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## GCSAA Priority Issues Agenda
Foreword

Congratulations! By picking up the Greens & Grassroots: A Golf Industry Guide to Advocacy manual you have taken the first step in becoming an effective advocate for the golf course management profession. By the time you finish reading through the tools in this manual, you will know how to confidently participate in the legislative process.

This manual provides you with simple, practical approaches on how to influence the political process and provides the tools you need to reach out to lawmakers. A wide variety of topics are covered including "Communicating with Lawmakers," "Managing Local Issues," and "Finding Legislative and Regulatory Information."

I’m sure you noticed the word “grassroots” in the title. Grassroots advocacy involves superintendents and chapters using their collective voices to influence government actions. Your calls, letters and personal visits do make a difference—it has been said that one phone call or letter to your member of Congress represents 100 votes.

Every day, lawmakers make decisions that affect the way we do our jobs. And, as you are aware, there are people and groups out there speaking against our interests. As superintendents, we are the best source for information on our profession and we must make sure we educate lawmakers about the positive role golf course superintendents play in preserving and protecting the environment. For our efforts to be a success, each member must help relay the positive message of our industry.

Thank you again for your interest and efforts in promoting golf's positive message to lawmakers.

Pete Grass, CGCS
GCSAA Director & Chairman, Government Relations Committee
2014
Sources of Information
GCSAA government relations staff monitor, report and take action on government issues at the local, state and federal levels. Staff keep members informed about government activity through the Greens & Grassroots e-newsletter, the GCSAA Government Relations Quarterly Briefing, the Advocacy section in Golf Course Management magazine and by direct contact with GCSAA chapters, state turfgrass associations and allied organizations.

Let us help you with your government relations efforts! Government relations staff can:

- Explain issues and why/how they impact golf course management and golf course superintendents.
- Teach you how to write letters, compose e-mails and make phone calls to help you advocate your position on the issues.
- Provide you with outlines, drafts or ready-to-use materials to communicate with lawmakers including position statements, letters, testimony and newsletter or magazine articles.
- Provide lobbying packets containing relevant information to help educate lawmakers.
- Help you identify local, state and national lawmakers and provide you with contact information.
- Provide specific information on local, state and federal laws affecting golf course facilities.
- Provide your chapter with action checklists for dealing with specific issues.
- Help you facilitate the building of issue coalitions.
- Provide compliance counseling on OSHA and EPA regulations.
- Advise your chapter on lobbying strategies, including using the media.
- Conduct advocacy training for superintendents and green industry allies.
The GCSAA information and public policy department provides a variety of resources to members and chapters to support their need for information and assistance on government issues.

**Greens & Grassroots E-Newsletter**
Staff members monitor, report and take action on government issues at the local, state and federal levels. These efforts are communicated through Greens & Grassroots, GCSAA's free government relations e-newsletter distributed via e-mail. Greens & Grassroots highlights both legislative and regulatory activity in an easy-to-read manner. Greens & Grassroots also contains "alerts" which provide information on how to influence pending bills or regulations. To subscribe, click here.

**GCSAA Priority Issues Agenda**
The GCSAA Priority Issues Agenda is developed annually by the GCSAA Government Relations Committee and approved by the GCSAA Board of Directors. The Agenda outlines the legislative and regulatory "priority issues" for GCSAA — the issues that are likely to require the greatest amount of association resources and staff time. The Agenda can be found in the Government Relations section of GCSAA.org or by calling the GCSAA information and public policy department at (800) 472-7878, ext. 3612.

**GCSAA Government Relations Online**
GCSAA Government Relations Online is home to a comprehensive government relations area for GCSAA members to use in their advocacy and compliance efforts. This resource keeps members up to date on local, state and federal legislative and regulatory matters important to the industry. GCSAA Government Relations Online contains many useful sections including: Issues, Resources, Grassroots Network, and Compliance. Government relations staff continuously update and add useful information to the site.
Federal Legislative Information
To track the activities of the federal government on the Internet, visit Congress.gov, a website maintained by the U.S. Library of Congress. THOMAS features information on all aspects of Congressional activity including the status of legislation and committee information. The site also includes links to the Library of Congress and comprehensive information on the federal legislative process. The U.S. House of Representatives (www.house.gov) and the U.S. Senate (www.senate.gov) also have comprehensive web sites. If you don't have Internet access, you can call the Office of Legislative Information at (202) 225-1772 to locate bills in both houses of Congress. If you don't know the bill number, legislative staff search for the bill using key words or the name of the sponsor. Staff in your legislator's district office should also be able to update you on activity in Congress. You can find your legislator's district office phone number in the government listings section of your local phone book.

Federal Regulatory Information
Official notices of proposed and final rules from federal regulatory agencies are posted daily in the Federal Register. Official notices of meetings and hearings by regulatory agencies like the EPA and OSHA are also published online.

State Legislative Information
Your local library is a great place to start when looking for comprehensive information on your state legislature. If you have Internet access, you can find the home page for all 50 states at http://govspot.com/state/. Many state legislators have even created their own personal web pages that provide their constituents with contact information including a direct link to their office via e-mail. Most state legislative committees publish schedules or news bulletins. You can ask to be put on the mailing list of committees that work on your issues. State legislatures also have “hotlines” for the status of bills, committee meetings and legislative activity.

State Regulatory Information
Many states are required to periodically publish updates or “registers” of new regulatory proposals. Contact your secretary of state's office to find out where regulatory material is published in your state. You may also be able to subscribe to publications that list proposed state regulations. If you have Internet access, you can find a listing of all state government agencies at http://govspot.com/state/.

GCSAA Government Relations Online
The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Government Relations Online is designed to help you learn more about issues impacting the golf course management profession; learn more about GCSAA's advocacy efforts and successes; and engage in our advocacy efforts. For help with all of your government relations needs, please contact:
Government Information Resources on the Internet

STATES

- **Legislative Hotline Directory** -- Telephone numbers for bill status information in each of the 50 states.
- **National Conference of State Legislatures** -- Direct links to state legislatures and individual state legislators.
- **State and local government on the** -- Links to state legislatures and local governments.

FEDERAL AGENCIES & U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

- **ADA** -- Americans With Disabilities Act Web site provided by the U.S. Department of Justice.
- **EPA** -- Official Web site of the Environmental Protection Agency.
  http://www.epa.gov/
- **Federal Register** -- Daily table of contents of the Federal Register.
- **Immigration and Naturalization Service** -- Official Web site of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service.
  http://uscis.gov/graphics/index.htm
- **Library of Congress Internet Resources: Government** -- Library of Congress list of links to government Web sites.
  http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/news/extgovd.html
- **OSHA** -- Official Web site of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
  http://www.osha.gov/
  http://www.gpoaccess.gov/index.html

CONGRESS

- **Thomas** -- Legislative information.
  http://thomas.loc.gov
  http://www.house.gov/
- **The U.S. Senate** -- Official Web site of the U.S. Senate.
  http://www.senate.gov/

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
- **U.S. Water News** -- Official Web site for *U.S. Water News* magazine, includes links to federal, state and international water agencies.
  http://www.uswaternews.com/homepage.html

- **Wetlands Regulation Center** -- Information on wetlands and wetlands regulations and links to other wetlands sites.
  http://www.wetlands.com/

**VOTER INFORMATION**

- **C-Span Online - Congress Today** -- Coverage of Congress and the President and also allows you to identify your members of Congress.
  http://capwiz.com/c-span/home/

  http://www.fec.gov/

- **Project Vote Smart** -- This site tracks the performance of over 10,500 political leaders.
  http://www.vote-smart.org/

**WHITE HOUSE & WASHINGTON D.C.**

- **Washington, D.C. & Capitol Hill** -- Maps, sight-seeing and tourist information, historical information, government guides and links to other D.C. sites.
  http://www.washingtondc.com/

- **White House** -- White House home page.
  http://www.whitehouse.gov/
State Bill Status Resources

State legislatures have “hotlines” and Web sites where you can find information on the status of bills, committee meetings or legislative activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Web Address</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>(334) 242-7800 (Senate) (334) 242-7600 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.legislature.state.al.us/ALISHome.html">www.legislature.state.al.us/ALISHome.html</a></td>
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<td>Alaska</td>
<td>(907) 465-3701 (Senate) (907) 465-3725 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/start.asp">www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/start.asp</a></td>
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<td>Arizona</td>
<td>(602) 926-3559</td>
<td><a href="http://www.azleg.gov/">http://www.azleg.gov/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>(501) 682-6107 (Senate) (501) 682-7771 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us">www.arkleg.state.ar.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>(916) 651-4171 (Senate) (916) 319-2856 (Assembly)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.legislature.ca.gov/port-billinfo.html">http://www.legislature.ca.gov/port-billinfo.html</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>(303) 866-4838 (Senate) (303) 866-2903 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.leg.state.co.us">www.leg.state.co.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>(860) 240-0500 (Senate) (860) 240-0400 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cga.ct.gov/">http://www.cga.ct.gov/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>(302) 744-4133 (Senate) (302) 744-4351 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://legis.delaware.gov/">http://legis.delaware.gov/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>(850) 487-5270 (Senate) (850) 717-5650 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.leg.state.fl.us">http://www.leg.state.fl.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>(404) 656-5040 (Senate) (404) 656-5015 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.legis.state.ga.us/">http://www.legis.state.ga.us/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>(808) 586-6729 (Senate) (808) 586-6400 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov">www.capitol.hawaii.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>(208) 332-1000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/">http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>(217) 782-3944</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ilga.gov/">http://www.ilga.gov/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>(317) 232-9400 (Senate) (317) 232-9600 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.in.gov/serv/lsa_billinfo">www.in.gov/serv/lsa_billinfo</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>(515) 281-3371 (Senate) (515) 281-3221 (House)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.legis.iowa.gov/">https://www.legis.iowa.gov/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>(785) 296-2149</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kslegislature.org">www.kslegislature.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>(866) 840-2835</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lrc.ky.gov/">http://www.lrc.ky.gov/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>(225) 342-5997 (Senate) (225) 342-7259 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.legis.state.la.us">www.legis.state.la.us</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>(207) 287-1540 (Senate) (207) 287-1400 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maine.gov/legis/">http://www.maine.gov/legis/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>(410) 946-5400</td>
<td>mlis.state.md.us</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>(617) 722-1276 (Senate) (617) 722-2356 (House)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.state.ma.us/legis/ltsform.htm">www.state.ma.us/legis/ltsform.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>(517) 373-0135</td>
<td>(517) 373-2400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>(651) 296-0504 (Senate)</td>
<td>(651) 296-2146 (House)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>(601) 359-3229 (Senate)</td>
<td>(601) 359-3360 (House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>(573) 751-4017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>(406) 444-4819 (House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>(402) 471-2709</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>(603) 271-3420</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>(609) 292-4840</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>(505) 986-4600</td>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>(518) 455-7545</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>(919) 733-7779</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>(701) 328-2916</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>(614) 466-5312</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>(405) 524-0126 (Senate)</td>
<td>(405) 521-2711 (House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>(503) 986-1180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>(717) 787-2342</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>(401) 222-3580</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>(803) 212-6720</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>(605) 773-3851 (Senate)</td>
<td>(605) 773-3851 (House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>(615) 741-3511</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>(512) 463-2182</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>(801) 538-1035 (Senate)</td>
<td>(801) 538-1029 (House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>(802) 828-2231</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>(804) 698-7410 (Senate)</td>
<td>(804) 698-1500 (House)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>(360) 786-7573</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>(304) 347-4836</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>(608) 266-1803 (Senate)</td>
<td>(608) 266-1501 (Assembly)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>(800) 342-9570 – in-state</td>
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Guide To Government
State Legislatures

All states, with the exception of Nebraska, have bicameral, or two-part legislatures designed along the lines of the U.S. Congress. Usually called the state legislature or general assembly, they have an upper chamber (usually called the senate) and a lower chamber (usually called the house of representatives, assembly or house of delegates). Nebraska has a unicameral legislature where only senators are elected.

The number of lawmakers in each chamber varies widely from state to state, as does the length of their terms of service.

Many legislatures elect a speaker of the house to preside over the lower chamber. In the senate, the president of the senate is often the state’s lieutenant governor. A president pro tempore and a secretary, who often has the same type of authority as a speaker of the house, may be elected by members.

Legislative Sessions
- most state legislatures have relatively short sessions, though the lengths vary from state to state
- most states meet for three to four months, usually convening in January and adjourning by May
- the legislatures of many larger states have become so active that they meet year-round
- a handful of states meet only every other year

Forms of Legislative Action
Laws can be made by legislatures in the following ways:

Bills: A bill is the form used for most legislation, whether permanent or temporary, general or special, public or private. Bills must be passed by both houses and in most cases be approved by the governor to become law.

Resolutions: Generally express the opinions of the legislature on a particular matter. A resolution adopted by both houses is known as a concurrent resolution.

Joint Resolutions: Used for matters of temporary application and have the force of law. A joint resolution is approved and signed in the same manner as a bill.

