



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR
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MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEPARTMENT OF WAR AGENCY AND DOW FIELD ACTIVITY
DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Department of War Congressional Activities

The Department of War (DoW) relies on a collaborative and close partnership with Congress to achieve our legislative goals. This requires coordination and alignment of Department messaging when engaging with Congress to ensure consistency and support for the Department's priorities to re-establish deterrence, rebuild our military, and revive the warrior ethos.

The Assistant Secretary of War for Legislative Affairs (ASW(LA)) provides centralized direction, integration, and control of DoW legislative affairs and liaison activities with the U.S. Congress.¹

Unauthorized engagements with Congress by DoW personnel acting in their official capacity, no matter how well-intentioned, may undermine Department-wide priorities critical to achieving our legislative objectives. Effective immediately, Offices of Principal Staff Assistants (PSA) and DoW Components must coordinate all legislative affairs activities by DoW personnel through the Office of the ASW(LA). This directive does not apply to the Inspector General of the DoW and Staff. This directive applies to all other DoW personnel, including:

- PSAs, the Secretaries of the Military Departments and other DoW Component heads, to include the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, Commanders of the Combatant Commands, and their respective staffs.
- Directors of DoW Agencies, DoW Field Activities, and similar components under the authority, direction, and control of a PSA (through the Office of the PSA with oversight).
- Legislative analysts, congressional affairs officials, and any personnel within the Offices of PSAs and DoW Components engaged in legislative activities.
- Defense Intelligence Enterprise Components performing legislative liaison functions will continue to do so under the supervision of OASW(LA).

The following legislative affairs activities must be coordinated with OASW(LA) prior to any commitment, planning, or execution of such activity:



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- Legislative Engagements: All interactions with Congress or state elected officials by DoW personnel, in their official capacity, requires prior OASW(LA) approval and coordination. This includes engagements with members of Congress or state elected officials outside of the National Capital Region.
- Legislative Communication: All Congressional Reporting Requirements, requests for information (RFIs), informal views, drafting assistance, technical assistance, or other legislative correspondence must be routed through OASW(LA).
- Compliance with OASW(LA) Requests: All components must promptly provide materials, briefings, and information in response to OASW(LA) requests, including RFIs.
- Staff from the Offices of PSAs and DoW Components will continue to support their leadership in preparing responses to inquiries, researching, analyzing, and coordinating written responses to legislative issues, and monitoring the legislative process in alignment with OASW(LA) guidance.

The official performing the duties of the ASW(LA) will conduct an immediate and comprehensive review of all congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs activities and functions and, within 90 days, submit a detailed report to the Deputy Secretary of War addressing:

- Current issues, inefficiencies, or misalignments in congressional engagement processes.
- Proposals to streamline activities in accordance with the Defense Comprehensive Review.
- Recommendations to enhance compliance and effectiveness in congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs activities and functions.

To support this review, DoW Component heads and PSAs must provide OASW(LA) with the following within 30 days:

- Contact information for all military, civilian, and contractor personnel directly or indirectly supporting legislative processes.
- Detailed organizational charts reflecting roles and responsibilities.
- Position descriptions for all personnel engaged in legislative activities.
- All information as requested on all tracking systems, contracts, or tools used to log, track, maintain, or monitor congressional activity and engagements.
- A list of all offices that have issued read-ons to members of Congress, including details of the issuing and the date of issuance.

- Any additional materials OASW(LA) deems appropriate to conduct a thorough review of all Department congressional activities.

OASW(LA) is fully authorized to establish working groups, convene meetings, or take any actions necessary to accomplish this task. All components are directed to provide full cooperation and participation as requested. This directive does not limit the roles and authorities of:

- The Under Secretary of War (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer of the Department of War (USW(C)) as set forth in 10 U.S.C. §135, annual appropriations acts, DoDD 5118.03, "Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense," or other laws or policies. The Office of OUSW(C)/Budget and Appropriations Affairs (BAA) will continue to serve as the principal legislative liaison for the appropriations committees and the Congressional Budget Office in direct coordination with OASW(LA).
- The General Counsel of the Department of War as set forth in 10 U.S.C. §140, DoDD 5145.01, "General Counsel of the Department of Defense," DoDD 5145.04, "Defense Legal Services Agency (DLSA)," or other applicable policies.
- Any employee or Service member's obligations, rights, or liabilities created by statute or executive order related to communications to Congress or whistleblower protections.

OASW(LA) is charged with ensuring adherence to these requirements, and full cooperation across the Department is expected to restore unity in our congressional engagements.



Steve Feinberg
Deputy Secretary of War



Pete Hegseth
Secretary of War