



**NARFE**

**Legislative Officer and  
Congressional District Leader (CDL)  
Manual**

# FOREWORD

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Advocacy before Congress is NARFE's core mission. As a legislative officer, you play a vital role in the success of our lobbying efforts. NARFE Headquarters provides direction and leadership for these efforts, but the core of the Association's legislative clout – the ultimate basis for its political power and influence – is its grass-roots strength. We know that all politics is local and that members of Congress respond to their constituents. That is why your being a NARFE legislative officer is so important. On Capitol Hill, NARFE's legislative staff echo what you tell members of Congress at home.

The foundation of our grass-roots work is the Protect America's Heartbeat program. This ongoing campaign is designed to increase member engagement on legislative issues and draw positive media attention to the federal community. Like all grass-roots programs, the Protect America's Heartbeat (PAH) campaign is a bottom up, locally driven effort.

This Legislative Officer Manual outlines the duties of the legislative officer and Congressional District Leader (CDL) and describes the resources available to help you fulfill them, whether for your chapter or federation.

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# Duties and Responsibilities of NARFE Legislative Officers

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Every NARFE member plays a significant role in NARFE's legislative outreach. As your federation and/or chapter legislative officer, you are the focal point for legislative action and know-how for your chapter or federation. You serve as a liaison between your members, your federation leadership, your elected officials and NARFE's Legislative Department, providing expertise and direction for members, motivating them and coordinating effective grass-roots action.

**As a NARFE legislative officer, you are responsible for:**

- Providing legislative updates to NARFE members at chapter and federation meetings and through newsletters;
- Building a relationship with members of Congress and their staffs, including at least one annual meeting with the congressional office(s);
- Reaching out to congressional offices to update them on NARFE's legislative priorities;
- Preparing grass-roots activities in which NARFE members can participate;
- Motivating NARFE members to participate in grass-roots advocacy;
- Familiarizing yourself with NARFE's Legislative Program and positions on pending legislation;
- Keeping up to date on Capitol Hill and Protect America's Heartbeat activities;
- Working with other legislative officers in your state; and
- Updating your federation and the NARFE Legislative Department about your legislative outreach.

At the **chapter level**, you also should work with your CDL and fellow legislative officers in the area so that you can plan joint events. You also should work with your federation legislative officer to ensure that everybody is on the same page and that work isn't being duplicated.

At the **federation level**, you should be the primary contact for senators' offices if you do not have a Senatorial Leader, as well as working with chapter legislative officers and Congressional District Leaders to make sure they have the resources necessary to be successful.

## Duties and Responsibilities of NARFE Federation Officers

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Different federations have developed different ways of offering assistance to their legislative officers. While some smaller federations might not need an entire team of legislative officers, some federations might find that delegating some of the outreach is not only easier for the federation legislative officer, but also helps encourage participation by members and develops a willingness to take on a leadership position. Because the federation legislative officer is responsible for reaching out to grass-roots activists and NARFE members, having “deputies” can help in that effort. Additionally, it will help you know what is going on in the state and help update the other federation leaders and NARFE Headquarters. The following may be of assistance to you:

- Legislative Committee – The committee is made up of a representative of each congressional district with a chairperson selected from the committee. Sometimes the chairperson is the federation’s legislative officer, and sometimes a separate person is elected to serve as the federation’s legislative officer (i.e., federation vice president). The committee is responsible for setting the grass-roots agenda and reaching out to congressional offices on behalf of the federation.
- Congressional District Leaders – Similar to a legislative committee, congressional district leaders are responsible for reaching out to a specific congressional office and reporting back to the chapters within the congressional district.
- Regional Representatives – Some federations have region or district vice presidents responsible for legislative outreach, while others have individuals specifically tasked with legislative outreach on behalf of the chapters within a certain regional boundary.

Regardless of how your state is organized, make sure there is a clear communications path established. Know how you can reach the chapters, and make sure the chapters can reach you. Additionally, make sure that everybody is sharing the same information. Put in writing what the expectations are for those carrying out grass-roots advocacy. Some federations have their own manuals or guides for legislative officers. Sometimes, a phone tree can be useful – especially in urgent situations such as an unexpected vote.

# Duties and Responsibilities of NARFE Congressional District and Senatorial Leaders

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A Congressional District Leader (CDL) is a NARFE federation position. The NARFE members in this position serve as the liaison between a member of Congress' office and the NARFE chapters within that congressional district. The federation can determine how best to appoint or elect a CDL. While not a requirement, it is strongly encouraged that the CDL live in the congressional district he or she represents.

For senators, some federations will choose to have their Federation Legislative Chair serve as the liaison to the senators' offices, while other federations will have a separate person serve as a liaison to both or each senator. These individuals can be called Senatorial Leaders (SLs). For the purposes of the remainder of this manual, CDL includes those working with Senate offices. CDLs serve as the primary NARFE point of contact for congressional offices on the ground. However, they are not the only person that congressional offices work with within the congressional district. CDLs should help facilitate meetings and provide training to the chapters in the district. They are not meant to replace the chapter legislative officers.