The Legislative Process
State legislative proposals can originate from several different sources. Often, a legislator will draft legislation after hearing about a problem faced by a constituent. Special interest groups, including associations and alliances, may develop legislation or promote adoption of “model” legislation nationally. The governor or a state agency may also seek to resolve an issue through legislation.

The legislator introducing the bill is called the sponsor. Often several other members will express their support for the legislation by becoming co-sponsors.

Once a bill is introduced it is assigned a number and is “read” or recognized for the first time. The legislation is then referred to one or more appropriate committees. Often, identical or similar pieces of legislation are introduced in both houses at the same time. These are known as companion bills.
Committees:
As in Congress, committees play a vital role in the legislative process:
- they consider dozens of bills and decide which ones will advance to the full house or senate
- most legislatures have several standing committees for each house
- joint committees, with members from both legislative bodies, are also found in some states

Most bills that affect golf course management are referred to a “committee on the environment,” “committee on natural resources” or similar designation. Small business committees may also consider legislation relevant to golf course management.

The committee chairperson decides whether to hold committee hearings on a bill. At a hearing, the bill’s sponsor, representatives of affected organizations, government agencies and public witnesses are given the chance to testify.

Bills may be amended many times by the committees. Typically, committees will vote “do pass,” “do not pass,” “pass with changes,” “hold” or “no recommendation.” Each of these bills may be sent on to the full house, but usually only “do pass” bills make any further progress.

How a Bill Becomes a Law
After a bill has passed through the committee process, it is sent back to the floor for a second reading. At this stage, bills may be sent to a rules committee, which decides when and if a bill should go to the floor for a third reading.

For the majority of states, the third reading offers all legislators the chance to debate or amend a bill. The full house votes on bills after their third reading.

If a bill passes and no companion bill exists, it must go through the same process in the other house. If companion bills that pass each house differ, a conference committee is convened to resolve any differences.

Once passed, bills are signed by the presiding officer of each house and sent to the governor.

Action by the Governor. Most governors do one of three things when legislation reaches them:
1. They sign bills, making them law;
2. disapprove of bills by vetoing them; or
3. let bills become law without their signature.

Governors may be given a time limit to act on the bill, for example, within 90 days after the session has adjourned. Exceptions are made for bills with emergency clauses, which require immediate action.
How Congress Works

"All Legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives."  
(Article I, Section 1, of the United States Constitution)

The chief function of Congress is the making of laws. A new Congress begins in each odd-numbered year, and lasts for two, one-year sessions. Sessions convene in January and adjourn in October. Congress normally recesses in August and around holidays, so members can travel back to their home states.

Congress
The United States Congress is made up of two legislative bodies, or houses:

The Senate:
- 100 members (two from each state) elected to six-year terms

The House of Representatives:
- 435 members elected to two-year terms
- A state's population determines the number of representatives (each state has at least one)

House and Senate Differences
- House members have smaller constituencies and are assigned to fewer committees.
- Senators represent entire states and are assigned to several committees with wide scopes of jurisdiction, and rely heavily on their staffs to keep them informed of constituent concerns.
- The Senate operates under straightforward rules that have changed little over the years, including unlimited debate time and amendments on bills.
- The House is governed by rules that usually change each session. Special rules allow for floor consideration of specific bills, limit or assign control of general debate time and govern the number and types of amendments to be offered.

Forms of Congressional Action
The work of Congress is initiated by the introduction of a proposal in one of four principal forms:

Bills: A bill is the form used for most legislation, whether permanent or temporary, general or special, public or private.
- A bill originating in the House of Representatives is designated by the letters "H.R."
- A bill originating in the Senate is designated by the letter “S.”
- Bills are presented to the President for action when approved in identical form by both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Joint Resolutions: Joint resolutions may originate in either house. There is little difference between a bill and a joint resolution, both are subject to the same procedure. Joint resolutions become law in the same manner as bills.

Concurrent Resolutions: Matters affecting the operations of both the House of Representatives and Senate are usually initiated by means of concurrent resolutions. They are not presented to the President for action.
Simple Resolutions: A matter concerning the operation of either the House of Representatives or Senate alone is initiated by a simple resolution. They are not presented to the President for action.

The Legislative Process
Members of Congress originate most legislation, however bills and amendments are also drafted by individuals, organizations or federal agencies promoting an initiative.

- Only Senators and Representatives can introduce legislation on the floor of the chamber.
- Members introducing the measure are known as the sponsors. Other members who want to formally endorse the legislation may join as co-sponsors.
- Once introduced, a bill is referred to one or more committees.
- A bill that is referred to multiple committees must be approved by each committee prior to consideration by the full House or Senate.
- The chairperson of the committee assigns the bill to the appropriate subcommittee.

Congressional Committees:
Most of the work of Congress is done at the committee level. Both houses have committees with jurisdiction over certain issues. Committees also are divided into subcommittees with narrower jurisdictions. Each piece of legislation is referred to the committee that has jurisdiction over the area affected by the measure.

The committee is where a legislative proposal receives the closest scrutiny. The committees and subcommittees review and refine legislative proposals and determine what legislation should be considered by the full House or Senate. Members are selected for committee membership at the beginning of each Congress.

How a Bill Becomes a Law
Once on the floor, a bill may be debated, amended, voted up or down, tabled or reported back to committee. Measures that are tabled or reported back to committee usually die.

- After consideration and passage of a bill in the House or Senate, the legislation is referred to the other body.
- The legislation must pass through the committee process in both chambers.
- Related or identical legislation (companion bills) often moves through both houses simultaneously.
- Identical legislation approved by both houses is sent to the President for signature.

Conference Committees:
Companion bills almost never pass both houses in identical form. Differences between companion House and Senate-passed legislation is resolved by conference committees appointed by the leadership. The bill dies if the conference committee members do not reach agreement. If an agreement is reached and a single, revised bill is produced, it is sent back to the House and the Senate for approval before being sent to the White House for the President's signature.

Presidential Action:
The President may sign legislation into law, take no action or veto it. If the President does not take action on a bill, it automatically becomes law after 10 days. Congress may attempt to override a presidential veto. This requires a two-thirds vote of the House and Senate, and if either body fails to cast the required vote, the veto is sustained. Presidential vetoes are rarely overridden because the number of members of Congress divided between the political parties is usually close.
Federal & State Regulatory Agencies

In federal and state governments, regulatory agencies exist to implement and enforce laws enacted by the legislature. Agency heads, usually called “secretary” or “administrator,” are appointed by the top government official, which is the president or the governor.

How Federal and State Agencies Operate
Agencies accomplish their mandates by issuing regulations or rules, which provide more details about what a statute requires. Many laws specifically give authority to, or mandate that, certain agency heads promulgate or adopt regulations.

According to the Administrative Procedures Act, proposed federal regulations must be published for “comment” or input by the public. Exactly how regulations are adopted in each agency is also governed by the agency’s own regulations. States operate in similar ways.

The federal government publishes proposed and final rules in notices in the Federal Register. Many states have registers where rules are published, but some states only provide proposals to those that ask for them or are on their mailing list. In many states, it can be difficult to track regulatory action without a contact in the agency.

Rules or regulations are laws. Agencies also may issue guidance as policy statements or in other forms that do not legally have the force and effect of law. However, these guidelines will often be as zealously enforced by agencies as if they were laws.

Although they are considered part of the executive branch of government, agencies exist and are provided budgets at the discretion of the legislature. In advocating or lobbying a regulatory agency to take certain action, it is often effective to work through Congress or the state legislatures. In budget bills and their accompanying reports, agencies can be encouraged or specifically required to take certain actions.

Agencies that Regulate the Golf Industry
Federal agencies that regulate the golf industry include the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Each of these agencies is a huge bureaucracy with numerous, different offices and branches that have jurisdiction over different aspects of the environment, health and safety. These agencies also have regional and state offices to help them enforce the law nationwide. Many delegate some enforcement responsibility to state agencies. Information on all federal agencies is available on the Internet at This link is not working. Here is a better link: http://www.usa.gov/directory/federal/index.shtml.
Glossary of State Legislative & Regulatory Terms

**Act:** A bill that has been approved by both houses of the legislature and signed into law by the governor or allowed to become law without the governor's signature or passed by the legislature over the governor's veto.

**Adopt:** To approve an amendment, motion or resolution. This is in contrast to “pass”, which means to enact a bill by the required number of votes.

**Agenda:** A list of proposed actions to be taken at an upcoming committee meeting or daily House or Senate session.

**Amendment:** Means of modifying a bill, joint resolution or resolution by adding or deleting language or changing wording. Amendments may be offered in various ways including the following:
- **Committee:** Changes proposed to the original bill by the committee.
- **Conference:** An amendment to a bill recommended by a conference committee.
- **Floor:** Changes offered as a House or Senate amendment by a legislator during floor debate.

**Appropriation Act:** The authorization to spend state and federal funds. Appropriating money is carried out by passing bills which authorize units (departments, agencies and institutions) of government to spend money for specified purposes.

**Assembly:** A name for one of the legislative bodies of a bicameral (two-house) legislature. This body is also commonly referred to as the "House."

**Author(s):** The legislator(s) or legislative committee that introduces a bill or resolution in either house. Members of the same house who sign onto the bill are referred to as co-authors.

**Bill:** A legislative instrument by which one or more legislators propose to a legislature the enactment of a new law or a change in or repeal of an existing law, an appropriation of public money or a change in the state constitution. Types of bills include:

- **Engrossed:** A bill reported out of committee in the house of origin and prepared for a third reading and final passage in that house. The bill has been typed to incorporate all committee amendments adopted by the house of origin up to this point.

- **Enrolled:** A bill as finally passed by both houses and prepared for signature of the presiding officers of both houses and transmittal to the governor for signature or veto.

- **Original:** The bill introduced into the legislature. The original bill is used throughout the
legislative process until engrossed.

*Prefiled:* A bill filed between legislative sessions with the chief clerical officer of either house. Prefiled bills are numbered and printed in preparation for the session and may be provisionally referred to the proper standing committees for pre-session consideration.

*Reengrossed:* The bill as typed to incorporate both committee and floor amendments adopted by the house of origin.

**Bill History:** A record of all the action on any given proposal. The term is also applied to action on resolutions and joint resolutions.

**Bill Status:** An account of where a bill is in the legislative process along with a history of what actions have been taken on the bill.

**Bill Summary:** Brief summary of the content and changes to law proposed in a bill.

**Chair:** Presiding officer during session of a committee, subcommittee or task force.

**Chamber:** The room where the House or the Senate meets.

**Committee:** A body of elected members delegated to consider and make recommendations concerning actions on bills, conducts studies and other related matters referred to it. Committees are usually appointed by the Speaker of the House or the Senate Majority Leader and are organized according to subject matter.

*Conference:* Composed of members of both houses; created to iron out differences between houses in a piece of legislation.

*Interim:* Created to study or investigate issues during the interim between legislative sessions.

*Joint:* A committee composed of members of both houses.

*Special:* A committee of one or both houses appointed for a limited purpose and discharged upon completion of this function.

*Standing:* A permanent committee with subject matter jurisdiction defined by rules of its house. It makes reports and recommendations on legislation to the house it serves and functions both during and between legislative sessions to conduct public hearings on proposed legislation and review proposed administrative rules.

**Companion Bill:** A bill which is part of a group or package of bills that is necessary to accomplish a single legislative goal.

**Concurrent Resolution:** A resolution expressing the sentiment or intent of both houses, on matters of interest of the legislature, the state and the nation.
**Conference Report:** A report, signed by a majority of the conferees of each house, consisting of agreements reconciling the different versions of a bill passed by the House and Senate. A conference report must be approved in each house by the same number votes as it takes to pass the bill.

**Constituents:** People who live in a given senate or house (assembly) district.

**Convene:** To call the legislature together to meet. The legislature can convene daily, weekly or at the beginning of a session.

**Co-sponsor:** Any member signed on as a supporter (other than the prime sponsor) of a piece of legislation.

**Effective Date:** The date a law becomes binding.

**Engross:** A motion to engross a bill is the step before final passage in the house of origin. An order to print a proposal in its engrossed form means to incorporate all amendments and chief clerks' corrections to the original bill for consideration by the second house.

**Engrossed Copy:** The final printed version of an enacted bill or resolution.

**Enrollment:** The process of having a bill or joint resolution reprinted in its final form as passed by both houses. The enrolled version includes all amendments, without the stricken or inserted new language specifically noted. It is in this form that bills are presented for action by the governor.

**Executive Order:** An order issued by the governor. An executive order is an expression of gubernatorial rule, regulation or will.

**First Reading:** The formal announcement on the floor of the legislature that a bill or other proposal has been introduced.

**Fiscal Note:** Statement prepared on the cost or savings resulting from a proposed bill.

**Floor Debate:** Discussion of a proposal in the Senate or House chambers. A bill being debated is referred to as being "on the floor."

**Hearing:** Meetings held by committees to allow the public to comment on proposed legislation.

**House Bill:** A bill introduced by a member of the house of representatives.

**House of Representatives:** One of the legislative bodies of a bicameral (two-house) legislature. This body is commonly referred to as the "house" or "assembly."

**Immediate Passage:** Motion allowing a bill to move from one order of business to the Order of Third Reading for passage on the same legislative day.

