

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY



**STATE LEGISLATIVE
LIAISON OFFICER (LLO)
HANDBOOK**

January, 2006

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U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Department of Boating *Directory of Services*

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Article 4.5 of the *Standing Rules of the National Board of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary* states:

There shall be a standing National Legislative Liaison Committee composed of a Chairperson appointed by the National Commodore and such other members as shall be nominated by the Chairman from time to time and appointed by the National Commodore.

The Legislative Liaison Committee shall function only under the sole and direct control of the National Commodore. From time to time the Committee may request assistance of other Auxiliary Units, staff resources and individual members, keeping the cognizant elected and staff officers informed of such requests and resulting activities.

The functions of the Committee are:

- a. To inform the National Board, National Executive Committee and the National Staff of legislative and regulatory developments at the Federal, State and Local levels which affect Auxiliary missions;
- b. To recommend to the National Commodore appropriate Auxiliary responses to such developments;
- c. To assist the National Vice Commodores and District Commodores in implementing such responses as may be specifically authorized by the National Commodore.

No Congressionally appropriated funds shall be used in operations of the Legislative Liaison Committee or in implementing such Auxiliary responses.

LLOs should have a general understanding of the Auxiliary, its resources and their basic function. Each LLO should also be familiar with the basic structure of our National Organization and the various departments. However the LLC's primary responsibility will be with the "Public Elected Officials" and therefore should have a good knowledge of: who those officials are, what they do, and how to contact them.

LLOs should use official government Web sites and published booklets to have quick access to all their state and national representatives.

In addition, the LLO should be familiar with the *Directory of Services* produced annually by the Department of Boating regarding Auxiliary missions with which they must be familiar if called upon to testify. (The *Directory of Services* is attached to this manual as an appendix).

COMMITTEE PURPOSE and VISION

Created by the National Board to serve the needs of the Auxiliary, the National Legislative Liaison Committee (NLLC) is appointed by the National Commodore (NACO) and consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman and three Area Coordinators (ACs). Together, they serve as a conduit to pass information regarding any type of legislative activity that may be of interest to the Auxiliary or its affiliated organizations via each District's State Legislative Liaison Officer (LLO).

As directed by NACO, the NLLC functions as a committee on NACO's staff and shall represent the Auxiliary in developing, initiating, and carrying forth legislative actions in support of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and recreational boating safety.

Appointed by each district commodore (DCO), the State Legislative Liaison Officer (LLO) provides information and assistance to the United States Coast Guard, Auxiliary District Commodores, Auxiliary National Departments and Auxiliary District organizations in their efforts to promote and support the recreational boating safety program and the Auxiliary's legislative agenda. When appropriate and authorized by the Coast Guard District Director of Auxiliary (DIRAUX), the State LLO may represent the Coast Guard Auxiliary in pursuit of approved legislative initiatives.

The State LLOs maintain an association with the applicable Coast Guard District's Boating Affairs Specialist, State Boating Law Administrators (BLA) and other recreational boating safety organizations as well as their Auxiliary district's State Liaison Officers (SLO). As the LLO deals with local, state, and national elected officials, keep these relationships in mind and always work through the appropriate Chain of Leadership as well as the appropriate NLLC Chain of Communications.

JOB DESCRIPTION – Legislative Liaison Officer:

In accordance with *AUXMAN* Chapter 5, paragraph B (1) b *Communications With Other Governmental Agencies*, “Members appointed as State Legislative Liaison Officers (LLO) and those serving on the National Legislative Liaison Committee (NLLC) are authorized to communicate with members of the State Legislature and their staff for the purpose of obtaining information of proposed, pending and passed legislation concerning recreational boating safety matters.”

This information is passed to the appropriate District Commodore, DIRAUX, District RBS Specialist, Chairman and Vice Chairman, one of three Area Coordinators; the Pacific Area: NLLC-AC PAC; Atlantic East: NLLC-AC ATL(E); or Atlantic West: NLLC-AC ATL(W) via the LLO.

