



Government Relations: National to Local

March 29, 2025

Walter D. Downing, PE

IEEE Life Senior Member, Lone Star Section Chair

IEEE R5 Government Relations

Why Government Relations?

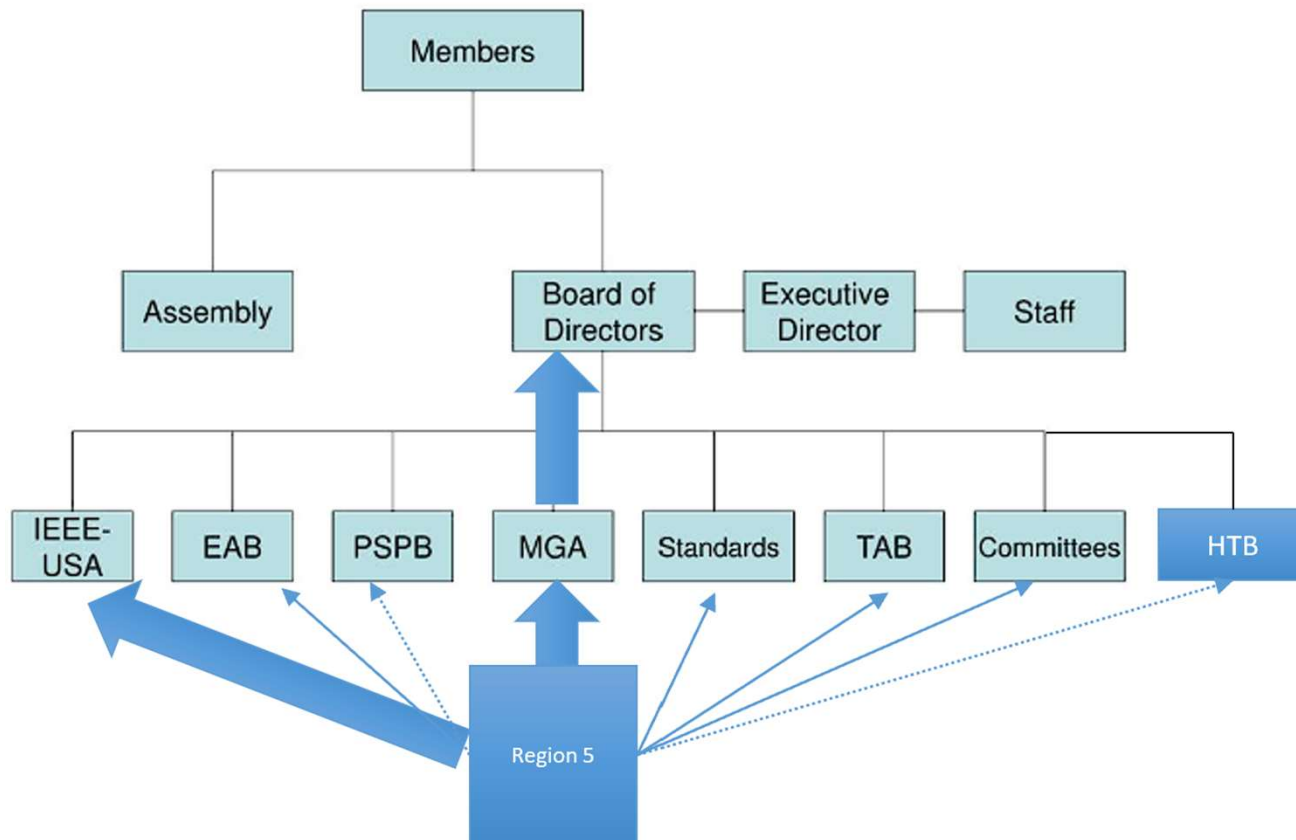
“We engineers are part of a larger society. In a shrinking and ever more independent world, and with diminishing resources, the engineer has a critical role to play. Increasingly, technology, research, innovation and productivity are becoming public-policy issues in the United States and throughout the world. We have an unquestionable responsibility to participate in the debate.”

Leo Young, 1980 IEEE President (1926-2006)



Building Careers & Shaping Public Policy

- ▶ About IEEE-USA: IEEE organizational unit created in 1973 to support the career and public policy interests of IEEE's U.S. members. IEEE-USA is primarily supported by an annual assessment paid by U.S. IEEE members.
- ▶ Mission: recommend policies and implement programs specifically intended to serve and benefit the members, the profession and the public in the United States in appropriate professional areas of economic, ethical, legislative, social and technology policy concern.
- ▶ Vision: serve the U.S. IEEE member by being the technical professional's best resource for achieving lifelong career vitality and by providing an effective voice on policies that promote U.S. prosperity.





