's important to be flexible, so give the scheduler two or three dates to choose from. Be clear about how the meeting will occur, whether in person or virtually. If virtually, note the platform on which the meeting will take place.
- Be specific about the purpose of the meeting, and limit the discussion to one or two issues.
- Submit your meeting request to the scheduler at least two to four weeks in advance. Once your meeting is scheduled, put it on the calendar. If the meeting is virtual, be sure to send a link to the scheduler ahead of the meeting.

Executing your meeting

BEFORE THE MEETING



Develop a checklist of important items to accomplish to make your meeting successful:

- ✓ Research the lawmaker's background. You might find that you have something in common, such as having the same college degree or belonging to the same club.
- ✓ Research the committees he or she serves on.
- ✓ Make sure you understand the issues you will be discussing and NARFE's position. Read NARFE issue briefs and fact sheets (located on www.narfe.org).
- ✓ Look up your legislator's voting record by accessing NARFE's congressional voting scorecard or by visiting www.congress.gov and entering the bill number.
- ✓ Gather information about the issue so that you can share it with the lawmaker and staff.
- ✓ Have an "ask." Your mission is to ask the lawmaker to do something about the issue. Example: "Please support H.R. _____."
- ✓ Work with your federation or headquarters to ensure you have the most current information.

DAY OF YOUR MEETING



Be on time. If you are meeting the lawmaker in person, don't arrive more than five minutes early, as space could be limited. However, being on time is

crucial because the lawmaker and staff are busy with back-to-back meetings and activities. If the meeting is occurring virtually, log in to the virtual platform at least five minutes early to allow for troubleshooting in case of technical difficulties.

- ➔ Be polite. First impressions are important, especially for relationship building. Remember that you are representing yourself and NARFE, so always conduct yourself professionally. It is impolite to get political; no matter who you voted for, your member of Congress is representing the interests of all of his or her constituents.
- ➔ The goal of your meeting is to be persuasive and win over the lawmaker so that he or she will act favorably on federal community issues. You will achieve this by making the issue local. Tell your story of how the issue is affecting your wellbeing. And by using NARFE federal family fact sheets, you can share data on how many other constituents are affected by the issue.
- ➔ At the conclusion of the meeting, share your contact information and be sure to get business cards from staff who participated. Assure them that you will follow up with answers to questions or requests for additional information.

AFTER THE MEETING

- ➔ Send a follow-up email thanking the lawmaker and staff for their time. This is your opportunity to provide answers or share requested information. In addition, it's an effective way to initiate the relationship-building process.

Personalized emails and letters

NARFE will notify its members through *NARFE NewsLine*, *Voices*, *NARFE Magazine* and *Insider* when grassroots action is needed.

When responding to an action alert, read the article to find out what is happening with the issue or bill. Click the link, and you will be directed to the Legislative Action Center.

NARFE provides sample letters so that you can personalize them to reflect your own experience with the issue. **It is imperative that you personalize this letter** as it increases the chances of the content resonating with the lawmaker and staff.

TIPS FOR PERSONALIZING AN ACTION SAMPLE LETTER

1. Let the lawmaker know you are his or her constituent. Include your location.
2. Describe your years as a former or current civil servant (what agency did you work for?)

3. Discuss how the issue is affecting your well-being. For example, if your Social Security benefits are being significantly reduced by the WEP and GPO, describe how you are getting by financially.
4. Use NARFE's federal family fact sheets to include data like: # of annuitants in the district/state, total people affected by the WEP and GPO in the state etc. This information also helps the lawmaker make a bigger connection to the number of constituents affected by the issue.
5. Always end with what you want your lawmaker to do about the issue or the bill. Ex. I urge you to cosponsor H.R. ____/S. ____ or oppose H.R. ____/S. ____.

Writing an effective letter to the editor of your community newspaper

Do you feel strongly about an issue and want to let people know what you think?

Do you want to influence others to take action?

Do you want to reach a larger audience outside of NARFE's community?

Letters to the editor are effective at getting the attention of lawmakers and raising public awareness about an issue.