Specifically, The LLO shall:

1. Maintain frequent communication with the District Commodore, DIRAUX, National Legislative Liaison Committee Area Coordinator (AC) for State, Coast Guard District Recreational Boating Specialist and SLO and legislative liaisons representing other boating and water safety related organizations which may be a source of legislative activity or information.
2. Identify via written report proposed, planned, pending and introduced legislation in the LLO's assigned state on a timely basis, and advise the DCO, DIRAUX, RBS Specialist and NLLC-AC as necessary when legislation is being considered to ensure NLLC is kept current and up to date, following up with addendums to the initial report(s) as necessary. Continually communicate via the AC whenever there are status changes, hearings scheduled, etc.
3. Establish and maintain a means of communication with the elected State Congressional Representatives (both House & Senate) of the State by locating Auxiliary members who know these members on a personal basis. Further, promote the establishment of an agreement with these Auxiliaries to assist in communicating with these members of Congress, when required and authorized, in support of an Auxiliary and/or Coast Guard legislative positions before Congress. Initial emphasis should be placed on locating Auxiliary contacts and establishing and strengthening relationships with members on committees in both state houses of Congress who deal with Coast Guard and Boating Safety matters.
4. Establish and maintain contact with these members of Congress on an on-going basis so that these members and their staffs are familiar with the Auxiliary; who we are, what we do, our mission and its importance to the nation, what benefit we provide the Coast Guard and boating public, how we support Homeland Security, etc. A good way to achieve this is by encouraging Auxiliary units to invite these members of Congress and/or their staffs to appropriate district, division, and flotilla meetings and ceremonies/events and by ensuring copies of district/division publications are sent to their local and Washington offices.
5. Provide the area coordinator with the status of on-going actions (licensing, mandatory education, etc.) and with appropriate advice and recommendations as to actions the Auxiliary should take at the local, state and/or national level.

6. Identify qualified Auxiliarists to testify in uniform before State Legislative Committees and assist in obtaining District CG/EXCOM approval when necessary. Ensure that the NLLC Chair, Vice Chair and the District's EXCOM is kept informed of action taken before the hearing and complete an after action report after the hearing is completed.
7. Establish a meaningful and ongoing relationship involving regular interaction with the NLLC-AC in assigned area as well as assigned State's SLO so as to be involved in the required annual meeting with each state's BLA and the appropriate DCO(s) as outlined in the *AUXMAN*.
8. Provide quarterly (or *as necessary*) update(s) to the NLLC-AC of progress on issues identified during the annual BLA meeting with the DCO, DIRAUX, RBS Specialist and others as appropriate and progress/status on State legislative bills, providing copies to the appropriate DCO and SLO.
9. Foster a meaningful and ongoing relationship with the State boating authority's legislative coordinator where such position exists.
10. In all tasks, place appropriate emphasis on ensuring that the appropriate DCO and NLLC Area Coordinator are kept fully informed.
11. Contribute written articles to district newsletter and *Navigator* and provide written reports of all district conferences and board meetings. Ensure copies of all articles and reports are provided to the DCO and NLLC-AC.
12. Support the goals and objectives of the USCG and USCG Auxiliary.

Traits and characteristics required to achieve success in the position.

- Be a highly visible and easily accessible resource for the Auxiliary.
- Have access to e-mail and be online to foster quick, effective and efficient communication.
- Be proactive concerning the status of planned, proposed, pending and introduced legislation in your state.
- Have a good understanding of Auxiliary policies, programs, and organizations, including the structure and methods of communications within the Auxiliary.

Goals and Objectives:

With the aid and support of the DCO, NLLC Chair, Vice Chair and Area Coordinator:

1. In coordination and cooperation with the state liaison officer, log annual BLA meetings with the state's boating safety officials and communicate the outcome of the meetings to the NLLC via an *After Action Report* to the DCO and NLLC-AC.

2. Identify and proactively maintain overviews of all potential, pending or actual recreational boating safety legislation of an interest or that could impact the missions and responsibilities of the CG and Auxiliary within assigned state.
3. Establish and maintain a list of Auxiliarists with personal relationships of local, state and federal representatives, and maintain a means of contact with those Auxiliarists.
4. A secondary LLO role is to respond to Auxiliary LLO requests to contact Federal elected officials or their staff members on a specific issue ONLY as directed.
5. Establish and maintain contacts with the USPS Legislative Officers, National Marine Manufacturers Association, and other recreational boating safety organizations and related businesses in your state to share information as well as to develop a support base for legislation supported by the CG and/or Auxiliary.

