



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



DEPARTMENT MANUAL

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PREFACE

Whatever you think about politics, understanding the political process is required to run an effective local union. This manual will provide you with the knowledge necessary to meet that goal. The IBEW cannot claim to protect and represent workers unless we are involved in shaping the future.

Political activism starts in your local union hall. If you are lucky, it could eventually lead to the enactment of a historic infrastructure package that will generate IBEW jobs for decades. While the federal government has an undeniably significant profile, a robust local-level policy plan can benefit workers and create new jobs. It can also expand IBEW's market share and position local unions in a way that protects labor standards, organizes new members, and represents existing members better.

The foundation of a premier local union program is the members of the local union serving in local elected offices or quasi-government boards. Following the steps in this manual will show you how to achieve these goals. Members in local union leadership, including business managers, executive board members, and local union registrars, should use this manual to mobilize their members in pursuit of a grassroots political program that gets results.

Keep in mind that the time to engage is not just when a president threatens the value of our gold-standard apprenticeship programs. It also isn't just when Congress considers proposals to dismantle the pension system we rely on for our retirement security. Instead, we need to be engaged all the time. Why? Because political decisions are being made daily in city halls and other government buildings. These decisions often touch our wages, job safety, and benefits.

This manual is a practical, hands-on guide that will give you step-by-step instructions on establishing a political program in your local union. It will also help you follow the law when raising money. Past editions of this manual have been heavy on explaining the lawmaking process of a bicameral democracy. Not here. Consider it a cheat sheet to help you get to work now. Because if we are not active in the political arena, others will make the rules that we are bound to follow.

Inside, you will find the keys to building your own grassroots network, political action committee (PAC) program, and advocacy shop. It will help you develop a program to inform and engage rank-and-file members about issues of interest to workers and unions. Please note that there is a companion to this manual titled *Government Affairs Policy Briefs* (accessed at: <http://ibewaction.org>), which should be used to inform members, elected officials, and the public about how legislation affects the IBEW. Also included are links to activist networks and other resources.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The IBEW divides its most crucial work into two parts: winning at the bargaining table and organizing all nonunion workers.

Both efforts help us improve the wages, working conditions, and general terms of employment for members. But unfortunately, our efforts to organize workers have become more complex as a consequence of damaging legislation.

Want to know how to get IBEW members involved—and stay involved—at every level of the union and political process? Start at Chapter 2. We must not be satisfied until every member is registered to vote. We must communicate our views to all elected officials. Most of all, we must inform members of critical political issues and encourage them to make their voices heard through voting.

However, supporting your candidate starts before Election Day. A successful candidate campaign has two crucial components: financial contributions and registered voters who turn out and vote. Begin by encouraging local union members to support a candidate by contributing to the candidate's campaign through the IBEW Political Action Committee (IBEW PAC) (accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/IBEW-PAC>) and voting for the candidate on Election Day. By using our collective strength to help elect candidates that support our issues, the IBEW is proactively taking steps to improve our livelihoods.

Members can also help elect labor-friendly candidates by volunteering for IBEW or AFL-CIO rallies, phone banks, door knocking, other get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts, and Election Day poll watching.

Know you need to make a political contribution to get your candidate across the finish line but not sure where to start? Jump ahead to Chapter 3. The IBEW supports political candidates whose views and ideals are sympathetic to the issues affecting working women and men in our country, regardless of their political party. If a candidate has the support of the members of a local union and that union supports the IBEW PAC, we will send a campaign contribution upon request.

We have always known that we may be unable to match corporate spending dollar for dollar. However, suppose we support the IBEW PAC, inform and motivate members, and vote. In that case, we can elect labor-friendly candidates and keep friends of labor in elected office.

Getting involved in a political campaign can strengthen your local union, whether your candidate wins or loses. Your actions can influence who makes the critical decisions in your city, state, and region. Winning candidates always remember who helped them get elected. Even if your candidate loses, your hard work will be noticed and remembered by politicians in your area. In addition, participation in the political process increases members' awareness of issues and builds solidarity and morale.