- Letters to the editor are a written way of talking to a newspaper, magazine or other printed publication.
- They can take a position for or against an issue, simply inform or both.
- They can convince readers by using emotions, facts or a combination of the two.
- They are short and tight, rarely longer than 300 words.
- They stimulate the interest of local news media and create more coverage for the matters you're working on.

Sample letters for engaging lawmakers in meetings and events

INVITATION TO ATTEND/SPEAK AT CHAPTER OR FEDERATION MEETING

[Insert date]

The Honorable (Representative/Senator's full name)

Attn: Scheduler

[Insert the district office address]

[Insert the office city state and ZIP code]

Dear [Representative/Senator's full name],

I am writing to invite you to attend/speak at a [virtual or in-person] chapter/federation meeting of the National Active and Retired Federal

Employees Association to discuss issues important to active and federal employees. The meeting will be held on [date] at [insert virtual link or location of meeting]. We are deeply interested in hearing your views on legislation affecting the federal community.

If you or a staff member can attend/speak, we will invite neighboring chapters to attend the meeting to increase attendance.

I will follow up in the next few days with a phone call. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [insert your best contact method].

Sincerely,

[Insert your full name]

[Insert your address]

[Insert your city, state and ZIP code]

SAMPLE LETTER 2: CANDIDATE FORUM REQUEST

[Insert Date]

Mr./Ms. (if candidate is not a current elected official) [Insert candidate's full name]

The Honorable (if the candidate is a current elected official) [Insert Representative/Senator's full name]

Attn: Scheduler

[Insert the main campaign office address]

[Insert the office city, state and ZIP code]

Dear [Representative [or] Senator for incumbents] [Mr. [or] Ms. for candidates] [Insert last name]:

On [date of event] on/at [insert virtual platform or location of event], local members of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) are requesting your participation in a candidates' forum to discuss issues important to active and retired federal employees and their survivors. Members from several NARFE chapters in [insert chapter cities] and statewide officers will attend the forum. We are happy to work with you and your opponent[s] on a date, time and location that are mutually convenient if the above date does not work.

NARFE members in [insert state] defend the retirement, pay and benefits of the [insert number] federal retirees and [insert number] active federal employees in [insert state]. Coverage of our forum will appear in chapter newsletter(s), and a photo story might run in our national publication, *NARFE Magazine*. You can learn more about NARFE at www.narfe.org.

I look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

[Insert your full name]

[Insert your address]

[Insert your city, state and ZIP code]

[Telephone number]

[Email address]

SAMPLE LETTER 3: MEETING THANK YOU LETTER

[Insert Date]

The Honorable [Representative/Senator's full name]

[Insert the Washington, DC office address]

Washington, DC [insert 20515 for House, 20510 for Senate]

Dear [Representative/Senator's full name],

I wish to extend my appreciation to [you and/or your staff – list staffer's name] for making time to meet with members of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) on [date]. We appreciate the time given to us and the cordial exchange we had.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss [insert issues discussed in your meeting, such as WEP/GPO reform/repeal, securing more accurate cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for seniors].

For your reference, here is a quick summary of NARFE's legislative priorities for the 177th Congress and the issues we discussed: [Insert summary]

Thank you again for your time and consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with your office.

Sincerely,

[Insert full name]

[NARFE title]

[Insert your address]

[Insert your city, state and ZIP code]

[Telephone]

[Email]

Interacting with lawmakers at town halls, coffee hours and other events in the district/state

To locate scheduled congressional events in your district and state, visit the Town Hall Project website at <https://townhallproject.com> and enter your ZIP code.

Attending events as a group is a great way to represent NARFE.

Work with your federation and chapter:

- Wear NARFE gear to get the lawmaker's attention.
- Prepare and designate individuals in the group to ask questions.
- Report your interactions to headquarters.



Interacting with lawmakers on social media

Every day, members of Congress post more than 1,300 times on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. For many elected officials, social media is a megaphone for announcing policy positions, discussing issues with constituents, and, of course, sharing the occasional selfie. Here are a few key strategies for how your organization can use social media as a means for engaging legislators on the issues you care about.