**In Concurrence:** Motion to pass a bill in the same form as already passed in the other
chamber.

**Initiative**: The procedure by which citizens can propose a law and put it to a public vote. **Interim**: The interval between regular legislative sessions.

**Introduction**: The formal presentation of a legislative proposal for consideration.

**Joint Resolution**: A proposal that makes a request, affects operations of both houses, pays tribute to public figures, or proposes a constitutional amendment that is acted on by both houses.

**Joint Standing Committee**: A permanent committee made up of members from both houses of the legislature.

**Legislative District**: The area of the state represented by a legislator, distinguished by geographical boundaries and usually based on population.

**Legislative Intent**: Used by courts to interpret statutes when the actual wording of the law is vague or unclear. To determine legislative intent, members' statements made during debate on a bill are examined.

**Legislative Process**: The procedure by which a bill becomes a law.

**Legislator**: Elected representative or senator.

**Lobbyists**: People who are paid to represent various interest groups before the legislature.

**Majority Leader**: Elected by the members of the majority party in the senate to lead them. This person is the spokesperson for the majority party, directs numerous administrative responsibilities and heads the appointment of members to committees. In the house this person is called the Speaker of the House.

**Minority Leader**: Elected by the members of the minority party (in both the house and senate) to lead them. This person is the spokesperson for the minority party and works in consultation with the Speaker of the House on the appointment of minority members to committees and other leadership positions.

**Motion**: A formal proposal submitted by a member of a legislative body requesting some action be taken by that body.

**Override**: The legislature may pass a measure over the governor's objections by voting to override a veto. Usually requires a two-thirds majority of members present in both houses.

**Parliamentary Procedure**: The rules and rulings under which legislatures conduct their business.

**Pass**: To give a vote of final approval to a bill in either house. Also called "final passage" or "passage of a bill."
**Pocket Veto:** Failure of the governor to sign a bill within the required number of days of receiving it after sine die adjournment.

**Pre-filed Bill:** Proposed legislation filed during the interim.

**Public Act:** A bill passed by both chambers of the legislature that amends the state’s general statutes.

**Public Hearing:** Meetings held by committees at which members of the public, lobbyists, legislators, and state agency representatives may testify on bills, resolutions or issues before the committee.

**Readings:** The formal steps of consideration that a bill goes through. Many legislative bodies across the country require the bill must be read three times in each house before becoming law.

**Refer:** To send any item of legislative business to a committee.

**Regulation:** A rule adopted by a state agency to implement, interpret or prescribe law or policy or describe its procedure or practice requirements. Agency regulations have the force of law and must be adopted according to procedures described in the law.

**Repeal:** A method by which legislative action is revoked or nullified.

**Resolution:** A document expressing the will of a house of the legislature that is not a law. The proposal usually requires no action by the other house. Resolutions can be used to urge state agencies or the Congress to take certain actions; formally approve certain plans of governmental agencies; conduct certain legislative business; place constitutional amendments on the ballot; express the legislature’s collective opinion; or establish study committees to examine issues. Some resolutions are also offered as an expression of congratulations, commemoration or tribute to an individual or group.

**Second Reading:** When the bill number is read in the Chamber and referred to a committee. The stage at which amendments to proposals are often considered.

**Senate:** One of the two legislative bodies that make up a bicameral (two-house) legislature.

**Senate Bill:** A bill introduced by a member of the senate.

**Session:** The entire period that begins with the swearing in of a new legislature and ends just before the swearing in of the next legislature. This is most often a two-year cycle.

**Sine Die:** A Latin phrase that signifies final adjournment. A sine die motion is used to close an annual session of a legislature and terminates all unfinished business.

**Speaker of the House:** Elected by the house of representatives to be presiding officer over that body. This person is the spokesperson for the majority party, directs numerous administrative responsibilities and heads the appointment of members to committees.
**Special Session:** A meeting of the legislature called for a particular purpose.

**Sponsor:** The originator of a legislative proposal, either a legislator or a committee.

**Statute:** Another name for a law.

**Statutes:** The general laws of the state.

**Subcommittee:** A part of a larger committee that is given responsibilities by the full committee.

**Substitute:** Another version of a bill that incorporates into one document a substantial number of amendments to the original bill. Multiple substitutes may be offered in each house to the same original item, so each is referred to by its designation, i.e., "House Substitute (H: 3)" or "Senate Substitute (S: 2)."

**Third Reading:** The stage at which bills and other proposals come up for final discussion and possible passage. Usually no amendments may be offered at this point.

**Unfavorable Report:** A recommendation from a committee that a bill be defeated.

**Upon Passage:** Used as the effective date for certain bills. Means the act takes effect the day the governor signs it.

**Veto:** The governor’s rejection of a bill in its entirety.

**Veto Override:** To pass a bill over a governor’s veto. This normally requires a two-thirds vote of the members elected and serving of each house.
Advocating Your Position
Communicating with Lawmakers

You can effectively communicate with lawmakers through letters, e-mails and phone calls. Lawmakers want to hear from their constituents "back home" so they can make informed decisions on issues. Your calls, letters and e-mails will make a difference—it is said that one letter or phone call is equal to hearing from 100 voters with the same view on the issue.

**Communicating in Writing: Letters**

- Write your letter on personal or company stationery. Be sure your name and return address are legible.

- Try to keep your letter to one typewritten page if possible and don't write on the back of a page. Ask someone to proof and edit your letter before you send it.

- State your purpose in a short first paragraph. Support your position with the rest of the letter.

- Be factual and personal. If writing about a bill, cite it by name and number. Explain how the legislation will affect you and the industry. Avoid using jargon or acronyms since your lawmaker may not be familiar with the golf course management industry.

- If you believe the legislation is wrong and should be opposed, say so, indicate the likely adverse effects and suggest a better approach.

- Ask for the legislator's position on the issue but don't demand support. Elected officials respond to a variety of views, and even if your position is not supported on one issue or bill, it may be the next time.

- Thank the legislator for considering your views.

**Communicating in Writing: E-mail**

Almost all members of Congress and state lawmakers have e-mail capability. Lawmakers and their staffs like receiving e-mail: they can read and respond to constituent messages when time allows, instead of being interrupted throughout their busy day.
E-mail offers a great opportunity to quickly and easily express your views on pending issues. Messages can be informal, but have the same impact as a letter. Generally, the same tips for writing a letter apply to writing an e-mail.

When sending an e-mail to an elected official, be sure to include your street address, city, state and zip code in your message, so you can be identified as a constituent. You should also make sure to ask the elected official to state their position on the bill or issue.

E-mail addresses for elected officials can easily be located on the Internet and in the GCSAA Legislative Action Center. Many Congressional and state lawmakers have their own homepages with links to their e-mail.

Communicating Verbally: Phone calls

Phone numbers for local, state and federal lawmakers can be found in the government listing section of your white pages phone book and in the GCSAA Legislative Action Center.

- Prior to the call, prepare a script or outline to follow including any key points you want to get across.
- Ask to speak to the staff person who has responsibility for your issue. Don’t expect them to know all the details about the bill or regulation. Be prepared to explain the issue and your position.
- Identify yourself and your golf facility. Be sure your lawmaker or their staff know you and/or your golf facility are in the lawmaker’s district.
- Be brief. Your call should not take longer than 3-5 minutes. Be considerate of their time constraints.
- Be factual and personal. Explain how the legislation will affect you and the industry.
- Ask for the legislator’s position on the issue but do not demand support. Elected officials respond to a variety of views, and even if your position is not supported on one issue or bill, it may be the next time.
- After the phone call, follow up with a thank you letter reaffirming your position on the issue.
- If you feel you need more time to discuss the issue, you may want to schedule a follow-up visit.

The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Government Relations Online is designed to help you learn more about issues impacting the golf course management profession; learn more about GCSAA’s advocacy efforts and successes; and engage in our advocacy efforts. For help with all of your government relations needs, please contact:

Using the Capitol Switchboard to call members of Congress

1. Call (202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected to your member of Congress.
2. If you don’t know who your member of Congress is, tell the operator your zip code.
3. Remember to ask to speak with the staff member who handles your issue.
Personal Visits with Lawmakers

Personal visits with lawmakers are very important to developing relationships that will help you address existing issues and those that will develop in the future. Federal and state legislators usually have times when they or their staff members can meet with you at their offices either in their districts or at the capitol. Members of Congress may be more accessible away from the distractions of Capitol Hill but don’t hesitate to request a meeting with them at their offices in Washington, D.C.

Scheduling a Meeting
A lawmaker’s appointment secretary usually sets up meetings with constituents. If you find your elected official is not available for a meeting, ask if you can schedule an appointment with the staff person who deals with your issue. Staff members play an important role in analyzing issues and lawmakers rely heavily on them for information—don’t discount the importance of building a relationship with staff.

State regulators usually have to be met in the state capitol. Regional offices for federal agencies are located in each state or multistate area.

Have your own or a GCSAA position paper or information sheet ready. Prepare a “talking paper” or list of the issues you want to discuss. Gather some information about your golf course to share.

The Meeting
• Introduce yourself and your golf facility. Tell them you are a constituent and let them know your professional affiliations (for example, that you are a member of GCSAA and your local chapter).

• Give a brief description of your chapter or organization and GCSAA.

• Identify the issue that concerns you. Briefly and succinctly describe how you think it will affect you, your facility and GCSAA.

• Ask if you can answer any questions. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so and offer to get back to them with the answer. You can also say that you will ask someone on the GCSAA staff to provide them with the information they need.

• Ask their opinion on the issue and take careful note of the response you receive.

• Ask who on the staff will serve as a contact for future communications. If in Washington, D.C., ask about district or regional offices and who would serve as a contact there.

• Leave written information about the issue, your facility and GCSAA.

• Be sensitive to the busy schedules of lawmakers and their staffs. Plan on most meetings lasting no more than 15 to 30 minutes.
After the Meeting
Follow-up is crucial! At the first opportunity, write a personal thank-you note. Briefly restate your position and enclose additional information as appropriate. Remind them that you and GCSAA are available to assist them in any way.

Government relations staff can help you put together a lawmaker leave behind. Government relations staff can provide you with information on the issues and other materials such as data from the Golf Course Environmental Profile and information on the golf course management profession. You can further customize your leave backs with your own chapter publications and information on your golf facility.
Position Statements, Position Papers and Backgrounders

To inform lawmakers, allies or the public about an issue, you should draft a position statement or position paper. These useful documents are designed to be educational and persuasive and explain your position on a particular issue.

Position Statements
A “position statement” is used to designate a straightforward statement or declaration of the association’s policy on a particular issue, bill or proposed regulation. A position statement is usually short and concise and does not include background information or discussion relative to the position. A position statement generally does not quote facts and figures developed by outside sources and does not utilize a bibliography.

Position Papers
A “position paper” also sets forth the association’s policy on a particular issue, bill or proposed regulation. However, as the term implies, a position paper also contains background information and discussion in order to provide a more complete understanding of the issues involved and the rationale behind the position set forth. A position paper frequently cites outside sources and may include a bibliography. Try to limit your position paper to no more than one page front and back.

Backgrounder Papers
Additional documents are sometimes prepared which attempt to more fully explain specific issues. These documents are called “backgrounder” papers and may originate from various sources, including internal association committees or staff, and are produced for the purpose of providing information on the particular topic. A backgrounder paper does not necessarily stand by itself as a statement of policy but may be used to formulate a position paper.
POSITION PAPER
ON
AN ACT OF 2014

H.B. 0000

In the first paragraph state the association's position on the issue. Use simple, concise language that's easy to read and understand. Keep sentences short.

In the second paragraph describe the association, its membership, and its mission or objectives. Explain the association's interest in the issue. Use short sentences.

BACKGROUND

Describe the bill and its relevant provisions. Explain why the bill was drafted or introduced. Include any relevant legislative history. Don't assume all readers of your position statement are familiar with the bill. Keep it brief.

DISCUSSION

Explain your position on the issues one at a time. Use short paragraphs.

Using Subheadings, Highlight Each Argument Succinctly or Give Each Topic a Title

Readers should be able to skim the position paper quickly. Choose an easy-to-read font. Use underlined or bolded text to guide readers through the discussion.

- Use bullets to highlight lists
- Indent some margins

Re-edit with an eye to simplifying language, shortening sentences, and dividing into short paragraphs.
Fit Your Position Statement on One Piece of Paper

A one-page position paper can be printed on one or both sides. If two-sided, direct the reader to the other side, so it's not missed in reading or copying:

Make It Interesting and Convincing

Explain technical terms used (in parenthesis, as briefly as possible) if necessary. Support your arguments with easily understood statistics.

Use strong action words. "Will" instead of "may." "Urges," "supports," "believes," not "wants" or "feels." Use exclamation points! And questions marks? Don't lengthen sentences with extra adjectives or adverbs. Finish each discussion item discussion with a firm "sound bite."

ACTION NEEDED and/or SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS

Clearly state what action you want taken. Describe it as what is needed. Explain what this action or change will accomplish and don't worry about being repetitive.

If space allows, outline your proposed amendment to the bill. Otherwise, describe the change needed. You can prepare amendments on separate plain paper, too.