Basic LLO qualifications should include:

- Available time and willingness to fully meet the LLO responsibilities
- Active in either the PE, OP, VSC, MEP or MDV programs.
- Understanding of the structure and methods of communication within the Auxiliary.
- Understanding of the state's legislative system and process and willing to seek out and develop working relationships with the legislators and their staffs.
- A self-starter requiring minimum supervision.
- Willing to commit to the time required to get the job done.
- Live within the state and in reasonable proximity of the state capitol.
- Possesses e-mail and Internet access and has basic computer skills.

Address questions or concerns to appropriate DCO or the NLLC-AC for action.

RESOURCES

As a LLO you will be expected to be familiar with many boating issues and resources such as USCG website (www.uscg.mil) the Auxiliary's website (www.cgaux.org) and the National Legislative Liaison Committee website (www.legislative.auxnaco.org). In addition to the tremendous amount of information accessible through the Auxiliary's web sites, there are also links to other boating safety related organizations which may provide a useful resource and tool. In addition, you should be aware of government resources available for your use such as published booklets with contact numbers and addresses for your state legislators and government websites for the same. Additionally, all legislative representatives and their office locations can usually be found in the front of your local phone book in the *Blue* pages.

LLOs should become familiar with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) website at: <http://www.nasbla.org/>. This organization is sponsored by the Coast Guard and many interstate boating agreements are reached through the sponsorship of this organization. Many of the subcommittees of NASBLA have active participation of the members

of the Coast Guard and Auxiliary members. In addition, you should access your state's website that provides information from the boating law administrator and the boating law agency.

Additional Internet sites are as follows: *(the listed website's corresponding web site address is located adjacent to the title of the site's page):*



Local Auxiliary web sites

<http://nws.cgaux.org/flotillafinder/index.html>



Coast Guard Auxiliary Association, Inc.

<http://www.cgauxa.org/>



Coast Guard Chief Director's web site

http://www.cgaux.info/g_ocx/



U.S. Coast Guard Official website

<http://www.uscg.mil>



USCG Auxiliary International Affairs

<http://www.cgauxinternational.org/index.html>



Informative Boating Resources on the Web

<http://www.bestboating.org>

Keys to Effectively Communicating With Your Legislator

When Writing a Letter to Your Legislator/Congressional Member, as a private citizen, remember:

- Identify yourself and your business. You may mention your membership in the Auxiliary and other organizations, but **DO NOT IN ANYWAY INFER THAT YOU ARE REPRESENTING THESE ORGANIZATIONS**
- Use a return address on the envelope.
- The ideal time to send a letter to your legislator is when the issue first arises.
- In writing your letter, be sure that you understand the issue and can state it in a concise and clear manner.
- If the proposed legislation has been given a bill number or name, state it in your letter.
- Your letter is most effective when put in your own words, and limited to one page.
- In your letter, you should state what position you would like to see your legislator take and briefly explain why.

- If you are aware of the position your legislator has taken on other issues, be sure to include this information. You want your legislator to know that you are knowledgeable about his/her voting record.
- If you believe that the legislation in question deals with problems that exist, try to present an alternative approach for handling the issue.
- Be sure to use the proper salutation when addressing your legislator.
- Ask for a reply. When you receive a response from your legislator, follow up with a thank you letter briefly restating your position.
- Be sure to address each legislator individually.

It is Unnecessary to:

- Be apologetic. It is your right to contact your legislator to express your position about issues that are important to you.
- Ignore your position. You want to state your concerns in a way that is credible.
- Be argumentative.
- Use your vote to intimidate your legislator.

When Meeting With Your Legislator in Person:

- Be sure to make an appointment.
- Be aware of the "hot" issues.
- If your legislator is unable to meet with you but a staff person is available, meet with her/him.
- Typically, meetings are fairly short so be direct and clear about the issue.
- Never discuss a Legislator's vote record in the same meeting where you discuss a contribution. Not only is it illegal, it marks you as a political novice. Even the appearance of an improper connection can lead to criminal or civil prosecution.
- Prepare talking points prior to your meeting to help guide you through the discussion. You may also want to leave these talking points with your Legislator.
- Follow up the visit with a thank you letter addressed to the legislator and the staff person with whom you met (you want your legislator to know that you appreciate him/her taking

time to meet with you). It will also serve to refresh the legislator's mind about the issue that you discussed with him/her.