STUDY THEIR STYLE AND PLAN YOUR ENGAGEMENT ACCORDINGLY

The first step to engaging a member of Congress on social media is to familiarize yourself with the kind of posts he or she has typically engaged with in the past. This is helpful in seeing which organizations have had success in garnering engagement from lawmakers and what tactics they used to garner that engagement. Did they retweet something the legislator posted? Did they tag the legislator in a post about one of their constituents? Did they use a hashtag the legislator frequently uses? These strategies vary across every office, so start by focusing on your list of potential or known champions and policy influencers.

TAG TO GRAB THEIR ATTENTION

After you've familiarized yourself with a lawmaker's social media habits, take steps to get the attention of his or her office. Start by tagging his or her official Twitter or Facebook handles in any post you want the lawmaker to see.

While tagging Twitter or Facebook handles will send the legislator a notification, including photos or graphics will help your content stand out and will likely drive more engagement with your post. Office visits during a Hill Day or district site visits during congressional recesses are great times to snap photos with a legislator and share them online.

Depending on the ask you have for a lawmaker, take note of tagging either

his or her campaign or official account, as willingness to engage may be different depending on the kind of content posted.

INCLUDE LOCATION TO SIGNAL CONSTITUENCY

Understandably, members of Congress prefer to engage with their own constituents. If you call into a congressional office, the first thing you are typically asked is, “Where do you live?” On social media, however, it can be hard to tell where someone is from and whether that person lives in the member’s district. To boost your chances of having a member engage with your social media content, find a way to signal that you are a constituent.

Facebook makes this easy—individuals can opt in to have a city/town next to their name flagging that they are residents of a particular district or state, but on Twitter, it can be a bit more challenging. Make sure to add your location to your Twitter profile, and consider adding your city/town to the tweet itself.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING BY ASKING QUESTIONS

To increase the chance that a member’s office sees your post, try responding to a post the member shared with a follow-up question. This ensures that the issue you’re discussing is something that the member is actively talking about in his or her daily work. It also gives the lawmaker a clear way to respond by answering your question. If you simply tag them in a comment, he or she may “like” your post, but you won’t learn anything new about his or her policies, or have an opportunity to continue the dialogue. Asking questions shows the legislator that you are reading the posts.

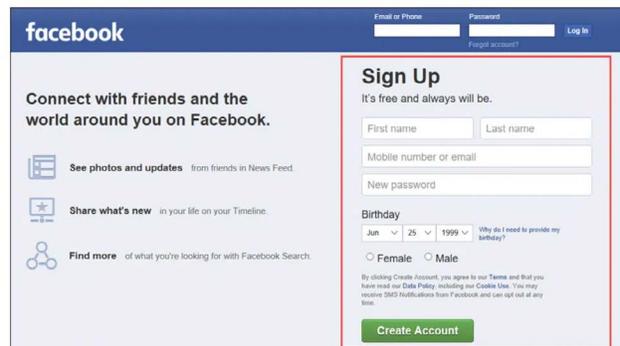
FOLLOW UP AFTER YOUR ENGAGEMENT

Success! You got a lawmaker to engage with your content, ideas or question—now what? Don’t let the conversation die online. Use the online engagement as an easy follow-up for in-person engagement. If this is happening on a larger scale for your organization (e.g., thousands of advocates across the country engaging with legislators), be sure to log any instances of engagement so that your team can refer to those posts in future meetings or advocacy days.

CREATING YOUR FACEBOOK AND TWITTER PAGES

Create Facebook Profile.

Before you can create a Facebook Page for your business, you’ll need to create a personal account on Facebook. If you already have a personal Facebook account, proceed to step 2. If you do not have a personal account on



Facebook, just go to [Facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) and sign up for one.

Create your Twitter Profile.

On your internet browser, go to the Twitter website and click Sign up. In the Twitter app, tap Create account.

You can create your account using an email/phone number or a Google account. Mac and iPhone users can also use their Apple ID.