For a bill, indicate the title and section of the bill to be amended. Make it easy to read and understand.

- Use the "strikeout" feature on your computer for language to be deleted.
- Underline and bold language to be added, or put it in italics.
- Avoid font shading effects that may black out when copying or faxing.

Most word processing programs now have these font features available.

CONCLUSION or SUMMARY

Restate your position. Restate the impact on association members and your state or region. Summarize your arguments. Summarize the remedy. Repeat the importance to the association or the golf course management industry.

Be firm in what you’re asking for, and remember that position papers should not include the courtesy "thank-you" used in testimony.
Lawmakers hold hearings to gather information on issues that are the subject of legislation or proposed regulations. Testifying at a hearing allows you to directly communicate with lawmakers about how the proposal will affect your job as a superintendent and the golf course management industry.

**Testifying before state or local governments**
At the state and local levels, anyone can usually testify and an invitation from the committee is not necessary. Advance notice of your plan to testify may be necessary, or you may only need to sign up at the beginning of the hearing. Contact the committee staff in advance to find out how it works for their hearings.

**Testifying before Congress**
In Congress, an invitation to testify is necessary. Invitations can be arranged through the committee staff, with the help of the bill sponsor or through your own member of Congress. Not all requests for invitations are granted. Sometimes invitations are offered first-come, first-served on a certain day, and the agenda fills rapidly.

The length of your written testimony (for the record) can be detailed, but use only attention-getting excerpts for your oral presentation, which should be brief, and to the point.

Many committees have their own requirements for written testimony, including double-spaced pages, legal sized paper, and a standard number of copies for committee use. Generally, there are no restrictions on the length of written testimony submitted for the official hearing record.

**Delivering testimony**
The person who delivers the testimony is just as important as what is said. Be sure to select someone who is a good public speaker, is knowledgeable on the issue, is a leader in your organization and if possible, is from the same state or district as a member on the committee.

If you are chosen to present testimony you should do as much advance preparation as possible—especially if you are not completely comfortable with public speaking. Reading a book or article on public speaking is a good idea, and practice your testimony in front of your chapter members or colleagues.

During your testimony explain your position clearly by speaking naturally and following an outline. Avoid reading your testimony if possible. Visual aids and specific examples are also very effective in getting your message across.

A helpful tool titled “Tips for Preparing Effective Testimony” is also available in this advocacy manual.
Tips for Presenting Effective Testimony
By Timothy Haake, Esq., Haake & Associates

Before the Hearing
Do your homework. Adequate preparation requires seeking answers to these four questions:

1) What has our association said before on this subject?
2) What legislators sit on the committee?
3) What is the committee hoping to get from this hearing?
4) What do we hope to get from this hearing?

Prepare your statement for the official hearing record. Most witnesses will use a prepared text when testifying before a legislative committee. Many witnesses find it beneficial to think of this prepared statement as having two forms:

1) the statement submitted for the official hearing record; and
2) the statement from which the witness actually reads aloud.

Carefully consider how best to write your “read version.” Its function is not only to communicate but also to persuade. Analyze your audience in terms of how they view the subject. Is there common ground shared by them and you on which you can build an appealing argument? While some may be fixed in their opposition, is there a middle-ground approach that can work to persuade others? What opposing points should you be prepared to rebut?

Adhere to the committee’s guidelines for written testimony. Many committees have their own requirements for written testimony, including double-spacing, legal sized paper, and a standard number of copies for committee use. Generally, there are no restrictions on the length of written testimony submitted for the official hearing record.

Practice reading your testimony aloud. Time yourself, and listen carefully. It is helpful to have an audience, either a colleague or spouse, to provide constructive comments on your presentation.

Consider “planting” questions with friendly committee members. Draft several questions and float them to any receptive committee members. This can help you get your point across and will ensure that you are prepared for possible questions.

During the Hearing
Keep your “read version” brief. Summarize what is in the official record version, emphasizing only the important points. You should be able to read it aloud in no more than five minutes. Avoid abbreviations, undefined acronyms, and any other industry-specific technical jargon. It is unlikely that everyone present will understand them.

Adhere strictly to any time limits imposed by the committee chairman. Staying within limits demonstrates preparedness and fosters a favorable environment.
Don’t answer a question unless you know the answer. Never guess at an answer or tell a legislator what you think he or she wants to hear. Instead, tell the legislator (or committee) you will be happy to get information from your association and send it as soon as possible. Ask for the name of a staff person you can contact.

After the Hearing
Be sure to follow up with the committee. After the hearing, the committee may send you a transcript of your remarks. This is not required, but is a normal courtesy accorded to witnesses. It gives you the opportunity to edit and correct your grammar and improper phrasing.

It is not an opportunity to change the substance of any answer, even if, on reflection or review, you conclude that you were in error. If you wish to change an answer, write a letter to the chairman indicating where you were mistaken, and give the correct information. Observe the committee’s deadline in returning your transcript.

Always let your association members and staff know how your testimony went. Was a particular committee member interested in or responsive to your positions? Did he or she vow to help you achieve your goals or offer any suggestions?

Building Relationships
Building relationships with lawmakers at the local, state and federal levels of government is an easy and effective chapter government relations activity. It is also one of the most important ways your chapter can influence government actions that affect your job as a golf course superintendent.

By having frequent contact with lawmakers and establishing golf course superintendents as a good source of information, your chapter will already have an open line of communication should an issue arise that affects golf course maintenance.

The following are two ways your chapter can start building good relationships with lawmakers.

**Golf Course Tours**
An organized golf course tour is a great way to get to know your lawmakers and teach them about your work. It is an opportunity for chapter members to showcase environmental practices on the course while getting to know lawmakers personally. Encourage lawmakers to bring along their staff members who work on environmental issues. Invite others from the golf course who might add to the experience, such as members of the golf course maintenance staff or the green chairman.

You can also invite state and local lawmakers for a round of golf following the tour. Federal lawmakers cannot accept a gift of free golf, but they may be willing to pay to play the course. Some state governments have similar restrictions so be sure to ask your lawmaker what is allowed.

Don’t forget to take photos of the event. Include copies of photos with thank you notes to the lawmakers. They may be interested in using them in their press releases and constituent newsletters. You can use the photos in your chapter and golf course newsletters, and post them on course information bulletin boards to let everyone know about your activities.

**Speaker Programs**
Inviting lawmakers to speak at chapter meetings is another way to build relationships. It sends the message that you care about their work and helps them accomplish their goals by providing an opportunity to address their constituents. Lawmakers are usually eager to accept invitations to speak as their schedule permits.

The invitation will be most appealing if lawmakers only have to speak 10-15 minutes. Allow for a 15-20 minute question and answer period following their speech. The nature of the questions from chapter members will educate your lawmaker about what your group is most concerned about. It also allows chapter members to get more specific information about issues.

It is a good idea for chapter members to prepare some questions in advance. It will give both the speaker and the questioner the opportunity to make a good impression—and lawmakers will appreciate the effort. Again, don’t forget to take photos and send thank you notes.
Conducting Site Visits for Lawmakers
by Michael Graham, American Dental Association

One of the best uses of time and money in a grassroots lobbying effort is to conduct a site visit with an elected official. Few occasions provide such a great opportunity for a legislator to get to know your association members and become educated on your issues.

Here are three reasons why you should make site visits a part of your grassroots lobbying action plan:

- give the elected official an opportunity to know you and your association member(s) personally
- educate him or her about your profession, business or industry; and
- put a human face on legislation that impacts your members

Getting to Know You
Perhaps you feel that you have a good relationship with an elected official. Your letters get answered. You even get a face-to-face visit once or twice a year. Now ask yourself—is that enough contact? Can that elected official be counted on during “crunch time?” Maybe not. And it’s not worth the risk.

Remember that an elected official sees lots of people each day. You are competing with everyone. Therefore, you must get to know legislators on a personal level so they respond to you as well as those you represent. Spending two hours discussing your issues—both business and personal—is usually an unforgettable experience. Be sure to take advantage of it.

Educating the Legislators
Do the legislators really know your profession? Some professions enjoy high profiles that allow, or even force, legislators to recognize them on a daily basis. Other professions don’t have the same profiles. A site visit allows legislators to get to know your issues better because they see them first-hand and meet the people responsible for delivering the goods and services.

Putting a Face on Legislation
Once visits have been concluded, you can be assured that every time a bill affecting your profession crosses those legislators’ desks, they will think about the visits they made to the site. At the very least, it provides legislators with a point of reference should you need to remind them when you are discussing your legislation.

Helpful Hints
Scheduling. Extend invitations to legislators to visit during a personal meeting or by sending a letter. The invitation may include a “meet and greet” reception following the visit to introduce legislators to other individuals in your profession. If you send a letter, be brief but specific about what you hope the legislator will learn from the visit. Follow up with the office scheduler to confirm the date and time.

Visit Logistics. Educate your participants about the legislators, key issues and what you wish to accomplish. Assign each participant a specific duty. What key issues, technologies, practices and techniques do you wish to highlight? What refreshments will you serve? Map out the tour, and perform a walk-through. Prepare an information sheet, and schedule a photographer. Under some circumstances, a legislator may want the press on hand.
Conducting the Visit. Stay on time. Remember your goals for the tour. Tie the technologies, practices, and so on, to the legislative issues you care about. Give the legislators time to visit with all participants, and provide a question and answer period. Remember to thank the legislators and respective guests. Don’t forget to tell the legislators what you want. (“Please support/oppose H.R. ____.”).

Following up your visit. Write thank-you notes to your legislators, reemphasizing the key points you made during the tour. Include additional update information, if appropriate, as well as photos taken during the visit. Stay in contact with the legislators. You should look at successful site visits as just another important step in the long process of getting to know and educate your legislators.

Rules on Gifts to Lawmakers

Congress
Beginning January 1, 1996, new gift restrictions were imposed on members of Congress and their employees. The House and Senate adopted different rules, but both define a gift as any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, forbearance, etc., having monetary value, including services, training, transportation, lodging and meals, made to any individual based on their relationship with the member of Congress.

The House prohibits representatives and their employees from accepting a gift worth $50 or more, and limits gifts from one source to $100 per year. A gift that is under $10 does not count toward the $100 limit. The ban only allows items of nominal value, such as food or refreshments not offered as part of a meal, and small items, such as tee-packs, T-shirts, caps or promotional products from their home state.

The Senate prohibits senators and employees from accepting a gift worth $50 or more, and limits gifts from one source to $100 per year. Any gift of $10 or more counts toward this limit.

There are a few exceptions to the rules. An elected official may accept free attendance at a widely attended event if they participate in an official capacity. This does not include entertainment or recreation expenses, such as a round of golf. Organizations or people registered as lobbyists cannot pay for a member's travel expenses to an official event.

For example, members of Congress or their staff may be invited to attend a charity golf event, but most legal experts agree that the rules do not allow them to play in the tournament for free.

Information on the congressional gift rules can be found at the following Internet sites:
- Senate: http://www.ethics.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/gifts

State Rules
Many states have enacted similar rules on accepting gifts. Some states are even stricter about what items or services of value an elected official may accept. Check with your state's legislative information office or the Office of the Secretary of State for guidance on gift rules.

Can lawmakers accept free golf?
You can invite a state or local lawmaker for a round of golf following a golf course site tour. Federal lawmakers cannot accept a free gift of golf, but they may be willing to pay to play the course. Some state governments have similar restrictions so be sure to ask your lawmaker what is allowed.
Issue Management
A local issue has arisen which threatens your golf course maintenance facility or the golf course maintenance industry as a whole. The issue is being driven primarily by emotion, not fact, and is gaining media attention. You have been asked to get involved. The following information outlines how to get started managing the issue by getting organized and developing and implementing an action plan.

I. Organize the Locals

When a controversial issue arises in your community or region, identify and make personal contact with all potential allies familiar with or affected by the issue.

Getting Started

Organize a meeting or conference call with all interested parties. This meeting should include people, companies and organizations directly impacted by the issue, as well as those who could be impacted in the future.

Why a face-to-face meeting is better than a conference call:
- A meeting provides the best opportunity to learn where everyone stands on the issue;
- A meeting facilitates development of an action plan;
- A meeting gives moral support to those impacted by the issue. Other like-minded people find they are not alone in fighting an issue and that action is being taken.

Before the meeting:
- Gather local newspaper articles about the issue and related issues to distribute at the meeting;
- Gather any newspaper articles or information you can find from other areas of the country where the issue has received attention;
- Gather published industry and scientific information to provide facts and background for letters, speeches and other correspondence.

Exchange Names/Addresses

Have everyone at the meeting write their name, business name, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address on a sign-up list. After the meeting, compile the list and distribute it to all attendees to facilitate rapid communication.

II. Develop a Plan

Once all parties have presented their views about the issue, begin work on a plan of action. Following these steps will help you develop an effective action plan:
- **Define Your Objective.** An objective should briefly explain what the group wants to accomplish from a big picture perspective. An objective should be one or two simple sentences that do not include specific tactics.

- **Outline Key Audiences.** Identify primary and secondary audiences to target for the most impact.