The benefits of a robust political program are not limited to politics. The program is also a chance to build, strengthen, and grow the IBEW at all levels of the organization. A good program will provide opportunities for the next generation of local union leadership and foster the growth of an effective communications structure. For a successful campaign, a strong communication network is essential. This network must include internal or external organizing and other local union actions or activities that require membership participation. We can make a difference by building our grassroots political program and working in concert with the local, state, and national AFL-CIO structures.

Furthermore, advocating for a particular bill or government funding for a project at the local level by a business manager or rank-and-file members can be one of the most effective ways to reach policymakers. Building a rapport with policymakers is essential, especially when advocating for an issue that is important to their constituents and will impact working families in their district or state. Elected officials are interested in what our business managers and members have to say and what government policies will support their jobs.

Finally, once you find a champion, it is essential to help them get elected and remain in office. Although mobilizing IBEW members and turning out members to vote is most important in helping IBEW-endorsed candidates win office, fundraising is also a crucial component of political action. Corporate PACs and wealthy individual donors outspent labor union PACs 16-to-1 in the 2020 election cycle. IBEW member candidates and our allies who don't get corporate and wealthy donor support depend on union PACs to stay competitive and win their elections. Union PAC support is often the single biggest source of financial support for many elected officials. IBEW's federally registered multi-candidate political action committee is one of the top PACs in the United States, thanks to the generous support of members and local unions.

CHAPTER 2

HOW TO MAKE YOUR LOCAL UNION A POLITICAL POWERHOUSE

UNDERSTANDING THE IBEW GRASSROOTS PROGRAM

The IBEW Grassroots Program is among the strongest political action programs of its kind, developing informational materials on current issues and candidates, maintaining several web- and private community-based sites for local unions to access resources online, and making political presentations at IBEW conferences and progress meetings. The program also provides training for local union leadership, registrars, and district and state political coordinators.

Most importantly, the grassroots program supplies local unions with a communications structure to educate and engage members.

Your Local Union Grassroots Program

The program is premised on informing, registering, and mobilizing members via four communication channels: worksite action, door knocking, phone banking, and local union publications. The coordination chain flows from the International Office to the rank-and-file and back. The program's key components are the collective efforts of local union leadership, registrars, and district and state political coordinators.

By setting the following goals, local union leadership can ensure the successful operation of their local union grassroots program:

- Reach the voter registration goal of 95 percent
- Distribute local union communications monthly
- Make worksite contact monthly
- Identify and engage elected local union members and "householders," a term used to describe family members and other individuals who live in a member's household
- When a local union member or householder is running for office or elected, please send their name to the IBEW Government Affairs Department
- Attend registrar training in your IBEW district
- Support the AFL-CIO state federation and central labor council (CLC) political GOTV program

DESIGNATING A LOCAL UNION REGISTRAR

Appointing a registrar to oversee a plan that will work for their local union is critical to ongoing political engagement, and its importance is laid out in the IBEW Constitution: Article XVI, Sec. 3, states that every local union shall have a registrar, and Article XVII, Sec. 1(e), sets forth the registrar's duties.

Depending on the size or structure of the local union, it may be more effective to have more than one registrar.

Individuals with the following characteristics and skill sets make good registrars:

- Knowledge about politics and how laws affect unions and workers
- Strong belief in the importance of IBEW member activism
- Communication skills and a willingness to engage local union members on potentially sensitive political issues
- Capability to develop and manage political programs, campaigns, and actions
- Willingness and ability to put in the time necessary to do the job well
- Involvement in local, political, or civic activities
- Familiarity with IBEW or AFL-CIO political programs

To maintain updated records, business managers are encouraged to add new registrars using the Local Union Registrar Update (accessed at: <https://secure.ibew.org/registrars/Page1.aspx>) on Local Connections and to delete the names of members who are no longer serving.

