



**American Legion Auxiliary
Department of California
Legislative
2011-2012**

Bulletin #1

August 2011

Congratulations on your appointment as Unit and District Legislative Chairmen!

In keeping with Department President Linda's theme: "Hats Off to the American Legion Family Volunteers", all Legislative Chairmen will be known as the Territorial Legislators. To uphold the significance of our title, we have an important task of being well informed with legislative matters and willing to get involved and have our voices heard. As auxiliary members, we can make a difference by starting the year right, getting acquainted with the legislative issues and concerns that could impact the welfare of our veterans and their families and all constituencies represented by our legislators. We need to promote keen awareness on various legislations being considered by our lawmakers. Let us be responsive to each issue. Let us be heard by all means possible.

Department Plan of Work patterned on National Plan of Action:

- Write letters or send emails to our Senators and Representatives. When you send letters or emails, do them in your own words, but brief and concise.
- Make incessant phone calls. Stick to the issue.
- Don't forget to ask for a response because they will respond if you ask for it. A letter of gratitude or thank you notes to each response will be very much appreciated.
- Keep a record of all the letters, emails you have sent, all phone calls you have made and all responses that you received. I will need a copy of each for our Middle and End of the Year Reports.
- For information on legislative developments, subscribe to DISPATCH, one of the best American Legion periodicals, published twelve times a year. It costs \$15.00/year and I strongly encourage every district and unit to subscribe to this periodical or you can read it online at <http://www.legion.org/dispatch>.
- Current issues and alerts can be found at: <http://capwiz.com/legion/home/>. Visit this website often and let your members know where the Auxiliary support is needed to help our veterans.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time for any questions at contact info given at the end of this bulletin.

Contact persons for further information you may need:

**National Legislative Chairman: Ann Rehbein 515-232-9299 amrehbein@msn.com
1505 Douglas Avenue, Ames, IA 50010**

**Western Division Chairman Midge Farrar 619-390-3936 zipperdog94@yahoo.com
9395-60 Harritt Rd. Lakeside, CA 92040**

It is very important that you get familiar with the National Plan of Action 'How To' Guides because the Department Plan of Work is based on this POA.

National Plan of Action 'How To' Guides:

Objective:

Promote support of the American Legion priorities/agenda by American Legion Auxiliary Members.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Know what the priorities are.
- Visit the American Legion website at <http://legion.org/legislative> to find the latest information. Legislative agendas, point papers are a few of the topics listed.
- Receive updates by email by joining a subscription link to the Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/legion/mlm/signup/>.
- Act on the priorities by distributing information at Unit meetings, through newsletters, phone trees, emails – whatever works best for your Unit. Convey the information so it is easily understandable by all members. Any action taken should be in your own words. The publication *American Legion Auxiliary Legislative Advocacy Guide* is an information tool to guide you through the process.
- Contact your Representative or Senator. Contact information is available in the *Legislative Action Center* at <http://capwiz.com/legion/dbq/officials/>.
- Write – mail is still being irradiated if sent to the Washington office; send it to your District office where it will reach the official much sooner. A sample letter is available in the *American Legion Auxiliary Advocacy Guide*. It can be found online: <http://www.alaforveterans.org/Brochures/AdvocacyGuide-lp.pdf>.
- Call – The District or Washington Office. You will usually talk to an aide and they will do their best to convey your message. Try to establish a relationship with the aide responsible for the topic (usually the Veterans Affairs aide).
- Email – When you write an email, it should be in your own words and thoughts and not subject to interpretation.
- Visit in person – in the Washington or District office. Make an appointment or attend a town hall meeting.
- Report back on the response received to your Unit, District, Department and/or the National Chairman.

Keep your Representatives and Senators aware that we need them to help us help our Veterans.

Pilar S. Reyes

Legislative Chairman

1161 Rosewood Way, Alameda, CA 94501

(510) 522-1801

pilrey@yahoo.com