Calling your lawmaker's office

NARFE members can get connected to their lawmakers' Capitol Hill offices by dialing the toll-free number **1-800-456-8410** and **choosing option 5**. Be ready to leave a message with the person who answers the phone, as the lawmaker is unlikely available to take your call.

Telephone calls are usually taken by a staff member. Ask to speak with the aid who handles the issue about which you wish to comment.

After identifying yourself as a constituent, tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message: "Please tell Senator/Representative [name] to support/oppose H.R. _____. (Be sure to familiarize yourself with the issue and NARFE's position, and to speak clearly and precisely).

Top tips for communicating with lawmakers and their staff

Here are some best practices for interacting with members of Congress and their staff that will take your advocacy efforts to the next level.

- **Have an “ask” and define your message carefully.** Don't communicate with a congressional office only for the sake of communicating. Whether in a meeting, an email or a phone call, always have a clear “ask.” Keep your ask simple, clear and specific, and include the action you would like your legislator to take. This can be vocal opposition to a policy proposal or cosponsorship of a bill NARFE supports. Clear, concise messages are more likely to be remembered and considered by the legislator. Use the materials on the NARFE Advocacy webpage to structure your message.
- **Set the tone.** Make sure the member of Congress and his or her staff are aware of NARFE's legislative priorities and what you plan to discuss prior to any meeting. Send materials to the staffer before the meeting so that he or she can be prepared to talk about the legislator's position.
- **Use various communication channels.** Recognition of NARFE's position can be strengthened through social media, email messages and calls from NARFE advocates throughout the lawmaker's state or district.

Ask other NARFE members to use NARFE's Legislative Action Center to contact their legislators about the issues. If NARFE members from across the district/state are contacting the legislator, your meeting will strengthen those messages and elevate NARFE's voice.

- **Humanize the issues.** Include a personal story in any correspondence you have to help influence your legislator to support NARFE's legislative priorities and explain firsthand how you or other constituents would be affected by the legislation you discuss. When holding a meeting, bring another NARFE member with a compelling personal story.
- **Ask for the staffer's card.** When introducing yourself to the staff person who works on federal issues, ask for his or her business card. Usually, the best way to contact congressional staff is via email.
- **Wear your NARFE name badge** and provide your NARFE business card when meeting with a congressional office or attending a community event in your NARFE capacity.
- **Use the phone when time is of the essence.** Although emails are preferred for day-to-day communication, pick up the phone to discuss urgent matters when legislation is being considered.
- **Arrange some meetings when Congress is not in session.** You will likely have more of the legislator's time and attention when he or she is in the district/state.
- **Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know."** Let the congressional staff know you will get back to them on any question for which you do not immediately have an answer. This is preferable to guessing and possibly supplying an incorrect answer.
- **Follow up after every meeting.** Send a thank-you note after your meeting and take that opportunity to answer any outstanding questions.
- **Know the key issues inside and out.** This includes not only the position you are advocating for, but the opposition, too. Know the congressional committees with jurisdiction over the issue, as well as the members of Congress who support NARFE's position and those who don't. Understanding the arguments against your position will not only help you prepare your case, but also help you inform your legislator. Staff will often ask, "Where's the objection to what you're proposing?" Knowing how to answer that question shows the staff that you take the issue seriously.
- **Familiarize yourself with the legislator's background.** Review his or her biography and see if there's any way to build a connection. Maybe you grew up in the same general area or went to the same school. Also, take note if the legislator has prior government experience at any

level. Know his or her committee assignments and look for ways to connect your issue to the interests of those committees, as committee assignments usually reflect the legislator's interests. Visit the House and Senate chambers websites to learn about your lawmaker's background at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.