As a NARFE CDL, you are responsible for:

- Ensuring the federation leadership is kept up to date on activities in the congressional district. This includes chapters' grass-roots activities the congressperson is hosting and ensuring NARFE members are attending them and, in general, how the member of Congress votes on NARFE issues;
- Ensuring the chapters within the congressional district are kept up to date on the latest legislative information and are taking appropriate action;
- If requested, visiting chapters in the district and providing legislative updates and/or trainings;
- Attending public events hosted by the congressional office to help build the relationship;
- Scheduling meetings with the member of Congress and NARFE members/leaders from the chapters represented in the congressional district;
- Coordinating activities among chapters within the congressional district;
- Reporting activity and congressional interactions to NARFE's Legislative Department; and
- Reaching out to congressional staff in advance of key votes.

This list is not exhaustive, and some federations may ask the CDL to perform other jobs or tasks, but they should be legislative and grass-roots related.

Similarly, as a CDL you are expected to:

- Ensure chapter legislative officers are receiving the updates they need to perform their duties and that they are using this information constructively, including providing updates at chapter meetings and in newsletters;
- Participate in the monthly region conference calls with NARFE's Legislative Department. While a CDL may not be able to participate in the call every month, he or she will, at least, receive the recap emails;
- Stay up to date with NARFE's training materials and information, including participation in monthly webinars;
- Keep up to date with NARFE's policy positions on issues before Congress, as well as demographic information for their district;
- Have an email address and check email regularly;
- Be familiar with legislative websites and resources, as well as the resources available on NARFE's website and the Protect America's Heartbeat (PAH) website; and
- Be aware of statements made by members of Congress on NARFE issues.

Again, this list of expectations is not exclusive. These are the minimum expectations as determined by the NARFE Legislative Department to ensure that CDLs are able to fulfill their responsibilities.

The CDL should work with the chapter legislative officers to assist in coordinating activities among chapters within a congressional district. The CDL works to avoid duplicating efforts by several chapters. For example, if a congressional district has five chapters in the district, and the member's office will meet with NARFE only once a year, the CDL will work with the five chapters to make sure that all are represented at the meeting. This way, if Chapter 1234 requests and gets a meeting, and then Chapter 5678 makes a request and is denied, Chapter 5678 is still participating in the meeting. Similarly, the CDL and chapters should work together when inviting a member of Congress to speak at a chapter meeting or event. This coordination will allow the member of Congress to speak to a larger audience, and the chapters are not competing with one another.

The CDL is meant to streamline NARFE's grass-roots efforts and lead to working more efficiently and professionally with the congressional office. It simply means that there is a designated person to help facilitate the work being done in the district.

Similarly, the CDL should work with the federation legislative chair, who is responsible for establishing the federation's field plan and grass-roots goals. The CDL works with the federation legislative chair to make sure that the work of the federation is accomplished at the local level and that chapter leaders have the tools and resources they need to accomplish legislative and grass-roots work. The federation legislative chair needs to ensure that CDLs have the resources and information they need to accomplish their responsibilities.

Some federations have area or district vice presidents who work with chapters on a variety of tasks. These area/district vice presidents can work with CDLs, but because of the time and work commitment a CDL is asked to give, and depending on other duties, we do not recommend combining the area/district vice president with the CDL job functions.

## Resources Available From NARFE Headquarters

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The Legislative Department is here to help you succeed. To assist you in your duties, the following resources are available.



**PROTECT  
America's  
Heartbeat**

### Protect America's Heartbeat (PAH) Toolkit

Comprised of seven separate toolkits under NARFE's "Protect America's Heartbeat" banner, the Toolkit provides NARFE members and leaders with the resources necessary to be successful in their grass-roots outreach. The seven toolkits include sample agendas and letters for meetings with members of Congress, NARFE fact sheets and issue briefs, media resources, how-to guides and so much more. Material also is available specific to your state. The Toolkit is available online at [www.narfe.org/heartbeat/resources.cfm](http://www.narfe.org/heartbeat/resources.cfm). It also can be mailed to you by contacting the Legislative Department ([leg@narfe.org](mailto:leg@narfe.org)).

#### The seven separate toolkits are:

1. NARFE Issue Briefs and Fact Sheets. Includes materials about NARFE's legislative priorities that you can provide to congressional offices or use as background.
2. Legislative Activities at the Individual Level. Includes materials to help individuals carry out their own legislative outreach.
3. Legislative Activities at the Leadership Level. Includes materials to assist NARFE chapter and federation legislative leaders in promoting outreach. This toolkit is separated into three sections: Congressional Meetings, At Your Meeting and In Your Community.
4. Campaign Activities Toolkit. Includes materials for NARFE members and leaders on grass-roots activities during campaign season.
5. Media Outreach Toolkit. Includes materials for NARFE members and leaders on how to reach out to local media outlets and be a spokesperson for NARFE.
6. Field Plan Toolkit. Includes information for NARFE leaders on how to develop and execute a grass-roots campaign field plan.
7. NARFE-PAC Toolkit. Includes materials for NARFE-PAC coordinators at the chapter and federation level.