- **Name Allied Organizations (current and potential) and Individuals.** List individuals, associations, companies, institutions and government agencies that can provide support, ideas and make other contributions to the group’s objective.

- **Identify Issue Leaders.** Identify one or two local individuals who will serve as issue team leaders. These individuals will coordinate activities and organize meetings.

- **Contact Industry Associations.** Make sure all related trade associations are aware of the issue and its development. Include them in relevant correspondence, even if they are not directly involved with the issue. You may want to inform state and national associations (including the GCSAA information and public policy department) as well.

- **Locate Experts.** Identify local experts who can provide information or support for the group’s position on the issue. Experts can include university extension agents, county or state health officials, and other third party sources.

- **Create Messages.** Develop and agree on a few key messages. Use these messages in conversations, correspondence, media interviews and to build support for the group’s action.

**Set-up a Timeline**

After the plan has been developed, establish a timeline for its completion. Set deadlines and assign people to complete the tasks.

**Obstacles to Organizing Around an Issue**

Sometimes obvious allies may choose not to participate in your group’s activities and efforts must be made to overcome their reluctance. Some people will participate but prefer not to lend their names or companies to an issue for fear of negative publicity. This possibility always exists, but the result of doing nothing at all can be far more damaging in the long run.

**III. Develop Tactics or Action Items**

Now that you have a clear plan of action, it is time to develop tactics and action items to carry out your plan.

**Media Relations**

If the issue is expected to have media coverage that impacts the reputation or standing of you or your club, organize a media response plan. A visit to the local newspaper editorial staff (and local TV/radio stations if appropriate) is a good vehicle to establish a flow of communication. Meet with “editorial writers” if you want an opinion page editorial written about the issue. If you expect future news coverage of the issue meet with the “editorial staff” (i.e. reporters, managing editor, business editor).
• **Media visits should be organized as soon as an issue breaks.** Reporters need contacts, names of experts, and sources that understand the group's position if they are expected to cover the issue fairly.

• **Never expect reporters to know all the facts.** They probably are not familiar with issues affecting the golf course maintenance industry. If reporters do not have adequate background or correct information to cover an issue, much damage can occur before they are brought up to speed.

• **Send a thank-you letter immediately after a media visit.** If resulting news coverage is balanced and/or favorable send another thank-you letter commending the reporter. If the contact is by letter, send a copy to the reporter's managing editor. If a favorable editorial is written, send a thank-you letter to the editorial board manager.

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**Organizing an Editorial Board Meeting**

If your group wants to influence a newspaper to write an editorial, contact the editorial board manager (one person is typically in charge of arranging visits for the paper) by calling the newspaper’s editorial department. Once you’ve been connected to the right person, briefly state the issue and explain why it is of interest to readers, then request a 15-20 minute meeting to explain the issue to the editorial board (these usually turn into 60-minute sessions).

**Who Should Attend an Editorial Board Meeting.** Ideally, a small group (3-5 people) with expertise on the issue should attend this meeting. Depending on the issue, the group can include management people from golf facilities, industry officials or university extension officials/professors.

**What You Should Bring to an Editorial Meeting.** Reporters always prefer leave-behind materials. At the minimum, bring along a list of those in attendance (name, phone, company, and title) as well as additional contacts, names of experts, and sources that understand the group's position and are willing to be interviewed (check before suggesting a name). Also provide position papers on the issue, reprints of articles on related subjects and other background information.

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**Letters to the Editor**

Your group can react to newspaper articles by organizing a quick “letter to the editor” writing campaign. Ideally, these letters should come from local concerned citizens and/or business people. For the greatest impact, letters should be submitted quickly after an article runs. Everyone, not just one person representing the group, should write a letter—numbers count! Keep copies of published letters to use in building support. Follow-up with the newspaper by phone if a letter is not printed—ask why it was not printed.

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**Trade Press Contacts**

Consider informing the trade press about the issue. The trade press can be a great ally in communicating to others in the industry, and the information could help superintendents facing similar issues in other parts of the country.
Organize Community Relations
Many civic organizations such as Kiwanis and Rotary clubs allow guest speakers to address meetings on specific issues. This is a great way to reach community decision-makers and business people. The GCSAA information and public policy department can help you prepare for a presentation.

On-going Issue Management
Should the issue be a long-term situation, identify one person to be the “key contact.” This person can help coordinate correspondence, watch for issue developments, and serve as the go-to contact for the rest of the group. This person should be local and have a strong interest in the situation. The issue may “drag” over time, making it difficult to maintain high action interest by coalition members. Regular updates and communication to the coalition will keep them alert to the issue.

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Coalitions and Alliances

Coalitions
Coalitions are usually organized to handle a particular issue, most often the subject of a proposed law or regulation. If there are other groups that share your position on an issue, a coalition can be formed. Coalitions are useful for sharing information, for dividing up tasks and for sharing the costs of a legislative or regulatory effort.

Coalitions can also be very influential with lawmakers—they show that there is widespread interest in an issue.

Alliances
Alliances are usually ongoing and serve to communicate information, as well as lobby on issues in which its members have common interest.

If you regularly have an interest in issues in common with other groups, you might want to organize an alliance. In many areas, golf course superintendent chapters and other golf-related organizations participate in “turfgrass” or “green industry” alliances.

Organizing a Coalition or Alliance
- Identify and make contact with all potential allies familiar with or affected by your issue. (The coalition should be as broad as possible to show wide support for your issue.)
- Exchange name and contact information with all parties.
- Develop a clear mission and a plan of action.
- Assign individuals different tasks based on the level of resources available to each participant.
- Select a leader or co-leaders to share leadership responsibility.
- Meet on a regular basis and show your progress toward your overall goal. Minutes from each meeting should be distributed to members in a timely manner.

Ways to Ensure Success
- Establish clear, attainable goals. Accomplishment of the goal should produce a win-win situation for all members.
- Understand that not all groups will have the same involvement—maintain flexibility.
- Maintain clear communication. Make sure members feel they are “in the loop.”
- Empower members by giving each of them a specific task to perform.
- Recognize individual efforts. Every person should feel like they have made a contribution.

Benefits of Coalitions and Alliances
There are many benefits to working with coalitions and alliances. Sharing of information and resources between coalition members both eliminates duplication of efforts and saves money by combining resources. In addition, chapter members can gain professional development skills by cooperating with diverse groups of individuals.
Building Support for Your Issues

Gaining wide support for an issue can greatly increase your chance of success with lawmakers. You can often boost the effectiveness of your campaign and capitalize on your message by building support in the media or through golfers at your course.

Publicity and Using the Media
If lawmakers aren't responsive to your concerns, you may want to look to the media for help. The media can be a powerful tool for advocating your position. Consider newspapers, television, radio and even the Internet.

Identify a “hook” for a good news story, and let your local newspaper or television reporters know. A survey, trend or event can prompt a news story about your issue. Be careful, however, because the media tend to sensationalize issues and a reporter might give the story an unfavorable spin.

- Talk radio, news radio and cable TV may also offer good opportunities—talk and call-in shows are always on the lookout for good discussion topics.

- Your local newspaper's editorial staff may be willing to publish an editorial on your issue. Ask for a meeting to help explain the issue.

- Guest editorials or letters to the editor will bring the issue to the attention of the public, and may also influence lawmakers. To avoid having your submission edited, limit the length of your piece to 400-600 words.

Get to know the media in your area and learn how to reach their reporters and news directors. Try to appoint a single spokesperson the media can consistently call for comments on issues, and who can be relied on to meet their deadline requirements.

Using Your Club Members or Regular Golfers
The members or regular golfers at your course may include lawmakers or other people in your community who can be key players in your efforts. There may be opportunities at your golf course to get their support or help.

Some golf facilities may frown upon or prohibit approaching members or golfers at all in this regard. Be sure you have authority and the support of your management before making any contacts.

To avoid interrupting their game, or discussing your issue in front of their playing partners, ask if you can have a few minutes of their time after their game. Invite them to play a round with you in the near future, if appropriate (whether the round can be free to lawmakers depends on gift rules that apply). Or, mention that you have an issue you’d like to get their advice about, and tell them you'll write them a letter or call for an appointment at their office. You'll be able to tell how receptive they are to your suggestions. If they are not receptive, don't force the issue—they may not agree with you today but may support you on another issue in the future.

In your letters, at your meetings or during your round of golf, invite them to tour your facility or observe firsthand the effect the issue has on your work. Developing good relationships with influential members of the community has many good benefits.
2014 Priority Issues Agenda

How the Agenda is developed

The GCSAA Board of Directors, Government Relations Committee members and staff receive ongoing feedback on golf course management issues through communication with members, affiliated chapters (boards, executives, government relations liaisons), regional turfgrass and green industry coalitions, allied associations, industry partners, university scientists, advocacy consultants, and government agencies. Input and feedback is also gathered from the GCSAA Member Needs Assessment, as well as issue-specific member surveys.

Based on this feedback, the GCSAA Government Relations Committee annually develops a recommended Priority Issues Agenda. While staff actively monitor and take action on many issues impacting golf course management, the Priority Issues Agenda outlines the legislative and regulatory “priorities” for GCSAA—those that are likely to require the greatest amount of association resources and staff time.

For each priority issue the Agenda contains an informational overview, a GCSAA Board-approved position statement, current GCSAA activity on the issue, information on official GCSAA position papers, and information on coalitions in which GCSAA participates.

The recommended Agenda is submitted to the GCSAA Board of Directors for approval. Upon approval, the Agenda is distributed to members through the GCSAA Website and other association communication vehicles.

GCSAA staff utilize the Priority Issues Agenda to take action on golf course management issues. They are guided by the official GCSAA position statement for each issue.

2014 Priority Issues:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Fertilizers
- Labor and Immigration
- Pesticides
- Value of Golf
- Water Management

For more information on any government issues that affect the golf industry, please contact the GCSAA Department of Information and Public Policy at (800) 472-7878, or visit GCSAA Online at www.gcsaa.org.
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Issue information:
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires reasonable modifications to golf course policies, practices or procedures to serve people with disabilities (as defined by the law) on an equal basis with the rest of the general public. A reasonable modification is one that does not present an undue burden to the golf course or alter the fundamental nature of the game. GCSAA has been active in working with golfers, lawmakers and regulators to address ADA issues since the law’s inception. GCSAA and its members have taken a proactive stance on golf course accessibility issues through the use of best practices to accommodate golfers with disabilities; through modification of policies; and through education and outreach to golf course owners and operators. On September 15, 2010, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) released final rules to update its ADA regulations and implement new accessibility standards for golf courses and other recreational facilities. The rules impact municipal and commercial entities and codify the architectural guidelines for barrier removal. The rules impact new golf course development and renovations to existing facilities. Alterations to existing golf courses include the redesign of teeing grounds and greens. Mowing and other general maintenance activities are not considered an alteration. After March 15, 2012, all new golf facilities must be accessible in accordance with the golf course accessibility guidelines and existing courses must remove barriers when it is “readily achievable” over time (easy to accomplish without much difficulty or expense). The golf course accessibility standards cover: accessible routes and/or alternative golf car passages; teeing grounds; putting greens; weather shelters; and driving ranges. Further, on July 26, 2010, DOJ issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) specific to accessible golf cars. DOJ is considering issuing regulations requiring golf courses that provide golf cars, when replacing or acquiring additional standard golf cars, to provide accessible golf cars for use by individuals with disabilities.

GCSAA position statement:
As golf course management professionals, the members of GCSAA will work to make golf accessible to all persons by promoting policies and practices that consider the needs and safety of all golfers, promote the growth and vitality of the game and maintain the agronomic integrity of the golf course. Every golf facility in the U.S. has a stake in growing the game of golf. The growth of the game is dependent upon new golfers of all abilities coming into the game. The purchase of single rider golf cars should be the decision of each individual golf facility weighing multiple factors including customer service considerations, safety of the devices, market demand and economic impact to the facility.

GCSAA activity:
- GCSAA is a founding member of the National Alliance for Accessible Golf (Alliance). The mission of the Alliance is to increase participation of people with disabilities in the game of golf. GCSAA serves on the Alliance board of directors.
- Through an ongoing grant from the USGA, the USGA and the Alliance have joined forces to fund golf programs for individuals with disabilities such as the Fore Hope Golf program in Ohio.
- In May 2005, GCSAA submitted comments to the DOJ which began the process of adopting revised ADA standards consistent with Parts II and III of the revised guidelines implementing the ADA and the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA), published by the Access Board on July 23, 2004, at 69 FR 44083. The Advanced Notice of Public Rulemaking addressed the issue of whether single rider golf cars should be required at all golf facilities in the U.S.
- In July 2007, the Alliance hosted its first annual Accessible Golf Pro-Am at the Toledo (OH) Country Club. The tournament raised funds for accessible golf programs throughout the country while increasing awareness in the work of the Alliance.
- In August 2008, GCSAA submitted comments to the DOJ on the proposed rulemaking issued by the agency on June 17, 2008, to adopt revised ADA Standards consistent with the 2004 ADAAG including the guidelines for
recreation facilities. In the NPRM, the DOJ decided not to propose new regulations specific to accessible golf cars.