- **Rally your allies.** Recruit and organize other supporters of NARFE's position, including individuals, organizations and agencies who are affected by the same policy. This includes vocal NARFE members and other organizations.
- **Be patient.** Successful advocacy does not happen overnight. Building support for an issue takes time and effort on behalf of lobbyists, NARFE members, congressional staff and other stakeholders. Getting a piece of legislation through Congress takes time. Success should also be judged on whether the needle was moved or if the narrative changed, either of which may be the best result.
- **Use financial support provided by your federation** to participate in NARFE's LEGcon legislative training program. NARFE federation 10 Percent Funds are a great way to reimburse CDLs/SLs for postage and other expenses. By providing reimbursement, you're likely to receive greater interest from federation members in volunteering to serve as a CDL/SL.
- **Organize a coordination and communication structure.** Create a communications system that allows you to send information to NARFE members and mobilize action quickly around the district/state. Building a network of advocates helps target your messages and actions most effectively. Engage the chapter legislative chairs and other activists in the district/state to build a structure that works for you. One size does not fit all.

Section Four

Why Establish a Congressional District Leader and Senatorial Leader Program?

By dedicating one person to serve as the liaison between NARFE members and a congressional office, NARFE's grassroots efforts are streamlined, more professional, efficient and consistent in messaging.

CDLs and SLs are responsible for establishing and maintaining relationships with lawmakers and congressional staff. When the staff knows whom to contact within NARFE, they are more likely to reach out in advance of legislative action.

By creating a CDL/SL structure, a federation streamlines advocacy efforts and strengthens NARFE's message on Capitol Hill. By being more efficient in our advocacy efforts, NARFE will be more effective in protecting and enhancing the earned pay and benefits of its members. And by working directly with a congressional office and the headquarters advocacy department staff, a CDL ensures every chapter and every member within a congressional district is receiving the same information regarding NARFE's advocacy efforts and priorities.

FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING CDLS/SLS EFFORTS

NARFE federation 10 Percent Funds are a great way to reimburse CDLs/SLs for registration fees to participate in NARFE conferences like LEGcon, postage for mailings and other expenses. Providing reimbursement means you'll likely receive greater interest from federation members in volunteering to serve as a CDL/SL.

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL CDL/SL LEADERS

Finding new advocates to take on NARFE leadership roles can be challenging. This guide serves to assist federation presidents and legislative chairs in recruiting members who are willing to devote time and effort to serving as CDL/SLs, representing NARFE in meetings with their members of Congress. It is important that you recruit individuals who have the prerequisites and can commit to the service requirements for the job.



THE FIRST STEP IS TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Who are the federation's most active members?
- Do you have members who are vocal on the issues and engage in discussions about them?
- Do they consistently participate in federation and chapter meetings?
- Do they volunteer to serve the organization in various ways?
- Does anyone have relationships with members of Congress?



NARFE HEADQUARTERS CAN HELP YOU TRACK MEMBER ENGAGEMENT IN YOUR STATE

NARFE's Legislative Action Center helps us track members who engage in letter-writing campaigns. It identifies the member, the issue that was written about and the lawmaker who received the message. This is a great way to find out the issues the member most cares about.

- Survey your members to gather information, such as the issues they are concerned about.
- From survey responses, divide your list by issue.
- Invite respondents to join the federation's grassroots network.
- Maintain your list in a spreadsheet so that you can contact pertinent members should the opportunity arise for them to engage in advocacy campaigns.



USE CURRENT ACTIVE MEMBERS FOR PEER-TO-PEER RECRUITMENT

Members who actively engage in advocacy and current CDLs/SLs are your best resources for recruiting candidates for advocacy leader positions. These leaders can best explain the reasons why they turned to advocacy, its value and its purpose. Publicly recognizing your advocacy leaders is one way to get members' attention and may inspire others to volunteer their service.



ENSURE CDLS/SLs HAVE ACCESS TO ADVOCACY TRAINING

The grassroots team at NARFE headquarters consistently develops and presents advocacy training for its advocacy leaders. Federations can request training for CDLs/SLs; ensure they register to attend NARFE's biennial legislative conference, LEGcon; participate in training webinars; and access on-demand training archived on NARFE's website. NARFE federation 10 Percent Funds are a great way to fund or reimburse CDLs/SLs for registration fees to participate in LEGcon and apply to postage and other expenses incurred while performing their advocacy duties.

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