### PAH Daily Media Monitoring

This daily email from NARFE's Legislative Department compiles links to news articles from

across the country. The email is available to any member who asks to be put on the distribution list, but it is geared toward NARFE leaders. To get on the list, email Carolyn Dorf at [cdorf@narfe.org](mailto:cdorf@narfe.org).

## **Legislative Hotline**

A brief email message and audio recording, usually distributed on Fridays when Congress is in session, the Hotline provides NARFE members with a weekly roundup of activities in Washington, DC, that week. It is emailed to all NARFE members and is available by phone by calling, toll-free, 877-217-8234. To get the latest Hotline, as well as archived ones, go to the NARFE Legislative home page, [www.narfe.org/legislation](http://www.narfe.org/legislation).

## **PAH Regional Conference Calls**

These monthly calls allow NARFE Headquarters to brief NARFE leaders on news and information concerning legislation and Protect America's Heartbeat. There is an opportunity for participants to ask questions and to engage in conversation with each other. The calls are designed for leaders, but any member is welcome to participate. To make sure you are on the distribution list, email Sarah Weissmann at [sweissmann@narfe.org](mailto:sweissmann@narfe.org).

## **PAH Legislative Update for Chapters and Federations**

This monthly legislative update is emailed to federation presidents, federation legislative chairs, chapter presidents, chapter legislative chairs and CDLs. The update is designed to provide material for these NARFE leaders to use in their reports on legislative activities to their members, whether they make the reports at their meetings or in their newsletters.

## **Training Webinars**

These sessions, on a variety of topics, are currently scheduled once a month. See the schedule and past webinars online at [www.narfe.org/legislation](http://www.narfe.org/legislation). Legislative officers are encouraged to participate.

## **Legislative Action Center/NARFE's Website**

The Legislative Action Center is NARFE's online advocacy hub. From the Legislative Action Center, members can send email messages to their legislators, draft a letter to the editor and track NARFE priority legislation. The Legislative Action Center is available online at <http://cqrcengage.com/narfe/home>. NARFE's website provides resources about NARFE and its departments, including all of the materials and links described in this manual. NARFE's website is [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org); the Legislative home page is [www.narfe.org/legislation](http://www.narfe.org/legislation) and provides a wealth of resources for legislative leaders, including a webpage dedicated to CDL

resources that all legislative leaders will find useful.

## **Congressional District Leader Guidance**

The guidance, available online at [www.narfe.org/legislation](http://www.narfe.org/legislation), provides answers to commonly asked questions from federations seeking to establish CDLs in their states.

## **Legislative Training Conference**

Held every odd-numbered year, the conference provides grass-roots leaders with the tools and resources necessary to organize within their chapters and federations. The three-day conference ends with meetings on Capitol Hill.

## **NARFE Congressional Directory**

Published at the beginning of every Congress, the Congressional Directory is available for purchase and includes contact information for every member of Congress.

## **NARFE Legislative Staff**

NARFE Headquarters is part of your legislative team and half of the Association's outreach. You talk to members in the district, and NARFE staff reiterates the message on Capitol Hill. The NARFE

Legislative Department remains ready to assist you. Talk to staff about your plans, enlist their help in your outreach and seek their assistance in drafting materials. As we continue to provide resources, we are always open to recommendations. Don't hesitate to contact us at 703-838-7760, ext. 201, or [leg@narfe.org](mailto:leg@narfe.org).



## Additional Online Resources

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In addition to the resources provided by NARFE, there are several online resources with which we encourage legislative officers at all levels to become familiar. This list is not comprehensive, but it is a good place to start.

- Familiarize yourself with the websites of your legislators. Visit the websites of the House of Representatives ([www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)) and the Senate ([www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)). In addition to linking to your elected officials' websites, the House and Senate websites provide historical information, civics materials and links to committee websites.
- While most grass-roots activity is geared to Congress, there are times when our focus might shift to the White House. Become familiar with the White House website ([www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)).
- Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau counts the number of Americans. But every two years, it releases the American Community Survey, which is designed to give a more detailed look at who we are. Explore the data released by the Census Bureau on its website ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)). Use it to provide context to your members of Congress and help explain who federal employees and retirees serve every day.
- You can get legislative information, including information from past Congresses, as well as public laws and the *Congressional Record*, from a site sponsored by the Library of Congress. The Library currently is in the process of transitioning from its existing site, Thomas ([www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)), to a new one, Congress.gov ([www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov)). Some information is still available only on Thomas, but for NARFE's purposes, either website should work. Thomas is scheduled to fully retire by the end of 2014.
- The Center for Budget and Policy Priorities ([www.cbpp.org](http://www.cbpp.org)) offers good background information on budget and fiscal policy.
- In addition to monitoring your local news outlets and blogs, some additional news outlets that you may want to monitor include:
  - > **Roll Call** ([www.rollcall.com](http://www.rollcall.com)) – A newspaper covering Capitol Hill and politics, including House and Senate elections;