- The seminar “Making Your Golf Course ADA Accessible” was held at the 2009 GCSAA Education Conference.
- The government relations session “ADA Accessibility Guidelines and NPDES Pesticide General Permits: Prepare Your Course for Compliance” was held at the 2011 GCSAA Education Conference.
- In January 2011, GCSAA submitted comments to the DOJ on the ANPRM related to “Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability by State and Local Governments and Places of Public Accommodation; Equipment and Furniture”. GCSAA also provided public testimony in January 2011 on the ANPRM at a DOJ public listening session in San Francisco.
- In September 2011, GCSAA offered a free webcast to its members on the new ADA accessibility guidelines for golf courses. The featured speaker was Peggy Greenwell, U.S. Access Board Accessibility Specialist.
- In 2012, the Alliance published an updated Toolkit for Golf Course Owners and Operators to provide guidance to golf course owners and operators seeking ways to make their golf course more accessible to golfers with disabilities.
- In 2013, the Alliance hosted the “Making Your Course Accessible to Individuals with Disabilities” presentation at the Golf Industry Show in San Diego as well as Alliance Awareness Week during June 24-28.

Position paper:
Comments filed with the Department of Justice on January 24, 2011.
Comments filed with the Department of Justice on August 18, 2008.
Comments filed with the Department of Justice on May 27, 2005.
Comments filed with the Department of Justice Access Board on December 2, 1999.
National Alliance for Accessible Golf Toolkit for Golf Course Owners and Operators

Coalitions/affiliations: National Alliance for Accessible Golf - www.accessgolf.org
Fertilizers

Issue information:
Efforts by states, municipalities and counties across the United States to ban or restrict the use of fertilizers continue as elected officials and citizens attempt to address concerns of nutrient loading in waterways. Phosphorus and nitrogen are of special concern. Activists are attempting to overturn state preemption laws. A federal focus on cleanup of the Chesapeake Bay watershed has brought greater attention to agricultural and urban nutrient management and the Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts will serve as a “model” for watershed cleanup efforts elsewhere. Fertilizer restrictions are being proposed in all areas of the country, not just the Northeast and Florida. EPA is pushing state and local governments to regulate fertilizers to control nutrient runoff as well as pushing states to adopt more stringent numeric nutrient water quality standards. Golf course fertilizer use remains a target due to public perception that the amounts used to manage courses are a source of the nutrient loads. State-mandated restrictions and nutrient management plans can have a detrimental impact on golf courses if they are not developed with input from the golf course management industry and without consideration of existing environmental best management practices for golf courses.

Specific fertilizer issues include:
- Nutrient Management and Management Plans
- Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)
- Fertilizer Bans/Restrictions

GCSAA position statement:
Fertilizer laws and regulations should be based on sound science supported by credible peer reviewed data and university recommendations. GCSAA supports the development and use of science-based best management practices (BMPs) for fertilizer applications through superintendent–regulator–university partnerships at the local and state levels of government. GCSAA supports golf facilities using guidelines developed by university scientists to develop written nutrient management plans based on the ecological characteristics and expectations unique to each facility and soil testing.

Golf courses rely upon the judicious use of a variety of inputs to produce healthy turfgrass. Proper nutrient management is one important key to maintaining healthy turfgrass. It is a key component of agronomic programs and environmental BMPs. Properly maintained turfgrass provides many community benefits including: critical "greenspaces"; habitat for birds and other wildlife; recreational opportunities; capture of run-off pollutants in stormwater, and carbon sequestration and oxygen production. In addition, many entities both public and private rely on healthy turfgrass as a key component in maintaining financial revenues.

GCSAA supports the enactment of state laws preempting regulation of the use of fertilizers and prohibiting local governments from adopting such laws, because local regulation of the use of these products is costly and unnecessary. Only State designated regulatory agencies should be vested with the authority to regulate the use of nutrients. State governmental regulatory agencies have the scientific expertise to determine nutrient requirements across the geography of the state. Laws and regulations involving fertilizer application should recognize golf properties engaged in environmental stewardship practices and/or programs that address nutrient management and promote BMPs.

GCSAA activity:
- Staff continues to monitor and take action on fertilizer issues and is working with members to provide information on BMPs for golf courses to lawmakers and regulators and help members and chapters develop formal statewide golf specific BMPs programs.
In Spring 2006, Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) launched a coordinated grassroots effort to address attempts by activists at the local government level to ban the use of fertilizers and pesticides. GCSAA is working closely with RISE to ensure that fertilizer and specialty pest management products remain available for purchase and use.

In 2007, GCSAA launched the Nutrient Use Survey, the third survey of the Golf Course Environmental Profile (GCEP). The overall goal of the GCEP is to develop an environmental profile of golf courses. This survey solicited information regarding nutrient use and associated practices on golf courses throughout the United States. This information will provide baseline data for documenting changes in environmental practices over time, help GCSAA respond to governmental inquiries, and answer the public's questions about environmental issues. Data from the Nutrient Use Survey was released in 2009.

GCSAA members in DE, MD, NY, WV, PA and VA formed a small, informal stakeholder group in the spring of 2010 to respond in a coordinated fashion to federal, state and local Chesapeake Bay watershed cleanup initiatives.

In April 2010, GCSAA submitted comments to the U.S. EPA on the Executive Order 13508 Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Section 502 Guidance: Federal Land Management in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

In 2012, GCSAA members in the Northeast actively participated in the Northeast Voluntary Turf Fertilizer Initiative whose goal is to develop mutually agreeable voluntary guidelines on the formulation, labeling and application of turf fertilizer for the Northeast region.

In 2013, GCSAA members worked with state and local officials on nutrient pollution issues in Cape Cod, Massachusetts; worked with the West Virginia EPA on the development of a fertilizer education program as part of ongoing efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay watershed; and continued to respond to city and county fertilizer bans throughout Florida.

**Position paper:**
Comments filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on April 10, 2010.
Comments filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 8, 2010.

**Coalitions/affiliations:** Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) - www.pestfacts.org
**Labor and Immigration**

**Issue information:**
An available, legal and trained workforce is vital to the economic success of golf facilities and a top priority for the golf industry. Bureau of Labor Statistics data demonstrates the demographic reality that the U.S. population is aging, growth in the young workforce is declining, young workers are increasingly educated and disinterested in unskilled labor jobs, and major worker shortages are forecasted especially for seasonal and less-skilled positions.

Significant labor shortages will make it difficult for many golf facilities to fill both their permanent and temporary/seasonal labor needs. The nation's golf courses cannot be sustained, or grow, without access to an adequate workforce. Many depend on immigrant labor due to the difficulty in finding U.S. workers willing to take seasonal, unskilled jobs. Proper documentation of workers presents its own set of unique challenges.

The U.S. labor shortage, comprehensive immigration reform and mandatory use of E-Verify are issues Congress continues to debate as they try to address the need for a stable, legal workforce to ensure the nation’s economic security.

The federal H-2B visa program is used by U.S. golf facilities to secure legal employees when they cannot fill seasonal jobs with American workers despite intensive recruitment efforts. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) must certify that qualified workers are not available in the U.S. and that the foreign worker’s employment will not adversely affect wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers. There is an annual 66,000 H-2B visa cap, when in times of economic prosperity, has been reached early. According to DOL statistics, in 2006, golf facilities (including resorts) asked for approximately 26,000 H-2B visa workers – of that number over 7,700 were for golf course maintenance positions. The number of H-2B visa workers in the golf industry has declined with the country's economic decline. Requests for H-2B visa workers at golf facilities will increase as the economy rebuilds and there is more competition for seasonal labor.

The H-2B visa program has been under attack since 2010. DOL issued a final rule on January 19, 2011 that will artificially increase H-2B hourly wages by more than 50%. On March 18, 2011, the DOL issued a second proposal which would revamp the entire H-2B visa program. Proposed changes would make the program costlier and more complicated for small, seasonal employers. These rules have been temporarily stopped by Congress or litigation. In 2013, the DOL and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued an emergency wage rule that increases H-2B wages paid by 30% and golf facilities struggled to pay a huge wage hike in the middle of the season.

Comprehensive immigration reform includes four pillars of reform: legalization; employment verification systems; temporary worker programs; and border security. GCSAA does not engage in the debate over legalization or border security.

**GCSAA position statement:**
Due to the difficulty many golf facilities have in finding permanent and seasonal U.S. workers, GCSAA supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes guest worker provisions and is not limited to border security. Reform measures should safeguard seasonal worker programs and not place undue economic burdens on employers.

Reform should create an immigration system and guest worker program that functions efficiently for employers, workers and government agencies. Reform should create a program that ensures U.S. workers are not displaced by foreign workers and ensures that all workers enjoy the same labor law protections.

Reform should strengthen national security by providing for the screening of foreign workers and creating a disincentive for illegal immigration. Enforcement of immigration laws is critical for the economic vitality of the country, national
security and for successful comprehensive immigration reform. GCSAA supports reform that creates a fair employment eligibility verification system for new hires that functions efficiently, effectively, and inexpensively for employers, workers and government agencies.

**GCSAA activity:**
- GCSAA has been involved in labor and immigration issues through support of federal comprehensive immigration reform legislation and the preservation of the federal H-2B visa program, which is used by U.S. golf facilities to secure legal, seasonal workers when U.S. workers are not available or unwilling to work.
- In 2005, GCSAA was part of a successful effort to modify the H-2B visa program to exempt workers who had used the program previously from being included in the annual numerical visa limit.
- GCSAA supported legislation in 2006 and 2007 which provided extensions of the exemption approved during 2005.
- Members of GCSAA’s Government Relations Committee (GRC) went to Capitol Hill during 2006-2013 to talk with members of Congress about the need for comprehensive immigration reform. During the 2013 National Golf Day, GRC members met with 6 of 8 of the Senate immigration reform “Gang of Eight.”
- GCSAA launched an action alert in December 2009 in opposition to employers being mandated to provide healthcare coverage to seasonal workers as part of federal healthcare reform legislation.
- GCSAA continues to provide education to members on labor and immigration topics including “Managing a Spanish-speaking Crew,” “Immigrant Workers,” “How to Hire and How to Fire,” and “Employee Recruitment and Selection: How to Hire the Right People.”
- Public policy staff presented the “Immigration and the Golf Course Superintendent” seminar at the GCSAA Education Conference in years 2009-2012.
- In November 2010, GCSAA submitted comments in opposition to the Department of Labor’s (DOL) proposed rulemaking related to the “Wage Methodology for the Temporary Non-Agricultural Employment H-2B Program” which would significantly raise wages paid to H-2B workers.
- In 2011, GCSAA launched a nationwide grassroots campaign focused on the assault on the H-2B visa program as well as developed a public policy podcast to educate its members on this important topic.
- In May 2011, GCSAA submitted comments in opposition to the DOL’s proposed rulemaking related to “Temporary Non-Agricultural Employment of H-2B Aliens in the United States” which would fundamentally change the way the H-2B visa program works. GCSAA’s H-2B visa rapid response team (GCSAA members across the country using the H-2B visa program) assisted in comment preparation.
- In 2011, GCSAA worked with the H-2B Workforce Coalition to successfully lobby Congress to include an amendment in the Fiscal Year 2012 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, which stopped any federal funding of the DOL’s wage rule until October 1, 2013. Congress extended the wage rule prohibition until March 27, 2013 with the signing of the 6 month FY2013 Continuing Resolution.
- In 2011, GCSAA supported litigation filed in the U.S. District Court in Florida that challenged the propriety of the wage rule concerning the computation and implementation of the prevailing wages for H-2B visa holders.
- In 2012, GCSAA supported additional litigation filed in the U.S. District Court of Florida that challenged the DOL’s proposed H-2B visa program overhaul rule.
- In 2013, GCSAA continued to support ongoing litigation challenging the DOL’s wage and program overhaul rules. GCSAA also actively supported passage of comprehensive immigration reform legislation in Congress as well as legislation that blocked implementation of the new 2013 DOL emergency wage rule.
- In June 2013, GCSAA submitted comments to DOL in opposition to their H-2B emergency wage rule that increased wages by 30% in the middle of the golfing season.

