

Committee	Full Government Affairs Committee (GAC)
Date/Time	Tuesday, 22 February 2022 / 3:00 pm eastern

Participants	Loucas Tsakalacos, Damon Dozier, Jeff Aguiar, Dan Becarra, Josh Caldwell, Babu Chalamala, Natalie Larocco, Jen Nekuda Malik, Dio Placencia, Colleen Scott, Linda Olafsen, Chris Shuck, Steve Smith, Margo Staruch, Stan Wong, Kris Uher (recording secretary)	
Next call	March 22, 2022 3 pm ET	
Responsibility	Action Items	Due

Introduction

Damon reported on the DC mask mandate update. The mask mandate will end this month (Feb. 28) and proof of vaccination card is no longer required. Damon introduced Natalie Larocco, MRS Member Engagement Project Manager, who was participating in the meeting as an observer.

Loucas Tsakalacos called the meeting to order. He welcomed participants and reminded them of the importance of Committee work and attendance at working group and full GAC meetings. A video interview with Loucas, outlining GAC work completed in 2021, will be in *Materials 360* and *MRS Bulletin*.

Washington Update

Dr. Eric Lander, OSTP, resigned February 8th after complaints that he had created an atmosphere of intimidation through verbal abuse. In his absence, Alondra Nelson is performing duties of the director of OSTP, and Francis Collins will be the acting science advisor and co-chair of the president's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. (Update:

The Continuing Resolution (CR) expired February 18th and we are currently in a CR that will expire March 11th. Because of this, negotiations are still ongoing on what FY22 appropriations will be. The Issue has been that shortfalls in non-defense spending compared to defense spending. There now there seems to be an agreement to move forward with less disparity. MRS has begun to advocate for higher agency spending amounts but there is a sense that there won't be a final decision until April or May, at the earliest.

The United States Innovation and Competition Act of 2021 (USICA) was passed by the Senate in the summer of 2021. In February, the House passed the America COMPETES Act, which is the House's response to USICA. A committee will be formed to negotiate a compromise bill that can get enough support to pass both chambers. Part of discussions involve ramping up the budgets of the NSF, DOE and NIST.

Each year MRS co-sponsors a Congressional Fellowship providing members with an invaluable opportunity of public policy learning. A final candidate interview will be held this weekend. The current fellow is Rachel Starr, who will be attending the 2022 MRS Spring Meeting in Hawai'i.

Policy Outreach Working Group Update – Josh Caldwell

- Government agency funding sessions will be held in May, two weeks after the MRS Spring Meeting in Hawai'i.

- Preparing invitations and schedules for Spring virtual CVD visits. If anyone is interested in participating, please let Damon know.
- An invitation to S22 has been extended to Kei Kozumi, Principal Deputy Director for the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) but haven't heard back yet. (Update: Kei Kozumi cannot attend the MRS Spring Meeting).

Grass Roots Working Group Update

- Awaiting final review/edit of two white papers: Space Materials and Fusion Materials. Following GAC approval the papers will go to MRS graphics
- Initial discussions on topics for Materials Voice were held. Materials Voice booth will be located inside the Exhibit Hall at the Spring Meeting which is different from past practices. Hopefully, this will increase foot traffic and letter submission.

2022 MRS Spring Meeting

No specific plans for GAC in-person activities have been made. Once travel restrictions are identified, and we know who will be traveling to the meeting it will be revisited.

Meeting adjourned at 3:33 pm ET.