- > *The Hill* ([www.thehill.com](http://www.thehill.com)) – Another Capitol Hill newspaper that includes coverage of House and Senate elections;
- > *Politico* ([www.politico.com](http://www.politico.com)) – An online newspaper that covers all aspects of politics;
- > *GovExec* ([www.govexec.com](http://www.govexec.com)) – An online source of news and resources on government employment;
- > *Federal News Radio* ([www.federalnewsradio.com](http://www.federalnewsradio.com)) – A website and radio station focused on federal government employment issues; and
- > *The Washington Post Federal Page* ([www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federalgovernment](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federalgovernment)) – An entire section of *The Washington Post* focused on government employment.

While it can be frustrating, it is important that you monitor outlets that reflect both sides of the aisle.

If you participate in social media, make sure you follow NARFE Headquarters:

- > **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/NARFEHQ](http://www.facebook.com/NARFEHQ)
- > **Twitter:** @NARFEHQ

## Political, Not Partisan

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NARFE is a political organization, but it is not partisan in its legislative outreach. This is a small yet important distinction. NARFE must engage in the political process. NARFE members must reach out to elected officials who can affect the earned retirement and health benefits of the federal community. Regardless of party, those elected officials are the ones currently in office. NARFE's excellent reputation on Capitol Hill is boosted by the fact that it is a nonpartisan organization. Members of Congress know that we are honest brokers delivering unbiased positions, and that gives us access. That message must be echoed at home by NARFE's grass-roots advocates.

Just as NARFE and its professional lobbyists are nonpartisan, it is your responsibility as a legislative officer to also leave party at the door. This means meeting with members of Congress who are not of the same party as you. The issues that NARFE members face impact people regardless of political party.

While we remain nonpartisan, we do recognize that elected officials have party affiliations. We must acknowledge the effect of party affiliation on today's politics. That includes recognizing the power of the majority party and how difficult it can be to cross party lines to vote on an issue.

Beyond the majority party, other aspects of politics must be taken into account. First, party leaders on both sides of the aisle play an important role in the functioning of Capitol Hill. And committee and subcommittee chairs and their ranking counterparts play an influential role in the debate.

NARFE-PAC plays a key role in our advocacy efforts. NARFE gives to both sides of the aisle through the PAC and does not consider party affiliation when making decisions. The first and last question asked is how the member of Congress has voted on NARFE issues.

When engaging in the political process, we must remember that:

- Congress can vote on your benefits at any time.
- Just because legislation did not pass this Congress does not mean we stop trying.
- Both good and bad legislation can be introduced again next Congress.
- We have to prioritize our legislative goals, and those priorities are dependent on Capitol Hill action.
- There is always a next election.
- Silence equals acceptance.

# Capitol Hill Information

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To help you with your legislative responsibilities, here is some basic information about Capitol Hill:

## Congressional Structure

**Congress** is made up of two bodies: the House of Representatives and the Senate. A new Congress convenes every two years in odd-numbered years and meets for two one-year sessions. We are currently in the second session of the 114th Congress. When one or both of the bodies adjourns for an extended period of time, it is known as recess.

The **House of Representatives** is the lower body, and the 435 representatives are elected every two years. The House is the people's house.

Because the House is designed to be a majority-rule body, the majority party wields a lot of power. The **Speaker of the House** is the leader of the majority party and presides over the House. Elected by the full body, (s)he is responsible for the administration of the House. The current speaker is Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI-1). Each party has a leader who is responsible for representing the party on the floor and more broadly. In addition to the party leadership responsibilities, the **Majority Leader** is responsible for setting the House calendar. The current Majority Leader is Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-23), and the **Minority Leader** is Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-12). Both parties have a whip, who is responsible for "whipping" votes and knowing what the caucus members are thinking. The **Majority Whip** is Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA-1), and the **Minority Whip** is Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD-5). Beyond the whip, the parties have different leadership organizations with leaders from across the country.

The House also has several caucuses. These caucuses, or groups of representatives with a shared interest in a particular topic, have varying degrees of influence. Some of the most well-known caucuses beyond the party caucuses are the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Republican Study Committee and the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

The **Senate** is comprised of senators who are elected to represent a state. There are 100 senators, two per state. Senators are elected every six years, so one-third of them are up for election every two years. The Senate is meant to be a more deliberative body and move slower than the House.

