

Committee	Full Government Affairs Committee (GAC)
Date/Time	Tuesday, 24 August 2021 / 3:00 pm eastern

Loucas Tsakalacos, Jeff Aguiar, Babu Chalamala, Alex Chortos, Damon Dozier, Daniel Becerra, Boris Dyatkin, Jen Nekuda Malik, Juan Claudio Nino, Linda Olafsen, Chris Schuck, Colleen Scott, Margo Staruch, Kris Uher (recording secretary)

Participants		
Next call	September 28, 2021 3:00 pm	
Responsibility	Action Items	Due

Welcome

Loucas opened the call and noted that Congress is in recess so there will not be a Washington DC Update.

Advocacy Issues

From time to time, MRS has been asked to join as a signatory on letters regarding policy issues or appropriations support. On issues where MRS has an established policy, GAC is not usually asked to review the request. But when an issue arises that is novel or has a sense of urgency, GAC will be asked for feedback. MRS has received a request from IEEE-USA to sign on to a letter to the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) requesting P-2 Priority designation visas for volunteers and members of global professional societies to facilitate their evacuation from Afghanistan. Given the timely nature of what is transpiring in Afghanistan, it is recommended that MRS signs onto the letter. All GAC members present in the call voted in favor. The letter will be sent for approval by the MRS Executive Director and MRS President. There is a record of advocacy letters on the MRS website: <https://www.mrs.org/advocacy-policy/policy-issues>

MRS co-sponsors two Congressional Fellowships, one with OSA (The Optical Society) and the other with TMS (The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society). The Advocacy Subcommittee is responsible for selection of the MRS/OSA and MRS/TMS Congressional Science and Engineer Fellows for assignment as a special legislative assistant on the staff of a member of Congress or congressional committee. They have a robust Fellows network and try to keep them engaged with what is happening in the Society and with advocacy. Typically there is a fellowship breakfast and one is being planned for this year, time/place TBD. Due to COVID-19 there are some protocols to follow based on local guide lines. Although we typically don't lobby the fellows, there will be opportunity to interact with them. More information to follow.

Working Group Reports – Roadmap to activities for the rest of the year

Boris Dyatkin reported that Materials Voice activities will resume at the 2021 Fall Meeting. The plan is to have the kiosk located close to meeting registration to allow for a more organic flow of meeting attendees to participate. Several topics are the focus:

- Budget and appropriations – we typically have ask numbers and try to reinforce to appropriators, however, the Biden budget may pass in the next few weeks. The writing team is assigned to this. A 2nd letter will be directly related to the DOD
- USICA and passage in the House
- Funding for ARPA-E
- Fusion of nuclear thermal issues – framed as investing in technology and collaborations.

Deadline for first drafts is mid-September

Damon Dozier reported on Policy Outreach activities in Josh Caldwell's absence.

- The Federal Agency Summit is targeted for late-September/early-October. Topics are being reviewed to make sure that they are timely and focused. This will be a remote event.
- CVD and AVD are targeted for the first week of November – CVD (November 2-3) and AVD (November 4). Both will be remote events.
- Research Funding Opportunities will be held during the hybrid portion of the 2021 MRS Fall Meeting (week of December 13). This will be a remote event.

Depending on travel restrictions that may be in place, there may be GAC activities (GAC luncheon, National Academies of Science) held on-site in Boston.

Meeting adjourned at 3:38 pm ET.