

## ARRL Legislative Action Program FAQ

1. What is the ARRL Legislative Action Program?

*The ARRL Legislative Action Program is designed to make it possible for ARRL members to promote and protect Amateur Radio through coordinated, legitimate political action at the Federal government level.*

2. Why should I become involved in this program? Isn't talking with our Congressmen a waste of time?

*Federal Legislators frequently vote based upon their understanding of the wishes of their constituents. As a constituent, your opinion is important to them.*

*Elected officials view their constituents as "resources" and want to hear from them. They need input from their constituents to gauge positions on a piece of legislation and determine how it will impact the voters in their districts. As a licensed Amateur Radio operator, you can provide a valuable resource to your member of Congress. More often than not, the knowledge Legislators have of Amateur Radio is fairly limited. Therefore, your combination of being a constituent and a federally licensed operator can help make a difference by ensuring that your Congressman and staff receive the balanced information they need to make good decisions on Amateur Radio related legislation.*

3. How is this Program organized?

- A. *The ARRL Board of Directors (Board) selects legislation that is to be supported or opposed through the Program.*
- B. *The ARRL Chief Executive Officer (CEO) manages the day-to-day operations of the Program.*
- C. *The ARRL President monitors operation of the Program and reports on this to the Board and, between Board meetings, to the ARRL Executive Committee (EC). The EC ensures compliance with the policies of the Board during periods between Board meetings.*
- D. *Each ARRL Division Director is responsible for the operations of the Program in his/her Division. The Director may appoint a Division Legislative Action Chair (DLAC) to manage on his behalf. The Director or DLAC appoints, trains and manages one or more Legislative Action Coordinators (LAC) for each state in the Division.*
- E. *The LAC appoints, trains and manages Legislative Action Assistants (LAAs) to meet with Federal Legislators/Congressmen or with their legislative aides in their offices "back home." The discussions and the materials left after the meetings encourage Legislators to support laws friendly to Amateur Radio.*
- F. *Visits to Legislators' "home" offices are made only when requested by ARRL Legislative Action Program managers through Division officials. These visits may involve key Legislators or all Legislators.*
- G. *Depending on the specific situation, managers in the Program will be requested to have all members in relevant Divisions, states or Congressional Districts to write in support of the ARRL legislative position to their Federal legislators.*

4. Who chooses which legislation we will support or oppose?

*The ARRL Board of Directors chooses the legislation to support or to oppose.*

5. Who develops strategies and tactics for the Program?

*The ARRL President, ARRL CEO, ARRL General Counsel, ARRL Executive Committee and the Congressional Relations firm the League retains work together to develop strategies and tactics to be used in the Program.*

6. Why doesn't the Program operate at the state and local levels of government as well as Federal?

*Each Section Manager (SM) is encouraged to maintain a program in the Section to support or oppose legislation at the state and local levels. A person known as the State Government Liaison (SGL) typically heads this program. The SGL position was established in Minute 20 of the July 1982 Board Meeting.*

*Persons who participate in the state and local program may also choose to participate in the Federal program and vice versa. To learn more about this state and local program, contact your Section Manager at <http://www.arrl.org/sections/>.*

7. I thought ARRL is a tax-exempt non-profit organization and that US IRS rules do not allow it to become involved in lobbying and the law-making process. What's going on here?

*ARRL is a tax-exempt non-profit organization as defined by section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. As discussed in the "It Seems to Us" editorial in the August 2006 issue of QST, "What is prohibited [to us and other tax-exempt non-profit groups] is any involvement in a political campaign. Under the Internal Revenue Code, all section 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. The prohibition applies to all campaigns at the Federal, state and local level, and violating it could result in revocation of tax-exempt status."*

*Also explained in the August 2006 QST editorial, ARRL is allowed to promote or work against specific public policy issues. Issues we have found of significant interest to Amateur Radio include Federal legislation to control excessive interference from Broadband Over Power Lines, Federal legislation to protect Amateur Radio frequencies and Federal legislation essentially to ensure all amateurs are allowed to install an antenna.*

8. I have often contributed to and worked for one or more political candidates in my area. Do I need to stop being active in political campaigns if I work in the ARRL Legislative Action Program?

*No, as a citizen of this country you are encouraged to speak and act for yourself in political campaigns if you wish. If you do this, what you need to do is to ensure that your participation in the political process is clearly understood to represent your own, personal position and actions, and not the position and actions of ARRL. When you act as a private citizen, be certain to wear your "private citizen" hat and not your ARRL hat.*

9. Who is eligible to participate in the Program?

*ARRL members who are willing to follow the guidelines of the Program are eligible to participate in it. Members who wish to become Division Legislative Action Chairs (DLACs), Legislative Action Coordinators (LACs) and Legislative Action Assistants (LAAs) need to participate in a brief training program before making calls on legislators.*

10. I am not a member of ARRL, why can't I participate in the Program?

*We would like to be able to work with all amateurs to make this program as successful as possible; however, Federal IRS regulations place limits on the amount of effort ARRL as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, can devote to nonmembers regarding legislative affairs. We invite you to join ARRL and become a key part in this program. For information on ARRL, go to <http://www.arrl.org/arrl.html>.*

11. How do participants in the ARRL Legislative Action Program get information and materials needed to call on or write to US Representatives and Senators?

*Background information on legislation, the names and addresses of "your" Congressmen, educational leave-behind leaflets and more that are needed to make visits to Congressional offices can be found at the Grassroots link on the Members Only area of [www.arrl.org](http://www.arrl.org). This information is available to be printed out.*

*Draft letters to Congressmen are similarly available at this same location.*

*Training materials for Legislative Action Assistants are available through the Director/Division Legislative Action Chair and Legislative Action Coordinator as well as being on the Grassroots web link.*