

NARFE-PAC COORDINATORS' GUIDE

NARFE leaders designated by state federation presidents as their states' NARFE-PAC Coordinators undertake an important job in support of NARFE's political arm.

NARFE-PAC Coordinators have several responsibilities:

- To facilitate communication between NARFE members and the National Office regarding congressional candidates within their respective states;
- To educate chapter leaders and members on NARFE-PAC's importance to the Association's primary mission of protecting and enhancing members' earned benefits;
- To update chapter leaders and members with information about contributions from members and disbursements to candidates from their state; and,
- To motivate members to contribute to NARFE-PAC and become involved in the political process.

We hope this guide helps NARFE-PAC Coordinators, both new and long-serving, fulfill this role.

NARFE-PAC Contributions to Candidates:

Consultative Process

"Of the donors, by the members, for the good of all retirees and survivors" is the NARFE-PAC creed. By design, NARFE-PAC decisions to contribute to congressional candidates involve a highly consultative process with local NARFE members in the federations and chapters. The job of a state NARFE-PAC Coordinator or chair is to facilitate this process by

serving as the liaison between the NARFE National Office and the affected chapters in their respective states. The Coordinator is responsible for providing the National Office with a consensus recommendation on providing or denying NARFE-PAC funds to a particular candidate.

FYI Process

The complete consultation process from the National Office to the federations and chapters should take no longer than two weeks. Here is how it works:

- National Office receives a campaign contribution request from a candidate by mail, fax or e-mail. If the solicitation is by phone, National Office staff require that a written request from the candidate's campaign be sent to NARFE as well. (Often, a member of Congress will request the contact information of a local NARFE officer. In this case, the National Office provides the phone number of the NARFE-PAC Coordinator so that the member of Congress can reach out to the state and speak directly to the NARFE leader involved in making a funding recommendation.)
- After receiving a written request, the Legislative Specialist in the NARFE Legislative Department sends an "FYI" via e-mail (or if necessary by mail or phone) to the respective NARFE-PAC Coordinator, indicating that the candidate has requested funds. The FYI will request that the NARFE-PAC Coordinator contact the appropriate NARFE leaders to determine if a consensus exists on this candidate.
- In two weeks (at the latest), the NARFE-PAC Coordinator is expected to respond to the FYI with a consensus on the candidate (or to indicate a change in opinion if a consensus has already been reached). Prior to receiving an FYI, NARFE-PAC Coordinators are encouraged to frequently poll NARFE members on their respective members of Congress and congressional candidates.
- Once the Legislative Specialist at the National

Office receives a response from the NARFE-PAC Coordinator, that response is presented to the Legislative Department staff, who provide this and other information on the requesting candidates to the National Officers (the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) for consideration in making a NARFE-PAC contribution determination.

- The four National Officers, who make up NARFE's Political Action Committee (PAC), make the final decision regarding NARFE-PAC contributions to candidates. Once the decision is made, the NARFE Budget and Finance Department authorizes and prints NARFE-PAC checks, which are then mailed to the candidate's campaign office with an enclosure that indicates the contribution was made on behalf of NARFE's members.
- A copy of the NARFE-PAC check to the candidate's campaign committee is sent to the federation president and federation NARFE-PAC Coordinator for their records. In addition, these two officers and their regional vice president are provided a quarterly report of member contributions to NARFE-PAC and NARFE-PAC contributions to candidates from their state and region.

Pre-request Recommendations

During certain periods of each election cycle, particularly as the election gets closer, the National Office is flooded with requests for contributions, often connected to fundraising events either in the congressional district or in the Washington, DC, area that are scheduled as soon as week or two away.

In anticipation of these periods, and because most candidates ask NARFE-PAC for a contribution, NARFE-PAC coordinators may be asked to poll members and chapter leaders and provide a consensus recommendation *prior* to the National Office receiving a specific request from a candidate. This allows timely responses without sacrificing the consultative process.

Factors Considered

A number of factors are considered when deciding whether to contribute to a particular candidate, including, but not limited to:

- Whether the candidate is supportive of NARFE issues, as indicated primarily by his or her voting record, but also through candidate statements and other actions. Naturally, evidence-based information regarding support for NARFE's issues is more readily available for incumbent candidates, who have a voting record in Congress on NARFE issues, as well as the opportunity to support key bills. Information about a challenger's views and potential support of NARFE issues can be gauged through personal meetings with NARFE members, written correspondence with the campaign, and public forums in which a candidate can express his or her views in support of or against NARFE's key issues.
- The influence a legislator can exert in support of NARFE goals, whether through a party leadership position, a committee assignment or a particular area of expertise;
- The competitiveness of the candidate's race; and
- The degree of communication and accessibility between the candidate and NARFE members, chapters, federations and legislative staff. Maintaining relationships with legislators is important to ensuring they will listen to NARFE's interests.

A federation's and chapters' views regarding the accessibility and responsiveness of particular candidates to local NARFE members, chapters and federation is a factor that you are uniquely qualified to judge. How accessible and responsive a candidate is to local NARFE members should play a significant role in recommendations.

Final Decision Regarding Recommendations

The final decision concerning NARFE-PAC contribu-

tions rests with the NARFE-PAC Committee (the four elected National Officers). While the recommendations of local NARFE members are always given full consideration and great weight when reviewing PAC requests, it is the responsibility of the NARFE-PAC Committee to take into consideration the overall national political landscape — in addition to the recommendations of local members.

In-District Fundraisers

If a local campaign fundraising event in the candidate's home district can be attended as a result of a NARFE-PAC contribution, the NARFE-PAC Coordinator is tasked with selecting the appropriate NARFE members to represent the Association at the event. The Coordinator, working with the Legislative Specialist, assures that attendee information can be relayed to the campaign committee organizing the local event.

REMINDER: FOLLOW THE LAW

To the extent that NARFE-PAC Coordinators, other NARFE federation or chapter leaders, or other members meet with candidates, they must avoid any illegal or potentially illegal statements or suggestions. Please keep in mind the following:

- **Campaign contributions may not be given in exchange for official acts or promises of official acts by the candidate.** Money is *not* given in exchange for votes, cosponsoring any bills or any other official act.
- Do not discuss NARFE-PAC contributions at all with congressional staff or candidates when at their congressional offices, as staff and legislators are conducting official government duties while within these government-owned buildings.

Any additional questions regarding the operation of NARFE-PAC can be directed to the Legislative Specialist at NARFE, (703) 838-7760, ext. 267; or leg@narfe.org.

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FOR FEDERATION
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