The vice president of the United States is the presiding officer of the Senate, followed by the Senate president pro tempore. The running of the Senate falls to the **Majority Leader**, usually working with the **Minority Leader**, who determines what bills and amendments will come to the floor for debate. The Majority and Minority Leaders are also their respective party's spokespeople on the floor. The **Majority Leader** is Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY), and the **Minority Leader** is Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV). The Senate also has a whip operation for each party. The **Majority Whip** is Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), and the **Minority Whip** is Dick Durbin (D-IL).

Unlike the House, the Senate has filibuster authority. Any senator can block a bill or nomination with a filibuster. While the filibuster has evolved over the years, it now takes 60 votes to end debate on a bill, also known as cloture.

## Office Staff

Every member of Congress has at least three offices: a Capitol Hill office, a district or state office(s) and a campaign office. The Capitol Hill office is usually responsible for policy and communications. The district office is responsible for community outreach and constituent casework. The campaign office is where the politics of re-election are handled.

### Important staff members with whom you will interact are:

#### Capitol Hill

- Chief of Staff – The chief of staff reports directly to the member of Congress and is responsible for running the office.
- Legislative Director (LD) – The LD has broad legislative knowledge and makes recommendations to the member of Congress as to whether or not (s)he should support pending legislation.
- Communications Director or Press Secretary – This person is responsible for all communications and media outreach for the office.
- Legislative Assistant (LA) – There are usually several LAs in an office, each with responsibility over certain issue areas.
- Legislative Correspondent (LC) – This staff person works with an LA on drafting letters to constituents on issues and researching bills.
- Scheduler – This person is responsible for maintaining the member of Congress' schedule and usually collects all of the background information before a meeting. The scheduler can maintain the official schedule and the campaign schedule.
- Intern – Usually a college student, the intern does any work assigned within the office.

Never be rude or dismissive of the intern – it will get back to the senior staff and member of Congress. Additionally, interns often are hired by the office or another office on Capitol Hill.

### **District Office**

- District Director – The district director is the senior staff member outside of Washington. In Senate offices, the title is state director. There may be several district or state offices depending on the size of the district. However, there is only one district/state director.
- Caseworker – The caseworker is responsible for solving constituents' problems with government agencies.
- Representative – The representative is responsible for community outreach and frequently represents the member of Congress locally when (s)he is in Washington, DC.

### **How a Bill Becomes a Law**

A bill is introduced in the House or the Senate and given a bill number (H.R. ### or S. ###). Legislation can begin in either body, except for bills to raise revenue or change the tax code, which start in the House. If the same legislation is introduced in both bodies, the legislation is called a companion bill. Once introduced, a bill is assigned to a committee(s) for consideration.

From there, the committee can hold a hearing on the bill or mark it up. A mark-up is where amendments are considered and any changes to the bill are made. If necessary, a subcommittee will review the bill before the full committee. If a majority of the committee members agree on the bill, it will be voted out of committee.

Once voted out of committee, the legislation goes to the full floor for a vote. In the House, it first goes to the House Rules Committee, which determines the rules of debate for the bill. This includes which amendments, if any, will be considered. If the full body votes in favor of the legislation, the bill goes to the other body for debate. There, the process begins again.

If changes are made in the second body, the legislation goes back to the original body to be changed or agreed to. If the disagreements between the House and Senate cannot be ironed out, a conference committee is convened to resolve any differences. Then the conference committee bill is voted on in both the House and Senate. At any time through this process, legislation can be stalled and "die."

Once the legislation moves through the congressional process, it is sent to the president,

who can either sign it or veto the legislation.

If legislation does not pass by the end of the second session of a Congress (typically December 31 in even-numbered years), it will have to be introduced again during the following Congress and begin the legislative process over.

## **The Budget Process and Key Players**

The government's fiscal year begins on October 1, but the budget process usually begins in February. While the process below is not how budgets have been handled recently, it is the way the process is designed to work.

The president will submit a budget request to Congress in early February. Based on the president's proposal, the House and Senate Budget Committees will propose budget resolutions that establish the spending levels for the government. If there are differences between the House and Senate, a conference committee will meet. A budget resolution is passed by the House and Senate but not signed by the president, which means that it has no authority of law. The budget resolution establishes the spending limits and determines the actions of the appropriations committees. The Senate Budget Committee must report its budget by April 1 and the full Congress must complete action on a budget resolution by April 15.

Within the federal budget, there are two kinds of spending – discretionary and mandatory. Discretionary spending must be approved by Congress and is debated in the appropriations committees. Mandatory spending is the money that must be spent every year based on past legislation. Mandatory spending includes entitlement programs. Entitlement spending is a budgetary term that means any money that Congress has promised to a constituency based on pre-set factors. Based on this budgetary definition, federal annuities and benefits are considered entitlement spending. NARFE often refers to federal benefits as earned entitlements.

