

Committee on Public Affairs and Public Relations

Report to the ACS Board of Directors

The Board Standing Committee on Public Affairs and Public Relations (PA&PR) met virtually on March 3, 2016. The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming new and returning Committee members, reviewed the agenda and highlighted three upcoming advocacy events:

- SETWG Congressional Visits Day - April 12 & 13
- ACS Legislative Summit - April 19 & 20
- DOE National Lab Day on the Hill – April 20

The Chair asked ACS staff to update Committee members on the launch of the Congressional Chemistry Caucus (CCC). The CCC will launch at a Capitol Hill ceremony on the evening of April 27. Representatives John Moolenaar (R-MI) and Daniel Lipinski (D-IL) are co-creators of the CCC. ACS CEO and Executive Director Tom Connelly will be joined in making remarks at the ceremony by his counterparts from the American Chemistry Council and the National Association of Chemical Distributors. The purpose of the CCC is to educate Members of Congress, their staff and the public on the value of the chemistry enterprise to the nation.

The Chair concluded opening remarks by highlighting several items behind Tab 1 of the agenda book:

- PA&PR Committee Information Sheet
- Message points for communicating with policymakers on ACS top-tier policy priorities
- Snapshot of Governance Advocacy
- Chart of major ACS coalitions and partnerships associated with policy statements
- Federal legislation tracking chart
- Press release outlining ACS 2016 federal legislative priorities

Approval of Minutes - The Committee **VOTED** to adopt the minutes of the December 12, 2015 meeting.

ACS Public Policy Statement Prioritization

The Chair introduced the annual exercise to prioritize individual ACS public policy statements and thanked committee members for submitting their input via a survey instrument.

ACS Office of Public Affairs staff (OPA) presented the background for the prioritization process and explained how the committee's input helps set the ACS advocacy agenda. Based on survey input received from both PA&PR members and OPA staff, policy statements were put into four tiers. The committee reviewed each tier and discussed the statements proposed for inclusion in each tier.

After discussion, the committee **VOTED** to approve the advocacy priorities for 2016.

Public Opinion Research on Attitudes to Chemistry Update

OPA staff presented, at the request of the Committee from its December meeting, a conceptual framework for ACS to conduct potential public opinion survey of public attitudes towards chemistry similar to what the Royal Society of Chemistry published in 2015. After significant discussion, the majority view of the Committee was that the best path forward for ACS in this regard was to better inform ACS members about the wealth of research already available that the public perception of chemistry is much better than perceived by chemists by and large. Additionally, the Committee felt that ACS should better direct its members to its significant resources available to them to engage effectively with the public to both explain their vital role as chemists and the value of chemistry in improving people's lives. OPA staff was asked to investigate cost-effective methods to accomplish the aforementioned and report to the Committee at the June meeting.

ACS Journal Article Embargo Pilot

OPA staff presented an innovative new pilot they developed in concert with the ACS Publications Division to build on current publicity success by securing even greater media attention to research published in ACS journals. The pilot, focused initially on four ACS journals, will be formally initiated in late April 2016.

2016 Legislative Outlook

ACS staff highlighted ACS legislative successes in 2015 and the challenges of the 2016 congressional environment make more difficult by the politics of a presidential election year. The 2016 outlook examined prospects for FY17 funding of research and development and STEM education as well as reauthorization of the Toxic Substances Control Act, passage of a comprehensive energy bill and other issues.

ACS Citation for Leadership in Public Policy

The Chair presented the recommendations from OPA for the first nominees to receive the ACS Citation for Leadership in Public Policy. The citation was a new form of recognition approved by the Committee in December 2014 that permits OPA great flexibility to recognize public policy leadership in an effective and efficient manner. The nominees, both members of Congress, will receive their citations at a Capitol Hill reception ACS is co-sponsoring with the Council for Undergraduate Research on April 20, 2016.

Adjournment

There being no old or new business, the Committee adjourned at 4:00 PM (ET).

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. John Adams, Chair