What Does a Registrar Do?

As of October 2022, there are 1,055 IBEW registrars. The registrar's responsibilities include:

- **Forming an action committee:** The action committee is a group of members who keep rank-and-file local union members informed on legislative issues related to the workplace.
- **Membership engagement:** IBEW members are more likely to vote for IBEW-endorsed candidates when registrars provide the information needed to make informed decisions.
- **Motivating members:** Registrars and their committees should develop a plan for direct, repetitive communication that includes personal visits, job site visits, telephone calls, texts, mailings, and social media. Maintain a database of members who are highly interested in politics (political activists) to help distribute informational materials and provide the basis for a more comprehensive, successful political powerhouse.
- **Voting information, including absentee voting:** Registrars should let members know the voter registration and early voting deadlines for all ZIP codes under their local jurisdiction. Registrars must also inform the membership of the procedure for voting by absentee ballot, even if they are not in their home jurisdictions. Registrars should contact their local election commission for information on obtaining an absentee ballot.
- **GOTV activities:** All that registrars have done to inform and motivate members means nothing if members don't vote. What do registrars need to do to get members to the polls? (See the "Get Out the Vote" section on page 8.)
- **Requesting campaign contributions:** It is essential to apportion PAC funds so the IBEW is active in federal, state, provincial, and local government.
- **Attending political functions:** It is crucial to have committee representatives attend CLCs or AFL-CIO meetings and fundraising events. At these events, the labor community discusses local politics and candidate endorsements. Registrars and their committees should encourage members to participate in precinct, county, provincial, and state party caucuses where possible.
- **Candidate support:** While labor is the primary funding source for many of the IBEW's friends in government, phone banking, door-to-door canvassing, and serving on candidates' teams are other important ways to provide support.
- **Promoting IBEW elected and appointed officials program:** IBEW members hold offices from the local school board to the U.S. Congress. The IBEW encourages members to

get elected to public office and appointed to boards and commissions. These seats are instrumental in making decisions about local projects, Davis-Bacon prevailing wage requirements, and other critical contracting decisions. When a local union member is elected or running for office, please send their name to the IBEW Government Affairs Department. Local unions can also request a list by emailing GovernmentAffairs@ibew.org.

How to Access the Registrars Center

Registrars are responsible for communicating with members about the importance of political action. The IBEW Registrars Center website provides registrars with the resources to carry out these tasks. The IBEW Registrars Center (accessed at: <https://www.ibew.org/registrars>) is available to business managers, registrars, and district and state political coordinators.

1. Go to the IBEW Registrars Center website
2. Click the "register" button and then complete and submit the application with your display name, username, password, and email address
3. IBEW Government Affairs Department staff will screen your application and request any missed information. Required fields include your contact information, local union, and title
4. When your application has been approved, you will receive a confirmation email with your log-in credentials
5. Contact governmentaffairs@ibew.org if you have any questions or issues logging in

Take Action with IBEW Action

IBEW members are encouraged to visit the IBEW Action website (accessed at: <http://ibewaction.org>) as a mobilization resource. The IBEW Government Affairs Department updates the site regularly with action items, policy summaries, and other critical resources.

KNOWING THE ROLE OF POLITICAL COORDINATORS

In the United States, each International Vice President appoints one district political coordinator as well as one state political coordinator for each state in their jurisdiction. District and state political coordinators are a resource for business managers and registrars because they are familiar with the broader political dynamics of their district and state. The coordinators also liaison with AFL-CIO state federations and CLCs. District political coordinators deeply understand the laws and regulations that govern voting, contribution limits, and compliance rules in their area of jurisdiction.

Please see the District and State Political Coordinators List (accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/Political-Coordinators>) for their contact information.

