WSWS Officer and Committee Report
August 2022

Office or Committee Name: Legislative Committee
Officer or Chairperson Name: Slade Franklin
Date of Preparation (include year): 07/26/22

Activities during the year:

Per WSWS bylaws, the Legislative Committee is responsible for keeping the Board of Directors informed on legislative issues of interest to Society members and the activities of WSSA's Director of Science Policy in Washington, DC, and with organizing Society membership on legislative issues.

Currently the three-member committee consists of Rachel Zuger, John Vickrey and Slade Franklin (Chairman).

The following information only includes the committee communications between August 2021 and August 2022. In that timeframe the committee has communicated several times through email and recently held a committee meeting via Zoom.

Email communications in late 2021 focused on the Operating Guidance and WSWS bylaws related to the committee. These email exchanges were to provide a clearer understanding of committee responsibilities; historic committee activities; and expectations of the committee from WSWS membership and the Board of Directors. These email discussions were mainly based on the WSWS Operating Guide where the Legislative Committee is tasked with the following:

1. Develop and maintain a contact list of individuals within each of the western states that can provide updates on legislative issues within that state.
2. Contact western state legislative representatives on a bi-yearly basis for information on new legislative items relevant to the membership.
3. On a bi-yearly basis, summarize all legislative decisions or issues in the western states and prepare a report for the Board of Directors and membership. This report will be uploaded to the WSWS website and published in the newsletter. Reports shall be provided to the President prior to the summer Board of Directors meeting (July/August) and before the Board meeting prior to the annual WSWS meeting in March.
4. Forward records, including the Operating Guide, to the new chair within six weeks after annual meeting.
5. Revise operating guide if necessary and forward revisions to the Constitution and Operating Guide Representative before the annual meeting so changes can be approved by the Board of Directors.

To meet the expectations of **Task #1**, the committee uploaded the State Weed Coordinators contact list to Google Drive. Access to the document was provided to the Legislative Committee and to the membership of the State Weed Coordinators Alliance (SWCA). An email was sent to the State Weed Coordinators asking for their assistance in updating the list. The State Weed Coordinator list is now accessible for easy updates by the committee and partners in the future. The Board of Directors and WSSA membership can also access the list at:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1IroVLc6N_c5LC32gtChS6jodVEl2bVMq/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=117021322400633786843&rtpof=true&sd=true

The committee held an official committee meeting on July 22nd, 2022 via Zoom with all three committee members present, in addition to Alan Helm (Board of Directors). The primary focus of this meeting was to address **Task #2** and **Task #3** by drafting the 2022 survey of western states for "*...information on new legislative items relevant to the membership*." The last survey was completed in 2020. The committee's drafted questions are related to individual state policy issues; Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding; and generalized questions concerning relationship of state lead agencies and land-grant universities and colleges. The committee determined the survey should be short in order to solicit responses, in addition to keeping the questions broad enough for the responders to adapt based on their local circumstances. These questions will be formatted into a Google Form and submitted to all western state and provincial program coordinators for responses.

Under **Task #3** the committee is expected to have the survey done before the summer meeting of the Board, however we will not be able to meet this deadline, but will meet the second deadline of reporting the results of the survey to the WSWS President in time for the annual meeting in March. The report will likely be available for review in September at the latest.

Task #4 was completed by Rachel Zuger and John Vickrey was completed via emails on January 18th, 2022 with the forwarding of historic committee actions, Operating Guide and Contacts List.

Recommendations for Board Action:

1. Although the committee will not meet the deadline of presenting the survey results to the Board of Directors in time for the summer meeting, this failure does provide the Board of Directors the opportunity to review the questionnaire before its distribution. The committee would welcome any further guidance, questions or topics the Board would like addressed before distribution. I've attached a draft of the committees' questions to this report for the Board's discussion.

2. In relation to **Task #5**, Article VII - Section 14 of the WSWS bylaws reads, "*The Legislative Committee shall be responsible for keeping the Board of Directors informed on…the activities of WSSA's Director of Science Policy in Washington, DC, and with organizing Society membership on legislative issues."* However, the WSWS Operating Guide does not identify how the committee is to interact with the WSSA Director of Science Policy or the process for organizing membership on legislative issues.

   Additionally, the committee has been advised of federal legislation and has been requested to support the co-signing of letters by the WSWS President supporting federal legislative efforts.

It's a suggestion for the Board to discuss the intent and purpose of this committee as it relates to federal and state legislative actions and what role the committee should take in discussing these matters on behalf of the Board and the membership. This potentially means a review and edit of the Bylaws and Operating Guidance as needed to ensure the committee is acting appropriately, and fulfilling the expectations of the Society.

Budget Needs:
Currently, there are no budgetary needs of the committee.

Name of Person Preparing This Report: Slade Franklin