

ASURA's Legislative Liaison

This material was prepared in March 2013 and updated in 2021 by Jeri Meeks. The document includes extensive input from Alan Johnson, a past Legislative / ASRS Liaison.

General Information

The Legislative Liaison acts as an agent of the Board to provide information and advocacy in relation to the Arizona Legislature and other associated sub-organizations. Per the [ASURA Bylaws](#), the Liaison is charged to exert influence on targeted agencies and specific bills, as approved by the ASURA Board and in consultation with the [ASURA officers](#).

A. Membership

The Liaison serves at the pleasure of the ASURA Board. The Liaison is registered as a Lobbyist for the organization. There can be more than one lobbyist.

B. Meetings

The Arizona Legislature is in session from January through May/June.

C. Areas of Concern

ASURA has been concerned chiefly with legislation in the Arizona Legislature in three areas:

- ASU, usually its annual budget
- Protecting ASRS retirement benefits
- Various issues involving public education at the pre-university and community-college levels and senior care.

D. Sources of Information

There are a variety of sources that need to be periodically checked:

- <https://asunow.asu.edu/> - ASU's news page with information about the university's programs and priorities
- <https://www.azregents.edu/news-announcements/news-releases> - Arizona Board of Regents news page
- <https://www.azcentral.com/politics/> - Local news website
- [azasrs.gov](https://www.azasrs.gov/); - the site presents ASRS news and updates
- <https://www.azasrs.gov/content/board-and-committee-meetings> - ASRS Board and Committee meeting schedules, agendas and materials
- <https://www.arizonaaea.org/home/33.htm> - the Arizona Education Association gives insight into what's going on in the Legislature regarding school and community-college legislation and the AEA legislative agenda
- <https://www.azleg.gov/> – the Arizona State Legislature site provides detailed information about each bill and its progress through the legislative process.

This site also links to a Request to Speak page that, with a login, will allow the

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user to enter a for or against position for each bill, request to speak at a committee meeting and track both actions.

- <https://azcapitoltimes.com/> - Arizona's legislative news site.
- <https://yellowsheetreport.com/> - Arizona's most exclusive political publication. Membership required.
- <https://goyff.az.gov/councils-commissions/governors-advisory-council-aging> - The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging (GACA), within the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family, was created to advise the Governor, Legislature and all State Departments on all necessary issues relating to aging. GACA conducts monthly meetings on topics related to seniors and retirees with expert speakers and lawmakers who are working together on corresponding legislation.
- <https://www.facebook.com/AZRSCo/> Arizona Retirement Security Coalition. This organization is an advocacy group whose purpose is to stand up for our public servants and their families in the area of public pension reform.
- <https://www.acluaz.org/> - the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona tracks legislation.
- <https://states.aarp.org/arizona/> - AARP Arizona is focused on retiree issues and needs in our state.

E. Gathering Information

The ASURA Liaison should use the various websites and Facebook pages listed above in the *Sources of Information* section to sign up to receive their newsletters.

In the late fall the Legislative Liaison surveys information sources such as the local newspaper and news or organization websites for prospective legislation of interest to ASURA. By early January, the Liaison submits a list of bills to support or oppose to ASURA's Board for their approval.

F. Supporting or Opposing a Bill

The Liaison has the right to support or oppose a bill. Executing this right involves one or more of the following steps:

- The Liaison, at a minimum, will first express support or opposition for the bill on the AZleg.gov website or in committee hearings. The Arizona State Legislature's website enables any citizen to find out committee assignments, including dates, times, room location and broadcast links (if available). The website provides a "request to speak" function to comment on a bill in a particular committee meeting. The Liaison simply types in his/her statement (briefly) and it will be transmitted to the whole committee.
- The Liaison may choose to speak to the committee in person. He/she indicates this in his/her request. He/she attends the meeting, and may be allowed to speak

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if the committee chairperson opens the floor for public comments. Even if the Liaison doesn't choose to speak in person, attendance at meetings is an important sign of support or opposition.

- After a bill proceeds from committee hearings to "floor" votes, the Liaison may want to e-mail particular legislators with support for or opposition to a bill. When e-mailing it is important to use a personal and not ASU e-mail address.
- The Liaison may want to do more in which case he/she may make appointments with individual legislators ahead of the hearing of a bill or may organize ASURA members to write letters, send e-mails (using personal not ASU e-mail addresses), or telephone advocacy to legislators.

Being informed, showing up at the Legislature, and mentioning that ASURA has hundreds of members produces some recognition of our organization and its wishes.

G. Registering as a Lobbyist and Lobbyist Duties

The ASURA Legislative Liaison has always been Registered Lobbyist with the Arizona Secretary of State. This status is not absolutely necessary as any citizen may address the Legislature, but this official status shows that we're serious. Registration is free to us and not too hard to do. That said the Lobbyist has a significant amount of reporting to do, such as:

- Quarterly expenditure reports via either the Electronic Lobbyist Filing (ELP) system or a pdf report to the Secretary of State.
- Annual Lobbyist registration and renewals
- Annual Principal/Public Body registration/renewal (non-payment option)
- Principal Annual Report

There are also maintenance actions the Lobbyist must perform, such as:

- Change of Designated Lobbyist
- Add/Remove Lobbyist from Principal/Public Body (PPB) Lobbyist Registration
- Search Lobbyist records
- Lobbyist Reporting dates

See the Secretary of State's Lobbyists webpage at <https://azsos.gov/elections/lobbyists> for detailed information about registering, reporting and the rules of conduct for Registered Lobbyists.

H. Working Together

ASURA's current Bylaws list one Legislative Liaison person. This job often requires multiple people working together to track and respond to legislation. When studying what to support or oppose, the group can test out their views on each other. It is also helpful to have multiple people attend the Legislative session(s) when bills that have

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been identified as concerns are being presented. The Liaison could seek help informally or an ad hoc Council could be initiated. It is desirable that the four ASURA Liaisons (Legislature, ASRS, ADOA Health Insurance, and ASRS Health Insurance) work together.