

What is the LWVUS Volunteer Lobby Corps team? The League of Women Voters of the United States volunteer Lobby Corps team is a group of approximately 20 League members who live in the District of Columbia, Virginia and Maryland who lobby the entire United States Senate and House of Representatives. They --



- attend briefings by League professional advocacy/lobbying staff monthly at LWVUS national headquarters in Washington, DC on 3rd Thursdays
- study materials received at the briefings
- make appointments with appropriate staff of US Senators and members of the US House of Representatives
- go to Capitol Hill one or two days per month to carry out their appointments in US Senate or US House of Representatives office buildings
- send reports about each appointment to the briefer

- email appropriate reports to state presidents whose elected officials were lobbied
- send follow-up emails to staffers

What are the topics discussed in these appointments? Lobby Corps team members are briefed each time on one particular bill which is receiving attention on Capitol Hill, the subject of which is a member-chosen priority for that year based on member-studied positions. Some topics have been the Affordable Care Act, public funding of campaigns, climate change, energy, the Help America Vote Act, civil liberties, SCHIP, DC Voting Rights, the New START



Treaty, Title X, the Keystone XL Pipeline, air toxin emissions, Super PACs, gun control, immigration reform, DISCLOSE, the VRAA, EPA regs., etc.

How might a typical appointment be described? Appointments on Capitol Hill are very pleasant including those when agreement is lacking. Little time is spent in pleasantries. The LWVUS volunteer states the topic, states the

LWVUS position and what we want, perhaps co-sponsorship or a vote for or against, adds specific reasons and then



asks the staffer for the view of the elected official. Lobby Corps team members do not argue; they express interest in the position of the elected official but make the League's position clear. The volunteer is trained for the meetings to last only a few minutes, leaving time for the staffer's response. The staffer, of course, may linger.

Between appointments, volunteer LWVUS lobbyists write thorough notes about what was said.

How might a typical day of lobbying be characterized?

Senate office buildings are near Union Station which has metro and MARC train stations and a large public parking garage. House office buildings are at Capitol South Metro station. Lobby Corps team



members set their appointments at offices with some proximity to each other. They carry out up to 10 appointments following a briefing at times of their choosing which can be accomplished in a day or two. Lobbying takes place either in the House office buildings on the Independence Avenue side of the Capitol or in the Senate office buildings on the Constitution Avenue side of the Capitol. There is a moderately-priced eating facility in each Senate and House office building for staff and visitors. Although Lobby Corps team members lobby individually, they sometimes arrange to meet for lunch and such lunches together have happened spontaneously. LWVUS volunteer lobbyists wear business dress with comfortable but appropriate business shoes.

Training? Indeed, LWVUS volunteer Lobby Corps team members are



thoroughly trained about how to gather last-minute information, how to make appointments, how to write the reports and follow-ups, and a mentor takes trainees along on appointments so that the trainee can witness first-hand what he or she will experience.

Personal rewards? Personal rewards are different for different people. Team



members like what they do. They become informed about the topics they are lobbying far more than most interested citizens. They have a closer view of how Congress works than they would have otherwise. They like each other. They hope they are serving the League of Women Voters and its issues which are their issues, too. *It's fun!*

To inquire or apply, contact Jackie Coolidge, the chair of the League of Women Voters of the United States volunteer Lobby Corps team, at jcoolidge@schoolbench.com. League members may attend a briefing by permission if interested in serving.

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*So you think
you might like to be a*

**League of Women
Voters Volunteer
Lobbyist on Capitol
Hill**