Once the budget resolution is passed, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees determine allocations for discretionary spending. Each appropriations committee is divided into 12 subcommittees with jurisdiction over specific agencies and departments. Once the subcommittee has completed its work, the full appropriations committee votes on the bill. If the process works as it is designed to, there will be 12 appropriations bills that pass the House and Senate and are signed into law by the president before September 30. If all of the appropriations bills are combined into one large spending bill, it is known as an omnibus bill. If all 12 are not signed into law by October 1, a continuing resolution (CR) will be signed that extends funding for a specified period of time.

Three government agencies that are part of the budget debate are the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

- > **OMB** ([www.whitehouse.gov/omb](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb)) is responsible for developing the president's budget and executing the president's policy across the government, including agency management and oversight, and coordination and review of federal regulations.
- > **CBO** ([www.cbo.gov](http://www.cbo.gov)) supports the congressional budget process through nonpartisan analysis of budgetary and economic issues. CBO conducts analysis based on the requests of congressional offices and covers an array of policy areas, including cost estimates for legislation. This cost estimate is often referred to as the "score."
- > **GAO** ([www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov)) is an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress and investigates how the government is spending its money.

## Key Congressional Committees and Membership for the 114th Congress

Following is a list of the congressional committees with jurisdiction over NARFE issues, as well as their membership. It is important to know to which committees your members are assigned, especially if they are among the eight listed below.

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The **Senate Budget Committee** drafts Congress' annual budget plan, monitors actions taken on the budget of the federal government and has jurisdiction over the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). ([www.budget.senate.gov](http://www.budget.senate.gov))

### Republicans

Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY), Chair  
Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA)  
Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL)  
Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID)  
Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)  
Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH)  
Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA)  
Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI)  
Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH)  
Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS)  
Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN)  
Sen. David Perdue (R-GA)

### Democrats

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Ranking Member  
Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)  
Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR)  
Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)  
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)  
Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA)  
Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR)  
Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)  
Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA)  
Sen. Angus King (I-ME)

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The **House Budget Committee** drafts Congress' annual budget plan, monitors actions taken on the budget of the federal government and has jurisdiction over the Congressional Budget Office (CBO). ([www.budget.house.gov](http://www.budget.house.gov))

### **Republicans**

Tom Price (GA-06), Chair  
Rep. Todd Rokita (IN-04), Vice-Chair  
Rep. Scott Garrett (NJ-05)  
Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25)  
Rep. Tom Cole (OK-04)  
Rep. Tom McClintock (CA-04)  
Rep. Diane Black (TN-06)  
Rep. Rob Woodall (GA-07)  
Rep. Marsha Blackburn (TN-07)  
Rep. Vicky Hartzler (MO-04)  
Rep. Marlin Stutzman (IN-03)  
Rep. Mark Sanford (SC-01)  
Rep. Steve Womack (AR-03)  
Rep. Dave Brat (VA-07)  
Rep. Rod Blum (IA-01)  
Rep. Alex Mooney (WV-02)  
Rep. Glenn Grothman (WI-06)  
Rep. Gary Palmer (AL-06)  
Rep. John Moolenaar (MI-04)  
Rep. Bruce Westerman (AR-04)  
Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL-16)

### **Democrats**

Rep. Chris Van Hollen (MD-08),  
Ranking Member  
Rep. John Yarmuth (KY-03)  
Rep. Bill Pascrell (NJ-09)  
Rep. Tim Ryan (OH-17)  
Rep. Gwen Moore (WI-04)  
Rep. Kathy Castor (FL-11)  
Rep. Jim McDermott (WA-07)  
Rep. Barbara Lee (CA-13)  
Rep. Mark Pocan (WI-02)  
Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (NM-01)  
Rep. Debbie Dingell (MI-12)  
Rep. Ted Lieu (CA-33)  
Rep. Donald Norcross (NJ-01)  
Rep. Seth Moulton (MA-06)

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The **Senate Appropriations Committee** writes the legislation that allocates federal funds to government agencies, departments and organizations on an annual basis. The committee has 12 subcommittees that are tasked with drafting legislation that allocates funds to agencies within their jurisdiction. Federal employee pay increases are established by the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee.  
([www.appropriations.senate.gov](http://www.appropriations.senate.gov))

### **Republicans**

Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS), Chair  
Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY)  
Sen. Richard Shelby (R-AL)  
Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN)  
Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)  
Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)  
Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC)  
Sen. Mark Kirk (R-IL)  
Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO)  
Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS)  
Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND)  
Sen. John Boozman (R-AR)  
Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV)  
Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA)  
Sen. James Lankford (R-OK)  
Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT)

### **Democrats**

Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD),  
Ranking Member  
Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT)  
Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)  
Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)  
Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL)  
Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI)  
Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT)  
Sen. Tom Udall (D-NM)  
Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)  
Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR)  
Sen. Christopher Coons (D-DE)  
Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI)  
Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)  
Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT)

