Summer 2025
https://dkgusforum.org/

U.S. Forum Connection

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International

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Calling Congress

One quick and effective way to communicate with your Congressional representatives is to CALL them and leave a succinct personal message.

House: 202-225-3121
Senate: 202-224-3121

Tell the operator who your congressional representative is, then when the office answers ask to speak to the staffer in charge of your issue or leave a message with whomever answers the phone.

From Passion to Policy: DKG Leaders Share How to Plan a Powerful Legislative Action Day

by Sharon Welch, NW Regional Representative

At the 2025 DKG International Conference in New Orleans, the U.S. Forum steering committee offered attendees a blueprint for planning meaningful legislative advocacy at the state level. A panel featuring DKG leaders Carrie Frye (FL), Kathy Kinley (CA), April Coleman (AZ), and Katina Keener (VA) offered practical insights from successful education advocacy events in their home states to encourage more states to sponsor their own Action Days.

Moderated by DKG U.S. Forum Steering Committee member, Sharon Welch, the discussion unpacked the "why" and "how" of organizing a Legislative Action Day (LAD) – highlighting strategic planning, community engagement, and the legislative tools every state organization in DKG can use.

Legislative Action Day panelists Katina Keener, Carrie Frye, Kathy Kinley, April Coleman and moderator Sharon Welch excited participants with shared ideas.

Panelist shared different models for organizing LADs – from half-day events to multi-day experiences. Dr. April Coleman spoke about the importance of logistics: scheduling legislative speakers, preparing brief packets, and coordinating transportation. Whether your state is organizing a large-scale or smaller event, the key is early planning and clear communication.

Katina Keener shared how Virginia DKG builds momentum before a LAD by hosting regional meetings and virtual orientation sessions. Keener shared that

(continued on page 6 Action Days)

National Legislative Seminar (NLS) 2026

https://www.dkgusforum.org/nls

Accept the CHALLENGE!!

The U.S. Forum Steering Committee is issuing a challenge to each member state to send a representative—or better still—**a TEAM representing your state to the National Legislative Seminar (NLS), March 8-11, 2026**, in Alexandria, Virginia. Not only is the event personally rewarding for participants, but the knowledge and skills gained can be very advantageous to your state's advocacy work.

Your voice matters! The more you know about effectively voicing your opinions to legislators, the more they will listen. Goal #1 of NLS is to enhance the skills of our member participants as they prepare to meet with legislators about issues of concern in their states. NLS will provide pre-seminar training sessions to help members prepare for their D.C. experience and more in-depth practice sessions with colleagues from all over the country during the seminar.

Goal #2 is to share information on issues of importance to our members from experts in the field. Our speakers, including legislative staffers from the House of Representatives and the Senate, will bring participants up-to-date information on critical issues. Members will have the opportunity to discuss issues of common concern with DKG members from other states.

Finally, Goal #3 is to afford participants the opportunity to visit important cultural and historical sites at our nation's capitol and surrounding D.C. area. Excursions will allow NLS participants to visit some "off the beaten path" sites as well as to explore the beautiful historical Old Town of Alexandria, Virginia.

Registration for the National Legislative Seminar will go live in September. Registration fees include all meals (except when "on the Hill" on Tuesday) and transportation to the Capitol. Registration by December 31, 2025 is $425.00 per person. From January 1, 2026 until February 6, 2026, registration is $475.00. Late registration after February 6th is $500.00. We encourage you to register early at **dkgusforum.org/nls.**

Likewise, you will want to make your hotel reservations as soon as possible. The Embassy Suites, Old Town Alexandria is across the street from the yellow line Metro stop, a short 10 minute ride south of Reagan National Airport. The two room suites have two queen size beds in the bedroom and a queen size hide-a-bed in the living room. Room rates are $285/night for single or doubles ($305 for a triple and $325 for quads) and include a full size breakfast, including cooked to order omelets, and an evening reception (snacks and beverages). The complimentary King Street Trolley is located across the street. This offers travelers a way to easily get down historic King Street with multiple stops, ultimately ending at the waterfront. The hotel is located in an area that offers plenty of dining and shopping options within easy walking from the hotel.

Rooms may be booked now.: https://book.passkey.com/go/DGK2026. Guests preferring to call in their reservation can reach the hotel at 1-(800) 362-2779 and will need to provide the group code "DKG".

Additionally, participants will have the opportunity to go on some excursions during the time of the seminar. Options and pricing are being explored at this time. Input from the 2024 participants indicated the Arlington Cemetery excursion was very worthwhile so it is one of the options currently under discussion.

The U.S. Forum website, **dkgusforum.org/nls**, contains information on agenda, speakers, excursions, pre-seminar workshops, travel plans and more. It is updated as new information becomes available. Check it out regularly **AND PLAN TO JOIN US for a GRAND ADVENTURE MARCH 8-11, 2026.**

Looking forward to seeing you in Alexandria and to having you ACCEPT the CHALLENGE!!