**Position paper:**
Comments filed with the U.S. Department of Justice on May 17, 2011.
Comments filed with the U.S. Department of Justice on November 12, 2010.
Coalitions/affiliations: H-2B Workforce Coalition; Essential Worker Immigration Coalition; Save Small Business Coalition; ImmigrationWorks USA
Pesticides

Issue information:
Golf course superintendents utilize pesticides as part of a system of integrated pest management (IPM) to control pests and maintain healthy turf. Best management practices, continuing education, research and technology are important elements for an IPM approach for golf course superintendents. The latest technology in application equipment is used on golf courses which allows for precise application of pesticides. Golf courses often compose a high percentage of green space in watersheds both urban and rural through professional use of inputs including pesticides. These green spaces offer environmental, community and economic benefits. Pesticide production is highly regulated in the U.S. through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. Pesticides used to maintain healthy golf course turf have been thoroughly tested by EPA. The agency evaluates pesticides to ensure they will not have unreasonable adverse effects on humans, the environment and non-target species when used according to label directions. The safe and responsible use of pesticides, and the continued availability of effective products, is a top priority for GCSAA and its members. This priority was reinforced in 2000 when GCSAA members passed an addition to the association’s bylaws creating new entry and maintenance membership standards for Class A members. As of July 1, 2003, to maintain their membership status, Class A members must obtain a state pesticide applicator license or successfully complete a GCSAA-developed IPM exam which tests on principles of pesticide usage. Specific pesticide issues include:

- State Preemption of Local Pesticide Ordinances
- Pesticide Regulation
- Endangered Species Act Litigation

Position statement:
Pesticide laws and regulations should be based on sound science supported by credible peer reviewed data and university recommendations. Golf course pesticide applicators are trained in the safe and proper use of pesticides within an integrated pest management (IPM) system and must pass a state-administered examination to be licensed. They also take continuing education to remain licensed as an applicator. Golf course superintendents follow best management practices (BMPs) for proper pesticide management of the course. Golf courses rely upon the judicious use of a variety of inputs to produce healthy turfgrass in general. Integrated pest management is key to healthy turfgrass and is part of the agronomic and environmental BMPs. Properly maintained turfgrass provides many community benefits including: critical "greenspaces", habitat for birds and other wildlife, recreational opportunities, capture of run-off pollutants in stormwater, carbon sequestration, and oxygen production. In addition, many entities both public and private rely on healthy turfgrass as a key component in maintaining financial revenues. Healthy turfgrass acts to reduce the velocity of runoff and filters particulates and contaminants from water bodies.

GCSAA activity:
- GCSAA is a 19-year member of the U.S. EPA’s Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP), which is a voluntary program that forms partnerships with pesticide users to reduce the potential health and environmental risks associated with pesticide use and implement pollution prevention strategies. EPA named GCSAA a 2002 PESP Champion.
- In 2006, GCSAA’s philanthropic organization, The Environmental Institute for Golf, began funding the development of an IPM template that will guide superintendents in the preparation of written IPM plans for the golf courses they manage. The IPM Planning Guide was launched to the golf industry in July 2010.
- In Spring 2008, GCSAA launched the Pesticide Use Survey, the fourth survey of the Golf Course Environmental Profile (GCEP). The overall goal of the GCEP is to develop an environmental profile of golf courses. This survey solicited information regarding pest management and associated practices on golf courses throughout the United States. This information will provide baseline data for documenting changes in environmental practices over time, help GCSAA respond to governmental inquiries, and answer the public’s questions about environmental issues. Data from the Pesticide Use Survey was released in 2012.
GCSAA biannually participates in the EPA Office of Pesticide Program’s Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee (PPDC) meetings at EPA HQ in Washington, DC. The PPDC provides a forum for a diverse group of stakeholders to provide feedback to the pesticide program on various pesticide regulatory, policy and program implementation issues.

In 2012, GCSAA and its government relations and environmental programs staff were featured in two articles in PESPWire, a newsletter from the EPA's PESP program. The articles focused on integrated pest management in the golf industry and how GCSAA can help golf course superintendents learn more about IPM.

In April 2013, GCSAA partnered with RISE and CropLife America to host a tour at the Bethesda Country Club in Maryland for some 60+ RISE-CLA Spring Conference attendees to see first-hand the day-to-day implementation of IPM programs on the course and throughout the facility.

Position paper: Environmental Principles for Golf Courses in the United States (Golf & the Environment initiative)

Coalitions/affiliations: U.S. EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP)
Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE)
Pesticide Policy Coalition (PPC)

State Preemption of Local Pesticide Ordinances

Issue information:
Many cities and counties across the country are debating ordinances to ban/restrict the use of chemical pesticides on city/public property. This includes parks, city office buildings and government-owned recreation facilities such as golf courses. Local bans/restrictions on pesticide use is a trend that has gained momentum ever since the city of San Francisco, Calif., adopted such an ordinance in 1996. This ordinance has been used as a model by anti-pesticide activists to try to enact similar laws in other locations. Bans on pesticide use by local governments has also been a precursor to efforts to totally ban the use of all pesticides in a community—including applications by private citizens to their homes and lawns, applications to commercial property, privately owned golf courses, sports fields and other recreational facilities.

Many states have preemption (or “state primacy”) laws to prohibit municipalities from adopting local laws and regulations on the use of pesticides and fertilizers. Without such laws, the more than 80,000 municipalities in the U.S. could adopt and enforce their own unique ordinances, including use and applicator certification, making compliance virtually impossible. Local pesticide restrictions hinder the ability of golf course superintendents to control pests that have a detrimental effect on healthy turf.

GCSAA position statement:
GCSAA supports the enactment of state laws based on sound science and data preempting regulation of the use of pesticides and prohibiting local governments from adopting such laws, because local regulation of the use of these products is costly, unnecessary and interferes in the application of integrated pest management on the golf course. When used properly, pesticides promote healthy turf which provides many environmental benefits including wildlife habitat and a natural water filter.

Local pesticide bans/restrictions hinder the ability of golf course superintendents to control pests that have a detrimental effect on healthy turf, trees and ornamentals. Restricting the use of effective pesticides can curb the ability to control disease carrying pests and can jeopardize public health and sanitation. Local pesticide bans/restrictions also require the use of resources for investigation of violations and enforcement, creating an unnecessary drain on community funds.

GCSAA activity:
• GCSAA monitors and takes action in collaboration with members and chapters on preemption/primacy laws and regulations and pesticide bans/restrictions across the country.
In Spring 2006, Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) launched a coordinated grassroots effort to address attempts at the local government level by activists to ban the use of pesticides and fertilizers. GCSAA is working closely with RISE to ensure that specialty pest management products remain available for purchase and use.

In 2013, GCSAA and its members responded to proposed pesticide bans in Long Island, New York; Cuyahoga County, Ohio; Thurston County, Washington; Tacoma Park, Maryland and Montgomery County, Maryland.

**Position paper:** Preemption of Local Laws on the Use of Pesticides  
Local Bans on Pesticide Use

**Pesticide Regulation**

**Issue information:**
The 1996 Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) fundamentally changed the way EPA regulates pesticides. FQPA mandated a single, health-based standard for all pesticides in all foods; provided special protections for infants and children; expedited approval of safer pesticides; and required periodic re-evaluation of pesticide registrations and tolerances to ensure that the scientific data supporting pesticide registrations will remain up-to-date in the future. Under FQPA, EPA was required to reevaluate, within 10 years, all food tolerances that were in place as of August 1996. The agency completed over 99% of the required tolerance reassessments on Aug. 3, 2006. This review resulted in changes to how golf course chemicals are regulated including elimination of certain uses and changes in labeling for others. In August 2006, EPA issued a final rule, which implemented a new Registration Review process. Starting in 2007, every pesticide active ingredient must be reviewed at least once every 15 years. The review of organophosphates began in 2008, and the review of the carbamates class started in 2009.

A Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in January 2009 in the National Cotton Council vs. U.S. EPA case overturned the EPA’s Aquatic Pesticides Rule from 2006, which held that pesticides applied in accordance with Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) labels are exempt from the Clean Water Act’s (CWA) permitting requirements. Effective October 31, 2011, pesticide applications made in, over or near “waters of the U.S.” require a CWA National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Never in the 65 years of FIFRA or 40 years of the CWA has the federal government required a permit for chemical spraying activities for control of such pests as mosquitoes, algae and invasive aquatic weeds. Congress omitted pesticides in 1972 when it enacted the CWA, and despite major rewrites since, has never looked beyond FIFRA for the regulation of pesticides. Unnecessary permitting places a significant economic burden on golf facilities who comprise a large group of small businesses. States spend significant resources in implementing and enforcing a permit that most regulators believe does little if anything to further protect water quality. Citizen action lawsuits can disrupt operations and jeopardize businesses. Future expansion of the permit is of concern.

**GCSAA position statement:**
GCSAA believes that all pesticide uses should be under the legal primacy of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). GCSAA supports the goals of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). GCSAA supports the use of real data and sound scientific methodology to assess pesticides for risk. GCSAA and its members have and will continue to provide accurate and usable data to the regulatory and scientific communities for use in Registration Review implementation decisions. The continued availability of safe, effective and economically viable pesticide products is a top priority for GCSAA and its members.

**GCSAA activity:**
- GCSAA will submit comments as appropriate and provide input on golf course products and their uses to EPA as they undergo Registration Review as well as work with members and industry partners to protect and preserve golf course product use.
- In June 2005, based on information provided by GCSAA, the U.S. EPA adjusted a simulation model used to predict pesticide concentrations in surface and ground water for use in exposure assessments. The new golf
course adjustment factor quantitatively discounts the percentage of managed land area on a golf course that is not treated with a pesticide so a more accurate picture of actual pesticide use is available.

- During Fall 2006, the EPA issued decisions banning the use of organic arsenicals (MSMA, DSM, CAMA, and Cacodylic Acid) and PCNB from the turfgrass market. In response, GCSAA launched a grassroots letter writing campaign to urge the agency to support the continued registration and use of PCNB and MSMA on golf courses. In 2008, GCSAA worked closely with the MAA Task Force – made up of MSMA manufacturers and product forumlators – to oppose EPA’s action.
- In March 2010, GCSAA submitted comments in opposition to EPA’s proposed spray drift guidance.
- GCSAA is actively engaged with EPA and states as they draft, implement and enforce federal CWA NPDES permits for pesticide applications in, over, or near “waters of the U.S.”
  - In 2009, GCSAA partnered with 22 major agriculture and non-agriculture organizations in the filing of an amicus “friend of the court” brief to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in support of a rehearing of the National Cotton Council vs. U.S. EPA case.
  - GCSAA submitted comments on EPA’s draft CWA NPDES pesticide general permit in July 2010.
  - In September 2010, GCSAA launched an action alert pushing for passage of federal legislation that would amend FIFRA to clarify that additional CWA NPDES permits are not required for pesticide applications made in accordance with FIFRA.
  - In 2010 and 2011, GCSAA assisted its affiliated chapters in commenting on draft state-specific CWA NPDES pesticide general permits.
  - The government relations session “ADA Accessibility Guidelines and NPDES Pesticide General Permits: Prepare Your Course for Compliance” was held at the 2011 GCSAA Education Conference in Orlando.
  - In July 2011, GCSAA submitted comments to EPA in opposition to the “Draft Reasonable and Prudent Alternatives in NMFS’ Draft Biological Opinion on the Proposed Pesticides General Permit.”
  - In 2011, GCSAA launched a nationwide grassroots campaign focused on passage of H.R. 872 (the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2011), organized meetings in district offices between Congressional staff and GCSAA field staff/affiliated chapter members, and developed a public policy podcast to educate members on this important topic.
  - In 2012, GCSAA spent considerable time on Capitol Hill lobbying member of Congress in support of inclusion of H.R. 872 into the 2012 Farm Bill.
  - In 2012, GCSAA launched a national grassroots campaign in support of S. 3605, the Restoring Effective Environmental Protection Act, the Senate companion bill to H.R. 872.
- In 2012, GCSAA lobbied members of Congress in support of H.R. 6194, the U.S. Agricultural Sector Relief Act of 2012, which would put additional pressure on EPA to grant methyl bromide critical use exemptions.
- In 2012, GCSAA submitted comments on EPA’s denial of a petition to suspend the clothianidin registration.
- In 2013, GCSAA and its members participated in the focus meeting of the opening of the MSMA Registration Review docket.
- In 2013, GCSAA worked with U.S. EPA to secure a methyl bromide critical use exemption until a suitable alternative is found.
- On August 22, 2013, GCSAA offered the “Hazard Communication, the Globally Harmonized System & Your Golf Course” webinar to provide initial background on the update to the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, aligning it with the United Nations’ Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling.

Position paper:
NMFS’ Draft Biological Opinion on the Proposed Pesticides General Permit comments filed with the U.S. EPA on July 25, 2011.
NPDES pesticide general permit comments filed with the U.S. EPA on July 19, 2010.
Spray drift comments filed with the U.S. EPA on March 5, 2010.
Comments on individual chemicals on file with the U.S. EPA.

Coalitions/affiliations:
Responsible Industry for a Sound Environment (RISE) - www.pestfacts.org
Pesticide Policy Coalition (PPC)

Endangered Species Act Litigation

Issue information:
To meet the conservation and species recovery goals of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the EPA’s Office of Pesticide Programs must consult on each "action" to register or re-register a pesticide use. This consultation process is outlined in Section 7 of the ESA. During the past 35+ years, EPA has not successfully implemented ESA obligations for pesticides. However, it has been EPA’s intention to integrate ESA into the Registration Review process. Instead, activist-driven litigation is now driving the ESA consultation process for pesticides.

In 2001, environmental groups sued EPA in the Washington Toxics Coalition vs. EPA case for failing to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the effects of 54 pesticide active ingredients on protected Pacific salmonids in the Northwest. In 2002, a federal district court ordered EPA to determine if ESA consultations are necessary for the 54 pesticides that may pose risks. As part of the settlement agreement, EPA agreed to place interim restrictions on the 55 pesticide active ingredients – including large no spray buffer zones – while they worked through the multi-year consultation process with the NMFS. As EPA moved through the consultation process with the NMFS, the interim restrictions on individual products become permanent restrictions. Many similar copycat lawsuits during the past 10 years have resulted in pesticide use restrictions at golf facilities.