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The **House Appropriations Committee** writes the legislation that allocates federal funds to government agencies, department and organizations on an annual basis. The committee has 12 subcommittees that are tasked with drafting legislation that allocates funds to agencies within their jurisdiction. Federal employee pay increases are established by the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee. ([www.appropriations.house.gov](http://www.appropriations.house.gov))

### **Republicans**

Rep. Harold Rogers (KY-5), Chair  
Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen (NJ-11)  
Rep. Robert B. Aderholt (AL-4)  
Rep. Kay Granger (TX-12)  
Rep. Michael K. Simpson (ID-2)  
Rep. John Abney Culberson (TX-7)  
Rep. Ander Crenshaw (FL-4)  
Rep. John R. Carter (TX-31)  
Rep. Ken Calvert (CA-42)  
Rep. Tom Cole (OK-4)  
Rep. Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25)  
Rep. Charles W. Dent (PA-15)  
Rep. Tom Graves (GA-14)  
Rep. Kevin Yoder (KS-3)  
Rep. Steve Womack (AR-3)  
Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (NE-1)  
Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-17)  
Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (TN-3)  
Rep. Jaime Herrera Beutler (WA-3)  
Rep. David Joyce (OH-14)  
Rep. David Valadao (CA-21)  
Rep. Andy Harris (MD-1)  
Rep. Martha Roby (AL-2)  
Rep. Mark Amodei (NV-2)  
Rep. Chris Stewart (UT-2)  
Rep. Scott Rigell (VA-2)  
Rep. David Jolly (FL-13)  
Rep. David Young (IA-3)  
Rep. Evan Jenkins (WV-3)  
Rep. Steven Palazzo (MS-4)

### **Democrats**

Rep. Nita M. Lowey (NY-17),  
Ranking Member  
Rep. Marcy Kaptur (OH-9)  
Rep. Peter J. Visclosky (IN-1)  
Rep. José E. Serrano (NY-15)  
Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro (CT-3)  
Rep. David E. Price (NC-4)  
Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (CA-40)  
Rep. Sam Farr (CA-20)  
Rep. Chaka Fattah (PA-2)  
Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (GA-2)  
Rep. Barbara Lee (CA-13)  
Rep. Michael M. Honda (CA-17)  
Rep. Betty McCollum (MN-4)  
Rep. Steve Israel (NY-3)  
Rep. Tim Ryan (OH-13)  
Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-2)  
Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (FL-23)  
Rep. Henry Cuellar (TX-28)  
Rep. Chellie Pingree (ME-1)  
Rep. Mike Quigley (IL-5)  
Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-6)

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The **Senate Finance Committee** has jurisdiction over all tax matters and Social Security issues, such as the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). ([www.finance.senate.gov](http://www.finance.senate.gov))

**Republicans**

Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Chair  
Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA)  
Sen. Michael Crapo (R-ID)  
Sen. Pat Roberts (R-KS)  
Sen. Michael Enzi (R-WY)  
Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX)  
Sen. John Thune (R-SD)  
Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC)  
Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA)  
Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH)  
Sen. Patrick J. Toomey (R-PA)  
Sen. Dan Coats (R-IN)  
Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV)  
Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC)

**Democrats**

Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Ranking Member  
Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY)  
Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)  
Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA)  
Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL)  
Sen. Robert Menendez (D-NJ)  
Sen. Thomas R. Carper (D-DE)  
Sen. Benjamin Cardin (D-MD)  
Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)  
Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO)  
Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)  
Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA)

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The **House Ways and Means Committee** has jurisdiction over all tax matters and Social Security issues, such as the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). ([www.waysandmeans.house.gov](http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov))

**Republicans**

Rep. Kevin Brady (TX-8), Chair  
Rep. Sam Johnson (TX-3)  
Rep. Devin Nunes (CA-22)  
Rep. Pat Tiberi (OH-12)  
Rep. Dave Reichert (WA-8)  
Rep. Charles Boustany, Jr. (LA-3)  
Rep. Peter Roskam (IL-6)  
Rep. Tom Price (GA-6)  
Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL-16)  
Rep. Adrian Smith (NE-3)  
Rep. Lynn Jenkins (KS-2)  
Rep. Erik Paulsen (MN-3)

**Democrats**

Rep. Sander Levin (MI-9),  
Ranking Member  
Rep. Charles Rangel (NY-13)  
Rep. Jim McDermott (WA-7)  
Rep. John Lewis (GA-5)  
Rep. Richard Neal (MA-1)  
Rep. Xavier Becerra (CA-34)  
Rep. Lloyd Doggett (TX-35)  
Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-5)  
Rep. John Larson (CT-1)  
Rep. Earl Blumenauer (OR-3)  
Rep. Ron Kind (WI-3)

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The **House Ways and Means Committee** cont.

