



NAVY LEAGUE OF THE UNITED STATES

Office of Legislative Affairs

Getting Started with the Grassroots Legislative Initiative

The Navy League Grassroots Legislative Initiative is collectively made up of members from across the country working with their local councils and the Headquarters Legislative Affairs Department, to advocate for the Sea Services (Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines) to their Member of Congress. While HQ has several professional staff to advocate for the Sea Services, grassroots advocates (YOU!) are the backbone of Navy League advocacy because you are the voters, the constituents of Members of Congress across the country, and believe it or not they listen to what their constituents care about. But your advocacy is just one piece of the overall strategy which includes:

- Annual Sea Service's Hill Surge
- Voice to Congress: online email advocacy tool
- Weekly HQ professional staff meetings with congressional staff
- Navy League sponsored Capitol Hill events
- Sea Air Space: annual convention with military, political, and industry leaders

Home Base for Materials/Resources: [The Legislative Affairs Committee Page](#)

Check this website to obtain the latest documents before every MOC meeting!

Core: Maritime Policy

At the center of the Navy League Grassroots Leadership Initiative (GLI) is the Maritime Policy. The Maritime Policy, currently in its 2021-2022 edition, is a biennial document created for each congressional session. It is produced by a committee of national Navy League leaders who are experts in the four Sea Services, and gather information from the services to produce policy recommendations. All of our advocacy is guided by the recommendations produced in this document which can be found on the [Navy League Website](#). But you don't have to be an expert to be an advocate! The job of national leadership and HQ staff is to support grassroots advocates and give you the tools you need to build a relationship with your local congressional office.

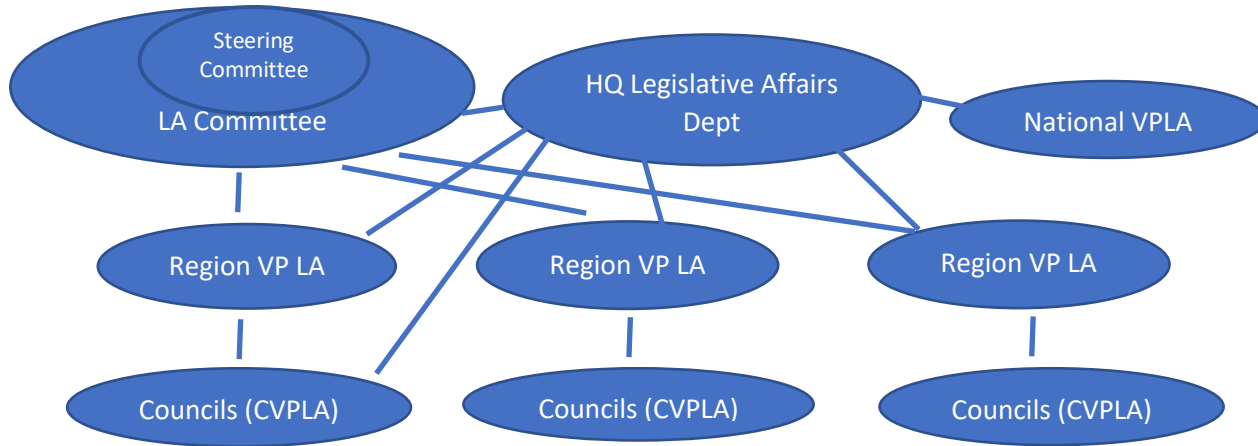
The Presentation and the Ask:

The PowerPoint presentation is designed to help give you a structure for your meeting with your local Member of Congress (MOC), and their staff. It comes with notes and a Q & A to answer some frequently asked questions, but again, you don't have to be a policy expert! If you are asked a question to which you don't have an answer national leadership and HQ staff are here to help. Also, the presentation is a guide, having a successful meeting with a MOC office means getting to know them and them getting to know you, as well as picking a focus for the meeting, and **delivering an ask**.

Structure:

The Grassroots Leadership Initiative is made up of councils, regions and national leadership.

Organizational Chart



Your council Legislative Affairs program will report to your Regional Vice President for Legislative Affairs and Headquarters. We also have A-teams that exist to meet with congressional offices that don't have constituents in the area, and a National Steering Committee that exists to provide guidance to HQ and the full Legislative Affairs Committee.