Advocating for Annie

In 2029, DKG celebrates its 100th anniversary. In recognition of the debt owed to the vision and leadership of founder Annie Webb Blanton, the Centennial Celebration Committee has submitted application to the U.S. Postal Service requesting a commemorative stamp in Dr. Blanton's honor.

Here is where all our members can become advocates. According to International President Dr. Beverly Hall, "We have been told by a postmaster that any letters of support from representatives and members to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) might help [convince the CSAC to approve issuing a stamp in Dr. Blanton's honor].

Members are asked to write the CSAC as well as their Congressional Representatives urging support of a commemorative stamp. Templates for the letters may be found on the International website and on the Forum website at: www.dkg.org/DKGSI/Events/Centennial-Celebration-Resources.aspx Click on the stamps or www.dkgusforum/home (click on the link to the above).

Remember however, that form letters are no where near as effective as one in your own words. Glean facts from the templates BUT make the letter your own. You might include something about the impact of Dr. Blanton's work on your own life—after all, every DKG member has been impacted by Dr. Annie Webb Blanton in one way or another.

Why not make writing letters of support one of your chapter activities early in the new school year?

U.S. Forum News

Forum Operating Guidelines Amended

by Peggy Monroe. SE Regional Representative

At the U.S. Forum General Meeting held on August 2, 2025, during the New Orleans International Conference, members approved amendments to the U.S. Forum Operational Guidelines. Some of the amendments passed could be termed "housekeeping," such as changing the word "electronic" to "virtual, allowing for the National Legislative Seminar to be held in the DC area (rather than DC) , and having the treasurer send an annual report to the steering committee. Please refer to the U.S. Forum website under the Guideline tab for the full language of these amendments.

Other amendments were more substantive. These included new language regarding terms of office and submission of resolutions by members, as well as clarification of the elections process.

TERMS OF OFFICE

The amendments passed specified that U.S. Forum Steering Committee members may serve in office no more than two (2) terms in succession. No current member of the U.S. Forum Steering Committee may serve on the election committee during her term.

RESOLUTIONS SUBMISSION

The process of raising issues for Forum consideration has previously been unspecified and handled differently by each Steering Committee. The new amendment ensures that every member, chapter, and Forum Committee has the right and opportunity to submit a resolution for consideration. Proposed resolutions will be reviewed by a Resolutions Committee which will ensure it complies with DKG purposes and neutrality. Members will want to review the submission procedure on the Forum website when it comes out this fall.

ELECTIONS

At the international convention and prior to the U.S. Forum meeting, the elections committee shall do the following:

> Use the granted time to inform attendees of the election process. The four ballots will be coded by region. All write-in candidate information will be available to members so they can add write-in candidate names on their ballots prior to the vote.

The current Steering Committee is hoping to have election devices for the next election—this will speed up the process and ensure all of the information on the ballot prior to the election would be correct, as well as facilitate accountability.

Thank you to all members who reviewed and commented upon the proposed amendments prior to the meeting in New Orleans and to those who attended the New Orleans meeting for their thoughtful and expedient handling of the amendment process.

Legislation to Watch (and act upon)

Now that the bill has passed…

by Dr. April Coleman, SW Regional Representative

You might be wondering what it means now that HR 1, "The One Big, Beautiful, Bill" has passed both Houses of Congress and has been signed into law. The short answer is "***It Depends***". Now known as Public Law No: 119-21, the bill summary can be found at H.R.1 - 119th Congress (2025-2026): One Big Beautiful Bill Act | Congress.gov | Library of Congress. The final impact of this legislation will vary by state.

Each state will have to look at the legislative impact and determine how to respond and/or mitigate the damage that might be caused by this new law. As an example, the state of Virginia will have to reduce its SNAP benefits payment error rate to 6% or lower if it wants to avoid sharing the financial costs for delivering these benefits to its residents. States with error rates above 6% will have to match federal benefits and if they cannot, then benefits to residents will likely be cut.

It's complicated, but now is a state responsibility. Consequently, NOW is the time to reach out to your state and local representatives to understand the specifics of Public Law No: 119-21 and what changes, if any, you can expect to see, and what action your state will be taking. NOW is also the time to let your Congressional representatives, and state and local officials, know your opinion about PL 119-21 and it impact on your district, educators, and students.

The 119th Congress is in full swing and based on the responses received from the Member Issue Survey, we believe these are the current Federal Bills to Watch. If you would like to read the language of a bill or if you want to track its progress, please go to **www.congress.gov** . You can also use that address to share your views with your Congressional representatives.