District political coordinators accomplish the district's grassroots mission by:

- Serving as a link between the national grassroots coordinator and state coordinators
- Pulling saved voter registration lists for state political coordinators from the Labor Action Network (LAN)
- Supervising state political coordinators when using tracking tools
- Facilitating membership list approval requests from the national AFL-CIO

State political coordinators accomplish the district's grassroots mission by:

- Working with local union business managers and registrars
- Maintaining updated metrics from the state's local unions on voter registration numbers and contact goals
- Assisting local union registrars with local union messaging and tracking tools
- Facilitating membership list approval requests with local unions
- Assisting in identifying local union activists as release staff to AFL-CIO state federation programs
- Identifying local unions that are not participating in the IBEW Grassroots Program
- Tracking and reporting primary and general endorsed candidates within the state to the IBEW Government Affairs Department

EXECUTING A SUCCESSFUL LOCAL UNION GRASSROOTS PROGRAM

Local union business managers and presidents are responsible for the following:

- Appointing a registrar and assigning their duties, including updating the registrar on Local Connections, encouraging rank-and-file members to work with local union leaders and registrars on the grassroots program, and registering other union members, family members, and friends to vote in targeted elections
- Getting all local union officers involved in the local union's political program and working with the registrar to recruit volunteers and activists
- Attaining local union mail contact monthly goals
- Achieving worksite contact monthly goals
- Releasing staff to AFL-CIO programs, where available and requested
- Identifying members' stances in LAN using worksite surveys and phone banks
- Participating in AFL-CIO phone banks, canvassing, and other GOTV activities

Rank-and-file members should work with local union leaders and registrars on grassroots programs and register and educate other union members, family members, and friends.

Make Every Member a Voter

The IBEW aims to maintain a high level of registered voters in the membership of every local union. The IBEW can accomplish this goal if each leadership level completes the following.

On a national level, maintain a master calendar of voter registration deadlines, candidate filing deadlines, primary election dates, and early and mail voting windows. On a district level, district political coordinators will pull voter registration lists from LAN for state political coordinators. District coordinators will also maintain updated metrics from local unions on voter registration numbers and contact goals.

On a local level, local union leadership can pull a list from LAN to see who is registered to vote. If a local union needs assistance pulling a list, it may request it from the IBEW Government Affairs Department. The registrar will then examine the list for inaccuracies, such as retirements. Local union leaders should obtain an updated voter list from the local election office to make corrections. Although these lists are public, there may be a cost involved, or you may need to make copies in person. The list should be updated annually and sent to the IBEW Government Affairs Department.

How to Start (or Jump-Start) Your Local Union Political Program



Get engaged

- Reach out to your elected representatives
- Have a political program
- Appoint a registrar
- Contribute to the IBEW PAC
- Invite elected officials to local union events and training centers
- Use the IBEW Registrars Center (accessed at: <http://www.ibew.org/registrars>)



Know your issues

- Get in touch with your state political coordinator about legislative and political priorities
- Keep members posted about local and regional political events and legislative developments
- Attend local union political meetings



Register members to vote

- Register apprentices and newly organized members to vote as soon as they become members
- Conduct voter registration drives
- Get LAN training to find unregistered members



Practice solidarity

- Attend CLC and area labor federation meetings
- Help out sister local unions



Create institutional advantage

- Research local commissions, authorities, and party committees and get IBEW members appointed to them



Encourage members to run for local office

Once you have determined the percentage of members in your local union registered to vote, pledge to increase that number by 10 percent. When you have attained that target, set a new one.

The IBEW Grassroots Program conducts a national voter registration project every election year by mailing voter registration packets to each IBEW local union. The packets include:

- Directions to complete the voter registration project
- Mailing labels for each unregistered voter (active and retired members)
- A sample cover letter that can be printed on the local union letterhead and signed by the business manager
- Voter registration forms

The local union is responsible for mailing the cover letter and voter registration form to every unregistered voter.