In January 2011, in a landmark case, activists filed suit against EPA for its failure to consult with federal wildlife agencies regarding the impacts of 380 pesticides, many of which are used on golf courses, on more than 216 endangered and threatened species scattered throughout the U.S.

On April 22, 2013, the U.S. District Court Northern District of California dismissed the Center for Biological Diversity and Pesticide Action Network North America v. Environmental Protection Agency, Endangered Species Act "Mega-Suit." In June 2013, plaintiffs filed a narrower lawsuit which asks for interim measures restricting the use of 78 pesticides on 216 listed species.

The ESA Section 7 consultation process is flawed and the lack of a clear and transparent ESA consultation process is seriously jeopardizing the availability and use of effective products to the golf industry.

In 2011, EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and NMFS asked the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to evaluate the ESA consultation review process for pesticide registration actions related to endangered species. On April 30, 2013, the NAS released its much anticipated report on pesticides and endangered species stating that EPA, the NMFS, and the FWS should use a common approach when determining the potential effects a pesticide has on an endangered species and its environment.

GCSAA position statement:
GCSAA shares in EPA’s commitment to ensure that actions carried out by it and other federal agencies should not harm endangered species or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of their critical habitat. GCSAA and its members have long-standing support, involvement and implementation of environmental stewardship programs that protect wildlife species and habitat throughout the U.S. GCSAA supports EPA working with federal fish and wildlife agencies to promulgate new rules that establish clear and equitable procedures for notice and comment on the EPA’s pesticide effects determinations for endangered species and subsequent actions including draft Biological Opinions and potential product restrictions.

GCSAA activity:
• In February 2011, GCSAA submitted comments to EPA in support of a petition filed by Growers for ESA Transparency (GET) that asked EPA to establish “clear and equitable procedures” for stakeholder comment during the Endangered Species Act consultation process for EPA pesticide registrations.

• GCSAA launched nationwide grassroots campaigns in March and May of 2011 in response to EPA seeking input on the National Marine Fisheries Service’s (NMFS) draft measures to protect endangered Pacific salmon from six pesticides. The draft Reasonable and Prudent Measures (RPMs) and Alternatives (RPAs) included in the NMFS’ draft Biological Opinion include proposed new use restrictions on chlorothalonil and 2, 4-D not based on sound science.

Position paper:
NMFS’ Draft Biological Opinion comments filed with the U.S. EPA on July 25, 2011.
Growers for ESA Transparency (GET) petition comments filed with the EPA on February 22, 2011.
Value of Golf

Issue Information:
Golf is a sport played by more than 26 million Americans, and enjoyed as a favored spectator activity by millions more. But it is far more than a game: golf is a leading U.S. industry that makes a wide variety of positive contributions to society. According to the U.S. Census data, the golf industry is larger than the motion picture and video industries. The 2011 Golf Economy Report quantified golf's annual direct economic impact as $68.8 billion, the industry provides 2 million jobs and $55.6 billion in wage income. Golf also generates more than $3.9 billion annually for charities across the country.

Most golf facilities in the U.S. qualify as small businesses according to the Small Business Administration. Unfortunately, golf has been excluded from receiving benefits from a number of prominent pieces of federal legislation in recent years including relief for the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, relief to victims of natural disasters across the country in 2008 and 2009, and in 2009 with the federal economic stimulus bill. Continued exclusion of the golf industry – a major generator of jobs and tax revenue across the country – from relief and stimulus measures being considered by Congress is a serious challenge facing the industry.

GCSAA position statement:
Golf is more than a game – it is a major U.S. industry, providing 2 million jobs and creating annual wage income of $55.6 billion. In total, the U.S. golf economy exceeds $176.8 billion in direct, indirect and induced impacts. The golf industry produced $20.6 billion in travel expenditures in 2011. Golf’s core industries exceed the economic impact of spectator sports, the performing arts, and the amusement and recreation industries. As a significant contributor to the U.S. economy, the continued health and growth of the golf industry has a direct bearing on jobs, economic development and tax revenues for thousands of communities across the country.

Golf facilities are good for the communities they serve. Golf contributes to society by providing economic, human, health/wellness and environmental benefits. Golf facilities are professionally managed by individuals who have achieved various levels of certification, they serve as managed open green space providing habitat for wildlife, and they generate $3.9 billion for charity each year. Golf as a fundraising vehicle includes an estimated 12,000 golf facilities, 143,000 events, 12 million participants and raises $26,300 average per function. Golf courses are a valuable use of land and can provide solutions to problems resulting from land degradation and urban development, including stormwater management, wetland mitigation and brownfield redevelopment.

GCSAA supports partnerships and collaboration with federal and state commerce departments and federal, state and local chamber of commerce organizations to advance the growth of the game of golf. Golf should be included in federal catastrophic relief targeted at businesses following natural disasters. Golf should have access to federal incentives and funding that stimulates the golf industry.

GCSAA activity:
- GCSAA’s Government Relations Committee has gone to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. since 2008 to talk with members of Congress about golf’s exclusion from federal relief and stimulus funding and to educate lawmakers on the game’s contributions to society.
- GCSAA continues to address anti-golf rhetoric in the local, state and national press. In May 2009, the GCSAA, PGA of America and CMAA issued a joint statement in response to an anti-golf article in USA Today.
• GCSAA contributes financially to the development of state economic impact studies through the Golf 20/20 initiative. In collaboration with golf allies, this economic information is shared with regulators, lawmakers, the media and the public through state capitol lobby days, media events, lawmaker meetings, and golf course site visits.

• In February 2010, GCSAA joined CMAA, the PGA of America and NGCOA in the launch of the We Are Golf campaign, an initiative to change the face of golf and to represent the economic, human and environmental benefits of the industry at federal, state and local levels of government. We Are Golf works to share information, case studies and articles with media, elected officials, regulators and other key constituents to inform them on issues of concern.

• GCSAA/The Environmental Institute for Golf launched the “Golf’s Drive Toward Sustainability” campaign at the Golf Industry Show in February 2010. Sustainability in golf is about ensuring profitable operations while making decisions that are in the long-term interest of the environment and communities. The program objective is to facilitate collaboration among golf associations and organizations to build a toolbox of resources that will be available to golf facilities to strive toward sustainability.

• During 2011, the We Are Golf coalition pushed for golf’s inclusion in national disaster relief legislation being discussed by Congress.
  o GCSAA launched a nationwide grassroots campaign focused on the inclusion of golf in the Southeastern Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2011.
  o GCSAA developed a public policy podcast to educate its members on this important topic.

• In 2012, the U.S. golf industry developed, signed and released a sustainability statement that supported a sustainability statement authorized by the international golf federations also in 2012. The U.S. statement indicates how sustainability can be advanced in the design, construction, maintenance and operation of a golf facility.

• Florida Golf Day was conducted on behalf of We Are Golf and the Florida Golf Industry on February 14, 2012 in Tallahassee. The event included a meeting with Governor Rick Scott as well as a press conference with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

• On April 18, 2012, over 95 members of the golf industry converged on Capitol Hill for the 5th annual National Golf Day. Over 100+ individual meetings with members of Congress and their senior staff were held.

• We Are Golf supported the White House’s Summer Job+ Program, which was a call to action for businesses, non-profits and government to work together to provide pathways to employment for America’s youth in the summer of 2012.

• As of June 2013, 32 states had commissioned state economic impact studies. Texas, Utah and Virginia were to complete studies also in 2013.

• The 6th National Golf Day was held on Capitol Hill on April 16, 2013. The GCSAA BOD, staff and Government Relations Committee held 60+ meetings with Members of Congress.

**Position paper:** None at this time.

**Coalitions/affiliations:** We Are Golf -- [http://www.wearegolf.org/](http://www.wearegolf.org/)
Water Management

Issue Information:
Water availability, water quality, water rights, water use and water affordability are significant issues for golf courses at all levels of government. Some areas of the U.S. require golf courses to use reclaimed, effluent or other nonpotable water sources for irrigation and it is important that there is access to water suitable for use on turfgrass. Proper management and conservation of water resources is an important issue for golf course management. Efficient water use and water quality management on golf courses requires up-to-date technologies, continuing education, scientific research, and sound management practices by golf course superintendents. Innovations at golf facilities include the use of reclaimed water, sophisticated weather instruments, drought- and salt-resistant grasses, water conservation and water protection practices. Many golf course superintendents monitor water quality of streams and groundwater. Golf courses can also have a significant impact on groundwater recharge, especially in suburban areas.

Specific water issues include:

- Water quality - surface and groundwater protection, nutrient loading, non-point source pollution
- Water quantity - effluent/reclaimed water, drought, conservation of water resources
- Water cost – affordability, tiered pricing

GCSAA position statement:
Golf course superintendents are responsible stewards of water resources. GCSAA supports collaboration with all levels of government to address water use and quality issues and for golf course superintendents to be involved in the construction of productive public policy related to water issues. GCSAA supports the use of reclaimed, effluent or other non-potable water for golf course irrigation when the water quality is suitable for plant growth and there are no public health implications. GCSAA does not support mandated use of reclaimed water when the water quality or water quantity is not adequate, when use is not cost effective or when the golf course superintendent does not play a key role in the decision-making process for the development of effluent water standards. GCSAA supports water conservation and the utilization of irrigation/water use best management practices (BMPs). GCSAA supports water conservation and water quality protection laws and regulations that are based on sound science and credible data and promote the values of turfgrass and professionally managed landscapes.

GCSAA does not support Congress, EPA or the Army Corps of Engineers expanding the jurisdictional reach of the federal Clean Water Act. This would be an unprecedented expansion of the regulatory authority of the federal government. Expanded federal jurisdiction would pre-empt traditional state and local government authority over land and water use decisions and alter the balance of federal and state authority. Increased delays in securing permits will raise costs of and impede many economic activities.

GCSAA supports golf facilities utilizing irrigation system audits as a means to increase the effectiveness of the irrigation system and conserve water. GCSAA also supports the creation and use of written drought management plans by golf facilities that are subject to drought cycles.

GCSAA activity:
- GCSAA actively monitors water issues at all levels of government and supports superintendent efforts to deal with water issues by providing resources through educational programs and through direct efforts with legislators and regulators and the media.
- GCSAA’s philanthropic organization, The Environmental Institute for Golf, and the United States Golf Association began funding a research project in 2006 to measure the impact of golf courses on surface and
ground water. “A Critical Review of Water Quality Impacts by Golf Courses: Update and Trends,” is a continuation of a previous national assessment published in the November 1997 issue of Golf Course Management and the Journal of Environmental Quality. The objective is to collect as much data as possible from golf facilities that are conducting surface and/or ground water monitoring projects and publish a critical review of the quality of surface and ground water as affected by golf courses.

- In 2006, GCSAA developed a state-specific Water Permitting database for members. The database contains information on permitting requirements for each state.
- In 2007, members of GCSAA’s water task groups completed development of a Water Fact Sheet to be distributed to recycled water suppliers to encourage them to take the necessary steps to ensure proper water quality for healthy turfgrass cultivation.
- In 2007, GCSAA launched the Water Use and Conservation Survey, the second survey of the Golf Course Environmental Profile (GCEP). The overall goal of the GCEP is to develop an environmental profile of golf courses. This survey solicited information regarding water use and conservation practices on golf courses throughout the United States. This information will provide baseline data for documenting changes in environmental practices over time, help GCSAA respond to governmental inquiries, and answer the public’s questions about environmental issues. Data from the Water Use and Conservation Survey was released in 2008.
- In 2009, GCSAA responded through public comments to EPA’s possible expansion of the WaterSense program into the commercial and institutional sector as well as draft specifications for water-efficient single-family new homes.
- In July 2011, GCSAA submitted comments to EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on their draft guidance for determining whether a waterway, water body, or wetland is protected by the Clean Water Act.
- In 2012, GCSAA presented data from the Golf Course Environmental Profile at the USGA Water Summit and several golf course superintendents were featured speakers at the event.
- GCSAA affiliated chapters in states like FL, GA, VA, CO, CT, OR, PA, RI and elsewhere are demonstrating proactive environmental stewardship through the creation and implementation of comprehensive BMP programs and certification.
- In 2013, GCSAA and its chapters throughout the country collaborated with state and local officials to develop practical water management public policy on golf courses. Examples: Superintendents in Texas worked with the Texas Water Conservation Advisory Council to update its golf course water management BMPs; the Minnesota GCSA partnered with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Waters, to redefine water appropriation standards; and superintendents in California began serving on the City of San Diego and Los Angeles water conservation task forces.

Position paper:
CWA Definition of "Waters of the U.S." comments filed with the U.S. EPA on July 31, 2011.
WaterSense comments filed with the U.S. EPA on September 18, 2009.
WaterSense comments filed with the U.S. EPA on July 7, 2009.
Comments on file with the EPA related to Total Maximum Daily Loads and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System permitting requirements.

Coalitions/affiliations:
U.S. EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program
Irrigation Association
WateReuse Association