To get Started: You have several options for training:

1. Your RVPLAs are listed below, contact them to arrange training.
2. Attend a live training with Navy League HQ the fourth Monday of the month at 4pm EST by contacting llorenz@navyleague.org
3. View the webinar available on the LA Committee Page 24/7, email your RVPLA or NLUS HQ when you've completed it for our situational awareness, or if you have any questions.

Region RVPLA	Empire	Florida	Great Lakes	Liberty	Lone Star	Mid- Atlantic	Mid- west	New England
Name	Lou Liotti	Gerald St. Germain	Robert Wilson	Steve Tagariello	Tim Hunsberger	Jon Kaskin	Victor Hulbert	Rusty Robertson

Region RVPLA	Northwest	Pacific	Pacific Central	Pacific Southwest	Rocky Mountain	South Atlantic Coast	Southern
Name	Mike Spence	Larry Osborn	Merilyn Wong	Andy Morabe	Chris Schutzenberger	Jim Offutt	Bill Hewitt

Setting up a Meeting

Objective: Build a relationship with a Congressional Office

Step 1) Set-up and complete a training

Step 2) Complete successful meeting with your Member of Congress and/or their staff – MAKE THE ASK

Step 3) Report your meeting with our [MOC Contact Meeting](#) form in the Action Center

Pre-meeting

➤ **Making a meeting request:**

- Obtain the name of the District Office staff that handles Navy League issues, usually the Military/VA portfolio. This can be done by requesting assistance from HQ, or simply calling the office, introducing yourself and asking for their email.
- Once you have the staffers name you can email them directly asking for a meeting to introduce yourself and the Navy League. Then you can move to:

➤ **Research questions:**

- What is important to the Member of Congress? What is in their district (sea service installation, large Navy veteran population, etc.) What did they run their campaign on? If you have trouble you can always ask for help from HQ!
- Make use of your Congressional District Profiles (including U.S. Senators) available on the LA Committee Page.

The Meeting

What does the Member of Congress and/or their staffer care about? Generally, they want to know two main things:

1. Who are you?
2. What do you want?
3. Can you support/assist the office's objectives?

1) More specifically:

- What is your background personally: a 30 second bio, and how/why did you start advocating with the Navy League?
- What is the Navy League (council/organizational overview)?
- Who are you at the district level? Meaning how many Navy League members are there in the congressional district, and the state, and what activities do you do in the district (units adopted, ship commissioning sponsored)?

2) The ASK, the key to the meeting:

- Every meeting should have at least one ask, sometimes more

- This will often take the form of a request to co-sponsor or vote for particular legislation but can also be personal/professional requests of the member or staff to attend or speak at an event.
- If the ASK is a local request to speak that can be determined by your council, legislative asks will be provided by Navy League HQ.

Don't forget to ask questions. If you talk the whole time you won't be able to get to know the staffer or Member. Building a relationship with an office begins with asking questions during your first meeting:

- What is their background and how did they come to the office?
- What are the Member's priorities, and how can you and the Navy League help?

What to bring:

- PowerPoint Presentation with Legislative Ask slides
- Congressional Profile
- Issue Brief
- Maritime Policy with Supplement
- Business cards
- Camera for photos with MOC/staff

After the Meeting

Report your meeting with our [MOC Meeting Report](#) form in the Action Center

- Follow up and thank the staffer/member you met with and re-iterate the ask politely.

Every office should have a current copy of:

- [2021-2022 Maritime Policy statement](#)
- Ask leave-behinds (available on LA Committee page)
- [Council fact-sheet \(template here\)](#)

To request these documents see Resources below or contact Luke Lorenz at Navy League HQ:

- Email: llorenz@navyleague.org
- Phone: 703-312-1561

Resources

Navy League Legislative Affairs Committee Website:

<https://navyleague.quorum.us/homepage/>

Available on the website:

- Leave-behinds for Members of Congress (legislation fact sheets, etc.)
- Master PowerPoint Presentation
- Issue Briefs
- Congressional District Profiles