Access the Labor Action Network (LAN)

The LAN is a secure voter file system that tracks the voting habits and histories of AFL-CIO union members. It allows us to do specific targeting to reach the members we need to reach while excluding those we do not. In other words, it helps us work smart and efficiently.

There are two different sides to LAN: My Voters and My Campaign. My Voters is used to analyze voters and create canvassing material. My Campaign is the labor activist database, which allows

PIN Verification

1	2	3
A	M	T
4	5	6
V	X	Z
7	8	9
W	F	E
	0	
	B	

Enter the letters that correspond to your PIN.

Account Name
kbrock

PIN*

Verify PIN

users to search, edit, and add local union contact information, volunteers, and worksite information. It also enables local unions to track their activities during grassroots campaigns.

IBEW members who need training on using LAN should sign up for an AFL-CIO LAN Training Webinar (accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/AFLCIO-LAN-Training>) on the AFL-CIO's Digital Training website under the Data Analytics and Infrastructure Resource (DAIR) Trainings section.

The local union must follow these steps to acquire LAN access:

1. The business manager must request LAN access for local union members by emailing the IBEW Government Affairs Department at governmentaffairs@ibew.org with the full name, title, and email address of the person they are requesting access for.
2. Once approved, the IBEW Government Affairs Department will email the national AFL-CIO to request LAN access for the new user.
3. Once a LAN administrator creates an account, the new user will receive an email from LAN@afclcio.org with a link to set up a password. If the password is not accessed within 48 hours, the account will be locked. LAN will prompt users to set up a password upon clicking the email link. Every 30 days, users are prompted to change passwords. Passwords require at least eight characters, at least one letter, at least one non-letter character, and cannot be easily guessed.
4. LAN allows users to select a four-digit PIN after selecting a password. Enter the letters that correspond to each digit on the keypad. You will need to remember this numeric PIN for future log-ins. You do not need to remember which letters you typed. Every time you log into LAN, the letters corresponding to each digit will change. LAN will prompt you to enter the letters corresponding to your numeric PIN. Do not type the numbers themselves. (See an example of LAN pin verification above.) Unlike your password, your PIN can be permanent and will not be subjected to change every 30 days. If you want to change your PIN, click on the 'Change PIN' option on the LAN website's main menu.

Get Out the Vote (GOTV)

Local unions should participate with the CLC and the state AFL-CIO in GOTV efforts during election season, which is longer in recent years due to the increased prevalence of early and absentee voting. Local unions can do this by recruiting as many volunteers as possible to conduct pollwatching, giving rides to polling locations, and helping with activities to get union members to the voting booth. Other key GOTV activities include phone banking, door-to-door canvassing, and political signposting.

Local unions should aim to distribute at least one mailer a month during election season. In addition, they can send local union mail using the AFL-CIO's Working Families Toolkit (accessed at: <https://www.wftoolkit.org>).

At the discretion of the International President, the IBEW will assign release staff at the international and local levels to assist with the IBEW's member-to-member or the AFL-CIO's labor-to-labor programs. Depending on their assignment, release staff will coordinate from a statewide or zone level and work with local unions and the appropriate labor council in their area. They will facilitate worksite visits, phone banks, canvassing, and other GOTV activities.

Talk to Members About Politics

Politics is divisive, and IBEW members are not immune to the messaging of anti-union politicians, special interests, and anonymously funded dark money groups seeking to distract attention from core union issues. While political parties may endeavor to balance the often-competing needs of corporations and workers, labor unions advocate entirely on behalf of workers and their economic interests.

As a union official, remember that your primary role is to serve the interests of workers on the job, whether on the legislative front or at the bargaining table. The IBEW supports pro-worker candidates regardless of party affiliation. Talk to the members of your local union about politics. All union members have shared economic concerns and are more likely to vote for the union-endorsed candidate if their union talks to them about the issues at stake.

