Mister President and Members of the Council,

The Committee on Chemistry and Public Affairs (CCPA) is responsible for providing ACS with advice and recommendations for action on public policy matters that impact the chemical enterprise. In addition, CCPA works to motivate and support ACS members to advocate for science. To this end, CCPA applauds the advocacy training that ACS Past President Allison Campbell has sponsored at national and regional meetings, and via ACS webinars. Interested members who missed these opportunities can still attend an advocacy training session scheduled at the Southeast Regional Meeting on November 2.

Another way that CCPA supports ACS members’ contributions to public policy is through the ACS Public Policy fellowships. Each year, ACS supports two Congressional fellows who spend a year working in Congress for the U.S. Representative or Senator of their choice. ACS also supports a Science Policy fellow who gains broad exposure to policy issues in the federal agencies while working side-by-side with ACS staff. You can read more information about the newest ACS Public Policy fellows in my written report.

Previous ACS Public Policy fellows have gone onto permanent positions in federal agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Departments of State, Energy, Commerce, and Agriculture. In this way, the Fellows’ contributions to national policy decisions continue long after the fellowship is completed.

However, not all ACS Public Policy fellows stay in Washington after their fellowships. And while many of my ACS colleagues assume that the fellowships are open only to recent Ph.D. graduates, I would like to emphasize that this opportunity is open to mid-career chemists as well.

ACS member Dale Orth is an example of a mid-career Congressional Fellow who spent a year on Capitol Hill and then brought the lessons and insights back to his community at the conclusion of his fellowship. Dale took a sabbatical from Western State Colorado University during the 2010-2011 academic year to be an ACS Congressional Fellow. He worked on education and science funding issues in the U.S. Senate. At the conclusion of his fellowship, Dale returned to teaching, and now also serves on the local school board, thus continuing public service in his hometown.

CCPA highlights ACS local section engagement in public policy activities by sponsoring the ACS President’s Local Section Government Affairs ChemLuminary Award. CCPA would like to recognize the Dallas-Fort Worth, Northeastern, & Virginia local sections for their government affairs efforts, and congratulate the Northeastern Local Section for winning. Councilors are urged to include their local sections’ advocacy activities in their annual local section reports so that they may be considered for the CCPA ChemLuminary award.

Now is an important time for chemists to make their voices heard on public policy issues. CCPA encourages members to take advantage of ACS tools, resources, and expertise to assist them in these efforts.

Mr. President, this concludes my report.