

Committee: Government Affairs

August 8, 2023, 12:30 pm Eastern

Participating: Loucas Tsakalacos, Jen Nekuda Malik, Babu Chalamala, Steve Smith, Michael Bozlar, Dan Becerra, Christopher Shuck, Todd Osman, Glenn Ruskin

Agenda

1. Update on FY24 Congressional Activities & Expected Final Action – Glenn
2. Update on MRS Fellows - Jen
3. Update on GAC Revisions & Board Actions - Todd
4. Update on CVD Participants Outreach to Capitol Hill - CVD Individuals
5. Update on ACS-MRS Space Materials Capitol Hill Briefing - September 20
6. Discuss GAC Fall 2023 Activities -
 - a. CVD
 - b. AVD
 - c. MRS Fall Meeting activities preview
7. Other Issues?
8. Wrap-up & Next Meeting Date

GAC Chair Loucas Tsakalacos opened the meeting.

Update on Congressional Fellows Group (Ad Hoc)-Jen Nekuda Malik

Glenn is working with Todd Osman on a welcome for the new Fellow and farewell for the outgoing Fellow. If MRS has funds available to attend, Jen would make time in her schedule to attend the welcome and farewell. Otherwise, Glenn will do both.

Action: Jen will provide names of other Fellows who can do the welcome.

New Congressional Fellow Marie Fiori

AAAS orientation the first week of September.

Placement takes 2 to 4 weeks; she begins working in mid-October.

Action: Jen will check back in October to find out where Marie has been placed.

The Congressional Fellows Group maintains a spreadsheet of the former Fellows, which represents a valuable network for future Fellows.

Outgoing Congressional Fellow Sindhu Swami Nathan

Will be invited to join GAC.

Action: Follow up with past Fellows to see if they're interested in joining GAC or in volunteering with other MRS committees.

Todd messaged Judy Meiksin to follow up with Sindhu on her experience as a Congressional Fellow.

Jen was thanked for her work.

Update on FY24 Congressional Activities & Expected Final Action – Glenn Ruskin

The House Appropriations Committee approved 10 of the 12 bills; still remaining are the appropriations which cover NIST, NASA, and NSF. The Senate Appropriations Committee has approved all 12 bills. The full House and Senate need to pass their bills when they return from August recess.

The new fiscal year begins October 1. Each bill has to be reconciled between the House and Senate versions before October 1. The numbers aren't far apart, so it could go smoothly but there's a lot of work ahead, and a short-term spending Continuing Resolution is a possibility.

Update on CVD Participants Outreach to Capitol Hill - CVD Individuals

Dan Becerra: Connecticut

Generic response

Michael Bozlar & Linda Olafsen: Texas

Generic response from Cruz, but a friendly note.

Sessions is interested in materials science input on a project; **Action: Michael will get together with Linda regarding this.**

Action: Glenn will send the email address for the Senator Cornyn staff member so Michael can follow up.

Note: Linda Olafsen also met with the office of Mississippi Senator Wicker.

Wicker's office is supportive of science, but said not to expect much.

Steve Smith: South Dakota

Response from Rounds. No reply from Thune's office.

Loucas Tsakalacos: Connecticut and New York

No responses yet; generic response from Gillibrand. He invited Blumenthal to visit Coherent Corp.

Angela Cleri: Pennsylvania

Fetterman's office expressed interest in a visit to Penn State before Angie leaves.

Update on GAC Revisions & Board Actions – Todd Osman

The revised GAC charter was approved 8/8/23.

Paula will maintain a roster of the ad hoc group members to contact when CVD and Congressional Fellows engagement is needed.

Update on ACS-MRS Space Materials Capitol Hill Briefing - September 20, 2023

Glenn is working on getting honorary Congressional co-hosts and room location.

ACS will pay the costs of the event, MRS provides the speaker.

Speaker: Othmane Benafan, materials research engineer, NASA Glenn Center, Ohio.

Action; Glenn will send him the required official invitation letter, and Benafan will need to get NASA approval to participate.

Action: Glenn will seek approval to stream the session for ACS and MRS members; it will be open to MRS members whether it's live or after the fact.

Glenn is also looking for a second speaker. **Action: Loucas suggested that Glenn reach out to GAC member Jeff Aguilar** of Lockheed Martin, who wrote the MRS Space Materials White Paper.

CVD and AVD

Fall CVD

Glenn doubts an in-person meeting would be effective. With all that will be going on in Congress in September, staffs have a lot of demands on their time.

There's a supplemental opportunity to reach out via email, the members' district offices, or Zoom.

Agency Visits Day

AVD is better in person but Zoom could be considered.

It makes sense to do the Agency Summit in October or November; the agencies will know the FY24 budgets.

The last Agency Summit was quite effective with good exchanges off the record and good interaction with the program managers.

The benefit to the participants increases if there are 6 or 7 agencies taking part.
Having it at AAAS in DC will be more efficient for the agencies versus travel to an MRS meeting.

Future GAC Meetings

Recurring bimonthly meetings beginning in October.

Paula will send out a Doodle poll to establish a convenient date for GAC members to attend.

Glenn will continue to send out DC updates regularly.

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 pm Eastern.