Union officials should approach the topic of politics by explaining how the political process affects union jobs. Decisions are made daily at all levels of government that affect union jobs, benefits, wages, and working conditions. An excellent place to start is by exploring voting records. That is why the IBEW developed a scorecard for members of Congress, the IBEW Legislative Scorecard (accessed at: <https://www.ibew.org/votescorecard>).

Voting records are just one of many ways to illustrate the effects of the political process on members' everyday lives. From bonding or zoning for local projects to federal regulations affecting entire industries, there is no shortage of examples of how politics may impact the members of the IBEW.

Political discussions can easily devolve into emotional arguments. To avoid them, follow these tips when talking to other IBEW members:

- Talk about issues instead of political parties
- Provide information, not voting instructions
- Present information credibly and objectively
- Stress labor's role—unions are the voice of workers, hold politicians accountable, and tackle issues that affect workers' values
- Personalize your message to your audience and remember that one size does not fit all

The IBEW Government Affairs Department is available to provide messaging guidance regarding IBEW's political and legislative priorities. Please see the *Government Affairs Policy Briefs* (accessed at: <https://www.ibew.org/Portals/22/IBEWAction/ConventionPolicyBrief-FullBook.pdf>) from May 2022, covering our legislative priorities in greater detail. If you need talking points for a particular IBEW member event, please have your district or state political coordinator contact the department.

Did You Know?

A recent membership survey found that nearly 90 percent of IBEW members have favorable views of the IBEW. When we talk to IBEW members, even about politics, we bring credibility to the discussion.

Local Union Political Program Do's and Don'ts

DO

Engage

- Invite candidates from each party to meet with rank-and-file membership at regularly scheduled local union meetings
- Invite elected leaders to tour your local union training center
- Participate in the IBEW Government Affairs Conference in Washington, DC
- Appoint and support your local union registrar(s)

Communicate

- Communicate about candidates' stances on IBEW members' jobs and benefits and encourage them to take action
- Share political and legislative updates at local union meetings and in print and digital communications with members
- Let the IBEW Government Affairs Department staff know if you need assistance

Mobilize

- Sponsor voter registration drives and register new members and apprentices
- Encourage member support for the IBEW PAC and individual PAC contributions by all members
- Ask members to volunteer as poll watchers during local elections
- Participate in labor-endorsed candidate GOTV activities

Stay Current

- Read *The Electrical Worker*
- Follow the IBEW on social media
- Participate in <http://ibewaction.org>
- Use the IBEW Registrars Center

Practice Solidarity

- Participate in state and local AFL-CIO area labor federations and CLCs
- Keep your state and district political coordinator informed about local and regional political activities and issues affecting the labor movement

Endorse a Candidate

- Let the IBEW Government Affairs Department (governmentaffairs@ibew.org) and your district and state political coordinators (locate who that is at: <https://tinyurl.com/Political-Coordinators>) know when you make an endorsement

DON'T

Be Overwhelmed

- Take a deep breath. Having a fantastic local union government affairs program is not hard, and it can be gratifying.

NAVIGATING THE IBEW GRASSROOTS STAFF STRUCTURE

National Level

Information on the grassroots program flows from the national level, to the district level, to the local union level. Legislative and political mobilization of the IBEW is organized and administered through the IBEW Government Affairs Department. The IBEW Grassroots Program follows a hierarchy:

1. Assistant to the International President for Government Affairs
 - a. IBEW Government Affairs Director
 - i. National Grassroots Coordinator
 - ii. IBEW Government Affairs Department Grassroots Staff

The national level oversees a robust political program. The department provides grassroots program training and other political presentations to IBEW local union leaders, registrars, activists, and state and district political coordinators as well as for all 10 IBEW international vice presidential districts in the United States. IBEW members interested in participating in these training sessions should contact their state political coordinator or district office.

