

AIAA Public Policy

A Guide for AIAA Sections

AIAA Key Issues

Each year the Public Policy Committee (PPC) establishes key issues that become the focal points of the Institute's engagement with congressional decision makers, the administration, and state and local officials. Our key issues provide the supporting pillars of the Congressional Visits Day (CVD) program, drive panel sessions at our annual forums, underpin our state-level advocacy efforts, and form the basis of a number of smaller focused events and activities.

The PPC is always looking for input on key issues from various communities within the Institute. Sections with policy issue ideas should submit them via the AIAA website (<http://www.aiaa.org/KeyIssues/>). Please be sure that your suggestions are timely and pertinent to the entire aerospace community.

Engaging Your Members of Congress

Building and strengthening relationships with members of Congress is essential to AIAA's public policy efforts. Engaging with your senators and representative(s) can take place in Washington, DC, during CVD and/or through one-on-one meetings while home in their district. You are more likely to meet with members of Congress during a congressional recess.

Congressional Visits Day

Every year, AIAA members – engineers, scientists, researchers, students, educators, and technology executives – travel to Washington, DC, for a day of advocacy and awareness with national decision makers. CVD is a great opportunity for local AIAA section members to participate in the national aerospace public policy discussion. The event is typically held in mid-March. To participate sections should:

- **Identify Section Members Interested in Attending CVD**
AIAA offers limited financial subsidies to assist members in their efforts to attend the CVD program. Applications will be subject to review by the PPC. See the AIAA CVD webpage for information on application dates for subsidies. Sections may also apply for "Category 3" funds to help cover travel expenses for members as well. Contact the local section chair or regional director for more information regarding "Category 3" funding opportunities.
- **Register for CVD**
Registration for CVD starts the preceding November. Interested participants can register via the AIAA website (<http://www.aiaa.org/CVD/>).
- **Contact Your State Captain**
The PPC Congressional Visits Day Working Group co-chairs will identify and recruit an appropriate participating member to serve as a State Captain. Those individuals will be responsible for coordinating all the activities of the State Team. CVD registrants will coordinate with their State Captain to plan for the event. For sections whose territory covers multiple states, each attending member should contact the corresponding State Captain for their voting district. In all cases the Regional Deputy Director of Public Policy can assist with enabling contact with the appropriate state captains.

- **Make Appointments with Your Congressional Delegation**

The AIAA Headquarters staff does not make appointments for the State Teams. It is the responsibility of the State Captain and delegated team members to reach out to the congressional offices to make CVD appointments. If a State Captain has not been identified for your state, work with your Regional Deputy Director of Public Policy to make appointments. “Find your Representative” by entering your zip code at <http://www.house.gov/>. The list of U.S. Senators can be found at <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>.

- **Participate in the CVD Webinar and Formal Training Session**

AIAA is committed to appropriately informing and educating lawmakers on the importance of the aerospace engineering profession and its role in this vital sector. It is critical that in performing this valuable and sought-after service that the information presented is compatible with the diverse interests of our membership and consistent with Institute policy. If you are attending CVD, or you want to learn more about AIAA's key issues, it is required that you take part in the training webinar held by AIAA prior to CVD. Registrants unable to listen to the live webinar can do so via the AIAA website at their leisure afterwards. A formal in-person training session is also held the afternoon prior to the event. Registrants will be contacted directly about the training schedule after registering for CVD.

- **Hold Your Meeting and Report Back**

Please remember that you are representing the Institute so you should conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. Being prepared and polished will help get our message across and leave the lawmaker with a positive impression about AIAA. The key issues should drive much of the conversation. Be sure to provide details about your meeting(s), including any follow-up requests, via a real-time survey.

See the AIAA CVD website for more details about the upcoming event—<http://www.aiaa.org/CVD/>.

August is for Aerospace

Outside of our CVD program, AIAA members should continue to promote the Institute’s key issues and strive to be “everyday advocates” for the aerospace community. The “August is for Aerospace” program is intended to be the local equivalent of CVD except that teams of members from the section visit the local congressional offices in your area during the annual congressional summer break. August is for Aerospace should allow a wider cross section of your section membership, who could not normally travel to Washington, DC, to participate in meetings with your congressional delegation.

Below is a list of steps AIAA members should use to identify their congressional representatives, learn when the representative may be in their district office, and schedule meetings with your delegation members:

- **Identify Your Member of Congress**

“Find your Representative” by entering your zip code at <http://www.house.gov/>. The list of U.S. Senators can be found at <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/>.

- **Look Up Your Representative’s (District) Contact Information**

Contact information for your representative's local district office is usually located on their official website.