House Committee On Education and the Workforce/Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions 8/2025

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Introduced	Status
HR369	States' Education Reclamation Act of 2025 (reassigns grants to Dept. of Treasury. Indian Ed. to Dept. of Interior, Impact Aide to Dept. of Defense, etc.)	David Rouzer, R-NC-7	1/13/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and Workforce; no action to date
HR899	To terminate the Department of Education. (as of December 31, 2026)	Thomas Massie, R-KY-4	1/31/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and Workforce; no action to date
HR838	A PLUS Act (creates framework for states to receive federal education dollars on consolidated basis and use those dollars for any purposes permitted by law)	John Moolenar, R-MI-2	1/31/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and Workforce; no action to date
HR847	BLOCK Act (beginning FY 2026, repeals formula grants and replaces them with block grants to states in the amounts provided in 2025; includes Title pro-grams, Migrant Ed, ELL, Rural Education, etc.)	Tim Burchett, R-TN-2	1/31/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and Workforce: no action to date

Legislation to Watch (and act upon)

cont. from p. 4

House Committee on Education & Workforce/Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions **August 2025**

Bill Number	Bill Title	Sponsor	Introduced	Status
HR869	Keep our PACT Act (Dollars through FY 2035 will be available for grants for low achieving students in low income schools; permanently authorizes special education monies)	Susie Lee, D-NV-3	1/31/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and Workforce and Committee on the Budget; no action to date
HR711	Fair Act of 2025 (prohibits federal agencies and federally funded entities from discrimination or establishing preferences (quotas, # goals, timetables) on the basis of race, color or national origin in contracts/ employment)	Thomas Tiffany, R-WI-7	1/23/2025	Referred to Committee on the Judiciary, on Oversight, AND Gov. Reform on Education and Workforce; no action to date.
HR 3262 & HR305	One School/One Nurse Act (Demonstration grants to increase the numbers of school nurses in public elementary and secondary schools.)	Jennifer Kiggans, R-VA Fredrica Wilson D-FL-27	5/7/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and Workforce; no action to date
HR 3308	RETAIN ACT (Addresses the teacher and school leader shortage in early childhood, elementary, and secondary education, and for other purposes.)	Haley M. Stevens D-MI-11	05/08/2025	Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Workforce ; no action to date
HR728	Expanding Head Start Eligibility (to include children of individuals eligible for SNAP, WIC, TANF, Section 8 and Indian Tribes)	John Garamendi, D-CA-8	1/24/2025	Referred to Committee on Education and the Workforce; no action to date
HR581/S169	Child Care Workforce and Facilities Act of 2025 (grants to DHHS and tribes to increase access to licensed child care services)	Josh Harder, D-CA-9 Amy Klobuchar, D-MN	1/21/2025	Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. No action to date
S235	Apprenticeship Pathways Act of 2025 (increases funding for youth apprenticeships)	Martin Heinrich, D-NM	1/23/2025	Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; no action

While it can be frustrating to see “no action” on so many bills, it means that the bills are still in committee; hearings have not yet been held. There is still time to provide your input.

(Action Day: continued from page 1)

one of her committee's most effective strategies is partnering seasoned advocates with first-time attendees to create a safe and supportive experience. Keener emphasized the power of sharing personal stories with legislators or how policies directly impact the lives of educators and students.

Dr. Kathy Kinley offered a deep dive into DKG California's legislative bill evaluation process. Her team identifies high-priority bills that align with DKG's mission, then equips members with concise summaries and talking points. This ensures consistency across all advocacy conversations and allows members to approach legislators with confidence.

Carrie Frye highlighted the value of building ongoing relationships with local coalitions, civic groups, and education associations. These partnerships align to DKG's mission and amplify collective voices for change. Inviting partners to participate in the DKG State Action Day also increases the presence and voice of those in attendance. Florida DKG also recognizes "legislative friends of education" with an award, and suggests inviting legislators to DKG meetings so they know who you are and respect your opinions.

A Legislative Action Day is more than a single event – it's a chance to educate, advocate, and elevate the voice of educators. The panel reminded us that with thoughtful planning, collaboration, and commitment, every DKG state organization can make a powerful impact at the state and local levels and beyond.

Looking to plan your own LAD? Please reach out to the DKG U.S. Forum for support, templates, and inspiration from members who've led the way.

DKG U.S. Forum Website: www.dkgusforum.org/resources

"Get in their spaces without getting into their faces."

Dr. April Coleman

Some Engagement Strategies:

- Co-sponsor a piece of legislation
- Offer to be a resource
- Attend legislator district meeting
- Get to know legislative staffers
- Build a collection of stories
- Virtual speaking engagements

You are invited to an on-line discussion about the Department of Education

Proposed Legislation Executive Orders Funding Plans

Potential Impacts on Public Schools

Zoom Meeting: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 6:00-7:00 p.m. CDT

Register by clicking here: DeptofEdDiscussion

Advocacy Updates and Legislative Alerts

*While generally legislation moves at glacial rates, there are times when things heat up, creating short timelines for submitting input to your Congressional representatives. If you would like to receive advocacy updates and legislative alerts via e-mail, please let your Forum Steering Committee know. We will add you to our contact list. You can complete the form on the website (*https://www.dkgusforum.org*) or*

Email your request to: dkgu.s.forum@gmail.com

Subject line: Advocacy Updates Contact List

Give your name, state and best email address for reaching you.

The Connection is a publication of the U.S. Forum, The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International. It is published quarterly and distributed to all DKG members in the United States. The U.S. Forum purposes are to inform members and to support desirable legis-lation in the interests of education and women educators. To submit articles or if you have questions, contact Peggy Monroe, 2024 -2026 editor, at dkgu.s.forum@gmail.com.