- ▶ Library of <150 eBooks and audio books on career and professional development
- ▶ Career and Professional Development webinars (earn PDH credits)
- ▶ Salary & Benefits Service
- ▶ Resources for Consultants
- ▶ IEEE-USA online newsletters
 - InSight (monthly)
 - Conference Brief (quarterly)
 - Leadership Connection (monthly – YPs and Students only)
- ▶ Special Events
- ▶ Awards and Recognition





- ▶ Public Policy Committees
- ▶ Government Fellowships
- ▶ WISE Internships
- ▶ Weekly online Smart**Brief** newsletter
- ▶ Public Policy Events
 - Policy Webinars
 - Congressional Visits Day (CVD)
 - Congressional Outreach Program (ICOP)
- ▶ Other Public Engagement
 - MOVE Community Outreach
 - K-12 STEM Education Programs





Public Policy Committees

Committee	IEEE-USA Staff	Volunteer Chair	Focus
Artificial Intelligence Policy	Erica	Anne Toomey McKenna	Supporting AI R&D adequately while enacting effective laws and regulations that promote safety, privacy, cybersecurity, and intellectual property protection
Communications Policy	Russ	Jim Isaak	Spectrum efficiency, high-performance computing, RFID, digital high resolution systems, personal communications systems, and privacy.
Energy Policy	Ryan	Panos Moutis	Energy infrastructure, grid reliability, energy delivery systems, energy efficiency, climate, power transmission, nuclear
Intellectual Property Policy	Erica	Matthew Schantz	Protection of patents, trademarks, and copyrights; and issues that encompass IP rights in fast moving technology, technology transfer, and U.S. competitiveness & innovation
R&D Policy	Ryan	Nils Smith	Engineering and defense research and development policies and programs
Space Policy (<i>proposed</i>)	Erik	TBD	Communications (ie. satellites), zero g manufacturing, LEO debris, space exploration, commercial space industry, interplanetary missions, NASA funding/missions, launch/reentry regs



2025 Policy Priorities (<https://ieeusa.org/public-policy/priorities/>)

- ▶ Promotion of Science and Technology
- ▶ Federal R&D Funding and Programming
- ▶ CHIPS Act Funding and Programs
- ▶ AI Regulations
- ▶ Immigration
- ▶ Energy
- ▶ Space



Congressional Fellowships

- ▶ Created in 1973
- ▶ Since inception, more than 100 IEEE U.S. members have worked on Capitol Hill as advisors to the U.S. Congress, serving on the personal staff of a Senator or Representative, or the professional staff of a congressional committee, of the fellow's choosing.
- ▶ Each year, eligible IEEE members are selected to serve a one-year fellowship by the IEEE-USA Government Fellows Committee.
- ▶ Selections are based on applications and interviews.
- ▶ Fellowships run from 1 September – 31 August each year.
- ▶ Deadline for 2026-2027 Fellowship applications is Monday, 8 December 2025





Washington Internships for Students of Engineering (WISE) – Applications for 2025 close on Monday, 31 March 2025

Founded in 1980 through the collaborative efforts of several professional engineering societies, the Washington Internships for Students of Engineering (WISE) program has become one of the premier Washington internship programs. WISE prepares future leaders of the engineering profession who are aware of, and who can contribute to, the increasingly important issues at the intersection of science, technology, and public policy in the United States.

Each summer, the WISE societies select outstanding 3rd or 4th year engineering/ computer science students, or students in engineering/ computer science graduate programs, from a nation-wide pool of applicants. The students spend nine (9) weeks living in Washington, D.C., during which they learn how government officials make decisions on complex technological issues, and how engineers can contribute to the legislative process and regulatory public policy decision-making.

**SUMMER 2025
PROGRAM UPDATE**

Summer 2025 Program Dates: June 2 - August 1, 2025



Congressional Visits Day (CVD) – April 8-9, 2025

Registration is closed (400 registrants, 42 States, 320 first time)



IEEE-USA Congressional Visits Day (CVD) is an annual event that brings engineers, scientists, mathematicians, researchers, educators, and technology executives to Washington to raise visibility of and support for engineering and technology.

CVD is an opportunity to introduce yourself, your colleagues, your company, and your profession to our elected officials. It also a great opportunity to discuss legislation and issues that are uniquely important to IEEE members.

This premier event is open to all IEEE members in the United States.





PHOTOS FROM PAST CVDs



From National to Local

Local Government Relations Events Inspired by the IEEE-USA Congressional Visits Day