- **Check the Congressional Calendar**

Try to schedule meetings while your representative is home during a district work period (recess). The 2018 House and Senate calendars are posted at:

<https://www.majorityleader.gov/2018-calendar/>

https://www.senate.gov/legislative/2018_schedule.htm

- **Schedule Your Meeting**

Contact your representative's district office and request a 30-minute meeting with the member. The member's schedule is quite busy so be flexible when making the appointment. Do not be discouraged should the member not be available because we can be equally effective when meeting with a district aide. When making the appointment be sure to:

- State your name and affiliation (AIAA)
- Explain what you would like to discuss (reason for meeting)
- Explain why your meeting is relevant to the member

- **Educate Yourself on the Key Issues and Know Your Audience**

As is necessary ahead of CVD, it is important for our members to be properly prepared ahead of any formal meetings with their elected officials. One should first review the lawmaker's biography on their website and have a general understanding of their stances on relevant issues. Next, review the key issues, located on the AIAA website, and select the issues that resonate best with that member of Congress. Feel free to reach out to your Regional Deputy Director of Public Policy, your CVD State Team Captain, or AIAA's Director of Public Policy (Steve Sidorek) should you need additional background on the key issues. You may also coordinate with the PPC on any additional issues that you would like to bring up that are pertinent to the aerospace community in your state.

- **Hold Your Meeting and Report Back**

Please remember that you are representing the Institute so you should conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. Being prepared and polished will help get our message across and leave the lawmaker with a positive impression about AIAA. The key issues should drive much of the conversation. Be sure to provide the results of your meeting(s), including any follow-up requests, to your Region Deputy Director of Public Policy and/or AIAA's Director of Public Policy.

Invite Congressional Delegation to Section Events

Of course sections are not constrained to limit public policy connections with your congressional delegation to only in August. Sections should also strive to enhance and expand the Institute's public policy efforts by engaging your congressional representatives throughout the year in your outreach activities. You may want to:

- Organize a panel session with your local policymaker(s) about a particular key issue or other pertinent matter of interest to your section membership,

- Hold a “Meet & Greet” happy hour with your local representative(s),
- Invite your member of Congress to a section dinner and have them speak about one of our key issues,
- Hold a gathering where a subject-matter expert educates your lawmaker(s) about one of our key issues,
- Invite a legislator or group of legislators to visit and tour a local aerospace facility,
- Meet with your lawmaker(s) in their local office to review the Institute’s key issues,
- Create a new section event that fits your membership and state.

When contacting your congressional office about these types of events, be sure to disclose how many participants (constituents) you anticipate will attend the event and explain the event format when making these type of requests.

The PPC’s Grassroots Engagement Working Group and AIAA’s Director of Public Policy (Steve Sidorek) are available to help your Section in planning for the event. Sections as are encouraged to share information and lessons learned from your event with the Grassroots Engagement Working Group to help other Sections in planning their future events.

Engaging Your State Leadership

Building and strengthening relationships between the section and State leadership can also contribute to AIAA’s public policy efforts. Specifically, sections can make local leadership more aware of national and local aerospace issues that impact our industry and membership by:

- **Identifying a State PP Coordinator**
The AIAA Headquarters staff is small, especially for public policy, and lacks the ability to support events in many different states while still resourcing national events. Consequently, it is recommended that sections select a State Coordinator.
 - For states with only one section the Section Public Policy Officer can serve as the coordinator.
 - For states with multiple sections the sections are encouraged to work together to select a State Coordinator.
 - For sections whose territory covers multiple states, you can select State Coordinators for each state so long as you have sufficient member interest. If you have few members participating then you may decide to focus on just one state in your territory. This is usually the state with the highest membership representation.
- **Participating in State Aerospace Days**
Many states hold an “Aerospace Day” to educate state leaders on the impact of the local aerospace industry. AIAA sections should work collaboratively with other local aerospace groups to present a unified industry message. Many states have specific state aerospace organizations and also chapters of other national groups such as the Aerospace States Association. AIAA does not always have to be in the lead as long as it is a key event contributor. Identifying a key person, or persons, who belong to AIAA and other groups can help smooth the coordination process.

The Grassroots Engagement Working Group and AIAA staff compiles a list of scheduled state aerospace events each year that is available to the sections.

- **Sharing Best Practices**

Gather best practices from the sections and provide “how to” resource materials to help the sections grow local public policy activities.

Public Policy Resources for Sections

Each AIAA region is represented on the PPC by a Regional Deputy Director of Public Policy who also are members of the Grassroots Engagement Working Group:

Region I Tim Dominick
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410.392.1069

Region II Robert LaBranche
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334.233.0500

Region III Amber Abbott-Hearn
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Region IV vacant

Region V Cristin Finnigan
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