**Republicans**

Rep. Kenny Marchant (TX-24)  
Rep. Diane Black (TN-6)  
Rep. Tom Reed (NY-23)  
Rep. Todd Young (IN-9)  
Rep. Mike Kelly (PA-3)  
Rep. James B. Renacci (OH-16)  
Rep. Patrick Meehan (PA-7)  
Rep. Kristi Noem (SD-AL)  
Rep. George Holding (NC-13)  
Rep. Jason Smith (MO-8)  
Rep. Bob Dold (IL-10)  
Rep. Tom Rice (SC-7)

**Democrats**

Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-9)  
Rep. Joseph Crowley (NY-14)  
Rep. Danny Davis (IL-7)  
Rep. Linda Sanchez (CA-38)

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The **Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee** has jurisdiction over civil service issues, including federal employee and annuitant retirement and health benefits, as well as the U.S. Postal Service. ([www.hsgac.senate.gov](http://www.hsgac.senate.gov))

**Republicans**

Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), Chair  
Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)  
Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH)  
Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY)  
Sen. James Lankford (R-OK)  
Sen. Michael Enzi (R-WY)  
Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH)  
Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA)  
Sen. Ben Sasse (R-NE)

**Democrats**

Sen. Thomas Carper (D-DE),  
Ranking Member  
Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-MO)  
Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT)  
Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)  
Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND)  
Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)  
Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI)

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The **House Oversight and Government Reform Committee** has jurisdiction over civil service issues, including federal employee and annuitant retirement and health benefits, as well as the U.S. Postal Service. ([www.oversight.house.gov](http://www.oversight.house.gov)).

### **Republicans**

Rep. Jason Chaffetz (UT-3), Chair  
Rep. John L. Mica (FL-7)  
Rep. Michael Turner (OH-10)  
Rep. John Duncan, Jr. (TN-2)  
Rep. Jim Jordan (OH-4)  
Rep. Tim Walberg (MI-7)  
Rep. Justin Amash (MI-3)  
Rep. Paul Gosar (AZ-4)  
Rep. Scot DesJarlais (TN-4)  
Rep. Trey Gowdy (SC-4)  
Rep. Blake Farenthold (TX-27)  
Rep. Cynthia M. Lummis (WY-AL)  
Rep. Thomas Massie (KY-4)  
Rep. Mark Meadows (NC-11)  
Rep. Ron DeSantis (FL-6)  
Rep. Mick Mulvaney (SC-5)  
Rep. Ken Buck (CO-4)  
Rep. Mark Walker (NC-6)  
Rep. Rod Blum (IA-1)  
Rep. Jody Hice (GA-10)  
Rep. Steve Russell (OK-5)  
Rep. Earl Carter (GA-1)  
Rep. Glenn Grothman (WI-6)  
Rep. Will Hurd (TX-23)  
Rep. Gary Palmer (AL-6)

### **Democrats**

Rep. Elijah Cummings (MD-7),  
Ranking Member  
Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney (NY-12)  
Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (DC-AL)  
Rep. William Lacy Clay (MO-1)  
Rep. Stephen F. Lynch (MA-8)  
Rep. Jim Cooper (TN-5)  
Rep. Gerald E. Connolly (VA-11)  
Rep. Matt Cartwright (PA-17)  
Rep. Tammy Duckworth (IL-8)  
Rep. Robin Kelly (IL-2)  
Rep. Brenda Lawrence (MI-14)  
Rep. Ted Lieu (CA-33)  
Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12)  
Rep. Stacey Plaskett (VI-AL)  
Rep. Mark DeSaulnier (CA-11)  
Rep. Brendan F. Boyle (PA-13)  
Rep. Peter Welch (VT-AL)  
Rep. Michelle Lujan Grisham (NM-1)

# Hatch Act

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The Hatch Act governs political activity for federal employees. It can be confusing and an easy excuse for many federal employees not to take action. Having some familiarity with the rules can be helpful in your efforts as a legislative officer.

The agency responsible for investigating violations is the Office of Special Counsel ([www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov)). Its website provides excellent resources on the Hatch Act, including do's and don'ts.

In February 2014, *narfe* magazine published an article on the Hatch Act. The article is available in the Campaign Activities Toolkit. Some highlights from the story:

- The Hatch Act does not apply to retirees. Once an individual retires, he or she can participate in all political activity.
- There is a difference between legislative activity (which NARFE grass-roots focuses on) and working to elect individuals. Activism on legislation does not violate the Hatch Act.
  - ♦ However, legislative activity at the workplace or on government equipment can violate other federal rules. It is strongly suggested not to engage in advocacy while at work or from your “.gov” email address.
- The Hatch Act limits partisan political activities and communications in two primary ways:
  - ♦ It limits many partisan political activities to outside the workplace, duty hours, uniform, and government vehicles.
  - ♦ It bans certain forms of partisan political activities regardless of whether the federal employee is off duty or away from the workplace.
- All federal employees can advocate for their benefits on their own time. It is a right preserved in the First Amendment.



**National Active and Retired  
Federal Employees Association**

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Alexandria, Virginia 22314-1914  
800-627-3394

**[www.NARFE.org](http://www.NARFE.org)**