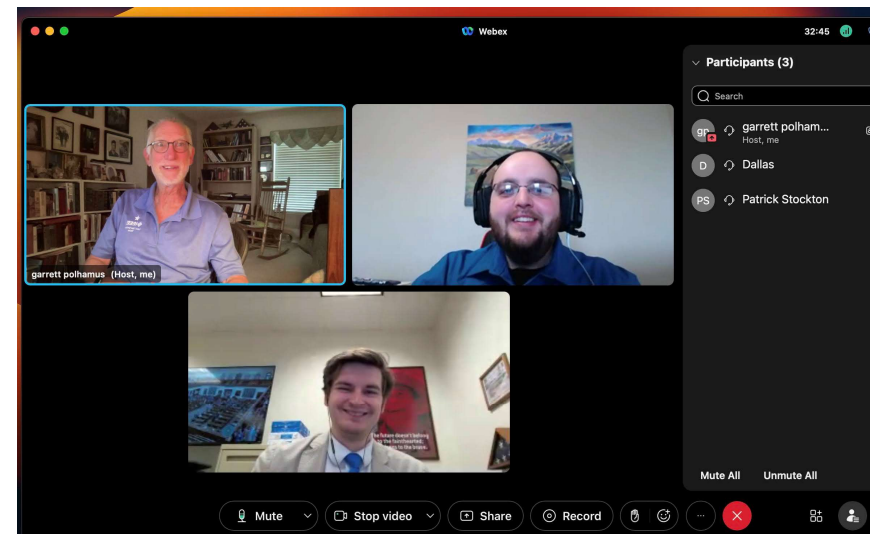
- ▶ IEEE Lone Star Section Legislative Visit Day
 - Pilot 5 May 2023 (online)
 - Second event 17 April 2024 (in person)
 - Met with State Legislators
 - Planning to make this an annual event
- ▶ IEEE-USA Congressional Outreach Program (ICOP)
 - Pilot “Meet Your Local Congressman”
 - Inaugural event in Idaho Falls on 10 May 2024
 - Led by IEEE-USA Early Career Representatives
 - Targeted for students and young professionals
 - Tailored for the local districts
 - Rebranded as ICOP
 - Several events planned for 2025



IEEE Lone Star Section Legislative Visit Day

2023 On-Line Meeting with Texas State Legislators – Pilot event

- ▶ 5 May 2023 – Online
- ▶ Assisted by Russ Harrison (IEEE-USA)
- ▶ 7 Lone Star Section members
- ▶ Meetings with Legislative Staff Members
 - Texas State Senator Donna Campbell (District 25)
 - Texas State Rep. Philip Cortez (District 117)
 - Texas State Rep. Mark Dorazio (District 122)



IEEE Lone Star Section Legislative Visit Day

2024 In-Person Meeting with Texas State Legislators

- ▶ 17 April 2024 – San Antonio Museum of Science and Technology
- ▶ Assisted by Erik Heilman (IEEE-USA)
- ▶ 10 Lone Star Section members
- ▶ Texas State Senator Jose Menendez (District 26)
- ▶ Texas State Rep. Philip Cortez (District 117)
- ▶ Texas State Rep. Mark Dorazio (District 122)
- ▶ Staffer representing Senator Donna Campbell



IEEE Lone Star Section Legislative Visit Day

Additional photos from the 2024 event



Senator Menendez



Rep. Dorazio



**Mr. Morales
Senator Campbell
Staffer**



Rep. Cortez

IEEE Lone Star Section Legislative Visit Day

Meeting with Texas State Legislators – Lessons Learned

- ▶ Venue is important
 - Location may facilitate participation (State Capitol or Local District Office)
 - When meeting with multiple legislators at a time, pick a public place that helps focus on the message (e.g. SAMSAT)
 - Online meetings are possible, but in-person meetings are better
- ▶ Timing is critical
 - Scheduling is difficult during legislative session
 - Discussions should be relevant to current issues under consideration
- ▶ Participation
 - Most likely to meet with staffers (especially during session)
 - Meetings must include IEEE members living in invited legislators' districts
- ▶ What are we asking them to do/support?
 - We are not lobbyists
 - IEEE-USA position papers help guide the discussion
 - Establish contacts for future discussion/advice on technology-related issues
- ▶ Working on plans for 2025 event after legislative session



IEEE-USA Congressional Outreach Program (ICOP) – Most recent event and next event

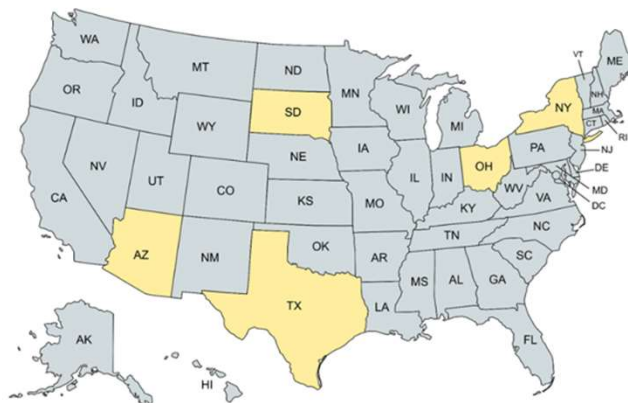




IEEE-USA Congressional Outreach Program (ICOP) – Events planned for 2025

2025 ICOP Schedule

- Mar 17-18: Phoenix, AZ
- May 27-28: Austin/San Antonio, TX
- Aug 21: Syracuse, NY (tent)
- TBD: Columbus, OH
- TBD: Sioux Falls, SD



Locations/dates subject to change



Questions/Discussion