

## **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 9, 2018. The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming members, expressed her enthusiasm for the privilege of serving as the new chair of the Committee, reviewed the agenda, and highlighted several issues of interest:

- **ACS Press statements** on the enacted federal FY18 & 19 budget deal and the release of the FY 19 President's budget request.
- **C&EN Comment** by committee member Lee Latimer encouraging ACS members to become involved with advocacy and the National Historic Chemicals Landmark program.
- **Letter from President Peter Dorhout** to U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen on behalf of Park University chemistry professor Syed Ahmed Jamal arrested by Immigration & Customs Enforcement agents for overstaying his visa.
- **Letter from Congressman Daniel Lipinski** to ACS Executive Director Tom Connelly thanking ACS for its leadership in helping protect graduate students from an onerous tax provision that would have taxed tuition waivers.
- **ACS Legislative Summit** – will be held on April 17 & 18 in Washington, DC and will have the participation of 12 ACS Board members, a former Board member and several members from the Younger Chemists Committee who received advocacy training at the August 2017 national meeting.

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

**Approval of Minutes** - There being no additions or corrections to the minutes of the November 30, 2017 meeting as distributed, the minutes were APPROVED without objection.

**ACS Policy Statement Gap Analysis** – the Chair led a discussion around five questions, sent in advance of the meeting as part of the annual policy statement prioritization survey that sought Committee member input regarding possible policy coverage gaps in current ACS public policy statements. The questions covered topics of innovation, research and development, science education and the workforce, the environment and sustainability, and the production, communication and utilization of scientific information and one open-ended question. Committee members discussed the input provided as well as offered additional insights that will prove helpful as policy statements are considered for future modification, extension or replacement. At the present time, no significant gaps were found in current ACS public policy statements.

**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 staff 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 EA&C 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 prioritization for 2018.

**Global Outreach Update** - The Committee received an update from staff on Chemistry Enterprise Partnerships that represent a new form of international engagements with sister scientific societies built around the 2030 U.N. Sustainable Development goals; efforts to pilot global member training to advocate on behalf of chemistry with a focus on the 2030 U.N. goals; ACS preparation for the 2019 International Year of the Periodic Table; status updates on two human rights cases ACS is pursuing, and; lastly an ACS/U.S. State Department chlorine training presentation being delivered to the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague on March 14, 2018.

**External Affairs & Communications Activities at the New Orleans National Meeting** - EAC staff provided the Committee with an overview of their activities at the New Orleans National Meeting, including staff support for eight governance committee meetings, operation of the ACS Press Center and conduct of press conferences, several training workshops, including one on advocacy, and hosting an International Activities Welcoming Reception. Committee members were encouraged by the Chair to try to find time to stop by and observe some of these activities.

**Old/New Business** – The Chair informed Committee members of her intent to have Dr. Susan Butts, who is leading a team exploring a potential ACS workforce immigration statement, participate in the June Committee meeting. Dr. Butts has been gathering data on ACS member views on the immigration topic and wanted to share these data with the Committee as well as get the benefit of their views.

### **Adjournment**

There being no additional business, the Committee adjourned at 2:00 PM (ET).

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Laura Pence, Chair