When Making a Telephone Call:

- State your name and why you are calling. Tell the person that you are a constituent and a recreational boater and there is an issue that you are calling to address.
- State your position in a concise and clear manner. Try to be brief. If it becomes necessary to support your position with arguments, do so. However, it is not necessary to be argumentative. You should prepare handwritten talking points to help you stay focused on the issue.
- At the end of your conversation, ask for a written response that states the legislator's position. Be sure to provide the person with your address.

If You Are Sending an E-mail:

- Identify yourself as a constituent. Only identify yourself as a member of the Auxiliary's Legislative Liaison program when your contact has been approved by your District Commodore and is being coordinated with your NLLC Area Coordinator.
- Insert your mailing address at the end of your e-mail.
- Be concise in presenting your position. Incorporate what you wish to say in one screen.
- Send your e-mail on Monday, Tuesday or Friday. On these days, there is a large amount of e-mail being sent. If sent on one of these days, there is a better chance that your e-mail will be read.
- Abstain from using the words "Congressman" or "Congresswoman." Instead, use the words "Representative," "Senator," or "Member of Congress."
- If you know the member or one of his/her staff persons, be sure to state this in your e-mail.
- Your e-mail will be more effective if you can convey your understanding of the legislative process. For example, if your issue has been given a bill number or a name, include them in your e-mail. If you know the current status of the bill, who the cosponsors are, or what the President's position on the bill is, include this information in your e-mail.
- Be precise; correlate the position you are taking on the issue with your own experience.
- Relate your position to the member's committee assignments and constituent concerns.
- The tone of your e-mail should be cordial.

- Request a response from your Representative that states his/her position. If the member votes the way you would like, be sure to send him a thank-you e-mail. If the member does not vote the way you would like, send him an e-mail expressing your concern.

Addressing Correspondence

1. To a U.S. Senator:

The Honorable (Name)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20501
Dear Senator (Name)

2. To a U.S. Representative

The Honorable (Name)
U.S. House of Representative
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Representative (Name)

3. To a State Senator

The Honorable (Name)
Arizona State Senate
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Dear Senator (Name)

4. To a State Representative

The Honorable (Name)
Arizona House of Representatives
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Dear Senator (Name)

Sample Letter:

Date

The Honorable Jennifer Jackson
Member of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 555
City, State Zip Code

Dear Senator Jackson:

I am writing to voice my concern regarding Senate Bill 3333. This bill appears to (describe in your own words what the bill does and what your concerns are with respect to the proposed legislation.)

(Underscore how the bill affects people. Include your own experience. Be specific.)

(State your position expressing why you support or oppose the legislation. Include problems that you believe affect the member's constituency.)

(Express your awareness of the member's past voting record. If you do not know her/his voting record, include any positions you know her/him to have taken on a related issue.

Please oppose/support any efforts to pass this legislation. Thank you for your support of the real estate community.

Sincerely,

(Your handwritten signature)

(Your typed name)

*Don't forget: we may always contact an elected official as a private citizen to state and discuss our views. However, under **NO** circumstance should we ever contact an elected official in our capacity as members of the Legislative Liaison program unless our contact has been approved through the appropriate District Commodore!*

Area Coordinators and Contact Information

Your District Commodore and the National Legislative Liaison Committee wants to know when you contact your legislators! If you email, please cc your DCO and Area Coordinator. The area coordinators are:

NLLC-AC PAC
Fred Pulve

NLLC-AC ATL(W)
Chris Ware

NLLC-AC ATL(E)
Stu Soffer

You can reach the area coordinator by email or by telephone. Their contact information can be found in the National Directory. They can also be contacted through your district's senior elected leadership.

Let us know about your activity — it helps us monitor our efforts and the results they produce.

LEGISLATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

1. As a Legislative Liaison Officer (LLO) you must be completely non-partisan regardless of personal political views, other activities or political relationships. Advise the Chain of Leadership if you feel you cannot remove your partisan hat when dealing with state or federal elected officials or their staff members.
2. Make it a point to get to know your local State Representatives and Senators, and their staffs, and introduce yourself to the Speaker of the House and Senate Pro-Tem. Have their email addresses in your address book.
3. Develop a relationship with the Governor's Military Liaison and Lieutenant Governor's Chief of Staff. Have their email addresses in your address book.
4. An LLO's primary responsibility is to monitor state legislation for Auxiliary areas of interest. Do this by letting the legislative staff know what your interests are and asking them to inform you when something is scheduled on a committee agenda.
5. Develop a good working relationship with your State Boating Law Administrator (BLA). Those introducing new legislation and most Committee Chairpersons seek the opinion of the BLA on boating issues. So the BLA can be an excellent source for information about new or pending legislation and scheduled Committee hearings. The Auxiliary BLA Liaison can help develop this necessary working relationship.

6. Sometimes it is desirable to provide expert testimony on a boating issue at a Committee hearing. Work through the professional Legislative Staff and offer to provide a knowledgeable witness. Encourage them to request that the appropriate CG District provide an Auxiliary witness. As LLO, you may or may not be that witness and the decision must be made at the DCO and District Commander/Director of Auxiliary level.
7. Develop a working relationship with the in-state and Washington-based staff members of your Congressional delegations and their Chiefs of Staff. Different staff members handle different areas. When an issue arises, the Chief of Staff will usually refer the matter to the appropriate staff member. Have their email addresses in your address book.



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY
THE CIVILIAN COMPONENT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
EIGHTH COAST GUARD DISTRICT (ER)

Tennessee State Liaison

TO: Legislative Liaison Officers
DATE: 01JAN04
SUBJECT: Reports

Ref: U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Manual, COMDTINST M16790.1E

SUBMITTING REPORTS

Feel free to “*cut and paste*” to use this page as the basic form for which LLO reports are submitted to DCOs and copied to Chair, Vice Chair, and Area Coordinator, NLLC, and to other interested parties. All reports provided the NLLC must be provided the DCO and other district personnel as directed.

It is important that information flow quickly and that it be timely; if legislative activity in your state warrants it, submit a special report via e-mail or fax immediately to your DCO and NLLC-AC.

Quarterly reports are an excellent way to sum up activity or to alert of future planned or contemplated legislation. The desired format for LLO reports is a narrative style beginning with a brief synopsis of the legislative related activity in your state. All items of information shown below that are known at the time of the report should be completed. If certain items are not known or have not yet been reached in the legislative process, they should be left blank. When you are reporting on a specific piece of proposed or actual legislation, detail the information as follows:

State and name of reporting LLO (as noted on this example report’s header)

Date of report

Potential legislation, new legislation or status update

House or Senate bill number, name or title:

Date Introduced to the state’s House and / or Senate

Whom the bill is sponsored by in the House and / or Senate

A brief summary of the legislation

Either an attachment that includes an electronic *Adobe® “pdf”* file or a web site address where the (proposed) legislation can be read in its entirety:

Bill assigned to _____ Senate Committee

Bill assigned to _____ House Committee

Name and Contact information for Committee Chair and key staff:

House:

Senate:

Current Status:

House:

Senate:

Date /Time Bill is next scheduled for review within Committee:

House:

Senate:

BLA'S position on the (proposed) legislation:

Auxiliary's position on the (proposed) legislation:

LLO opinion on the (proposed) legislation:

Legislative Session ends:

Remarks:

If you are updating a report, state:

1. No changes since my last report dated..., or legislature is out of session and will reconvene on...

or
2. Update the previous report submitted on this proposed bill by including any details or changes regarding the legislation or previous information submitted. As the bill moves forward in the legislative process, update reports should be submitted at each major step; i.e., introduced, committee hearing scheduled, reported out of committee, heard on the floor, etc.
3. Do not hesitate to include any rumors or information you may be aware of regarding pending or proposed legislation—be assertive in finding out what's happening and ask probing questions so the Auxiliary can stay in front of potential legislative issues.

Submit your report in a timely fashion via email to your DCO and area coordinator.

Business cards and specialized name tags, if approved by your DCO may be obtained through the Auxiliary Association as illustrated below. Work through the DSO-MA in your assigned District to insure that whatever you are using is authorized within your District.

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD AUXILIARY



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
The civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard
(Authorized by Congress in 1938)



Style 1



Style 2



Style 3



Style 4

Dedicated to promoting recreational boating safety

Sample Legislative Liaison Officer Name Tag

