

APS Office of Public Affairs

The APS Office of Public Affairs (OPA) advocates for issues of importance to the APS membership. During the last few years, the OPA has worked on federal funding of research, science education, energy, defense and the environment. The primary means of advocacy are coordinating grassroots letters and visits to Congress by APS members, OPA staff visits to the Hill, media stories and op-eds, and Washington coalition activities with science, engineering, industrial, and higher education organizations.

The 43,000 members of APS are the backbone of any APS advocacy effort, but only if Washington hears from them. The Units offer a powerful means for communicating to APS members.

The OPA offers a variety of ways for the Units to learn about and influence Washington activities, to participate in them, to help increase the APS grassroots participation, and to communicate Washington issues to APS members:

- As part of the annual APS Units Convocation in January, officers can arrive a day early to participate in a Congressional Visits Day. The day begins at the Office of Public Affairs where the staff provides a briefing on the issues and effective meeting strategies. The OPA supplies materials for the visits, some in advance and some at the briefing.
- At key times throughout the year, the OPA requests Units to send “alerts” to their members requesting that they email Congress or the Administration, . The Unit alerts are a powerful complement to APS-wide alerts.
- The OPA is always ready to host individual or small group visits to Capitol Hill. It can provide a briefing, suggest meeting strategies, and supply meeting materials. Units may want to encourage their officers or members to allow extra time for Hill visits if they come to Washington for other business (or to make a special trip).
- The OPA offers staff to speak at Unit meetings about APS Washington activities and to boost grassroots participation.
- The OPA staff can provide short paragraphs for Unit newsletters about Washington happenings and APS plans.

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