Through its national grassroots coordinator and support staff, the department informs IBEW local unions about political issues that affect them and their families. We also encourage local unions to engage and communicate with elected officials. And, finally, we inspire IBEW members to volunteer and vote for labor-friendly candidates.

The national grassroots coordinator accomplishes the department's grassroots mission by:

- Developing informational materials on current issues and candidates
- Maintaining a website where registrars can access resources online
- Making political presentations at IBEW conferences and progress meetings
- Providing training for local union leadership, registrars, and state and district coordinators
- Ensuring that the department's training curriculum provides the tools needed for a local union to develop its political program
- Maintaining proper LAN (accessed at: <https://www.laboractionnetwork.com>) lists for district political coordinators
- Creating local union mail templates for each issue topic
- Generating mailing labels for local unions
- Maintaining a master calendar of voter registration deadlines, candidate filing deadlines, primary election dates, and early and mail voting windows
- Encouraging IBEW members to run for office or seek appointments to quasi-government positions such as port authorities and public service commissions
- Assisting district and state political coordinators with grassroots tools

A full description of the IBEW Grassroots Program can be found in the Appendix on page 29.

District Level

The district hierarchy is as follows:

1. International Vice President
 - a. District Political Coordinator
 - i. State Political Coordinator

The IBEW district passes down tools from the international level to the local unions. Additionally, the district encourages local unions to implement its national program, maximizing its political effectiveness.

Local Union Level

The local union hierarchy is as follows:

1. Business Manager
 - a. Local Union Leadership
 - b. Registrar
 - c. Activists
 - d. Rank-and-File Members

PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVE STATE/LOCAL LABOR FEDERATIONS

The AFL-CIO operates at three structural levels:

1. National AFL-CIO in Washington, DC
2. State level, with 51 state AFL-CIO federations (including Puerto Rico)
3. Local level, with hundreds of CLCs

The national AFL-CIO sets policy on national and international labor issues. State federations advocate on behalf of members of their affiliated unions, monitor state labor issues, and provide leadership for the CLCs. State and area labor federations also organize affiliated unions to work in areas of mutual concern.

The national AFL-CIO charters CLCs to work on local issues with state and national federations and carry out labor priorities through grassroots mobilization efforts. Field representatives work under regional directors to provide assistance and training to state federations and CLCs.

Local unions should work with the national and state federations and their local CLC to devise a strategy for addressing political and legislative issues that affect working families. In addition, CLCs should be involved in the political process to maximize labor's impact in Congress and state legislatures.

All levels of the AFL-CIO structure take part in political action. The national office works with state federations to elect labor's friends to public office. State and local affiliates endorse federal, state, and local candidates.

IBEW members should help shape the political environment of their cities, their states, and the federal government through the AFL-CIO. We encourage each IBEW member to serve on their CLC and state political task forces.

CHAPTER 3

THE IBEW POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Whether we like it or not, fundraising is a critical component of political action. In each election, corporate PACs and wealthy individuals vastly outspend labor union PACs. Pro-worker candidates must depend on a combination of smaller individual and union PAC contributions.

Financial contributions from labor unions are a vital source of funding for many elected officials. However, candidates for federal office cannot accept dues funds or general funds. They can only accept funds from individuals and registered federal PACs. The IBEW PAC is our federally registered multi-candidate PAC. The Federal Election Committee (FEC) considers local union PACs affiliates of the IBEW PAC.

The IBEW PAC is one of the top PACs in the United States. Your local union's participation in the PAC is critical to its continued success. All IBEW local unions should commit to raising at least \$12 per member per year for the IBEW PAC as set by a resolution and confirmed at the 40th International Convention.

Each local union is credited individually for the money they contribute to the IBEW PAC. Upon request, the PAC team will return funds to the local union for their endorsed candidates, committees, or political activities.

In recognizing our local unions' outstanding efforts, the IBEW Government Affairs Department presents annual awards to local unions that achieve or exceed the yearly per-member goal. Additionally, the department gives special awards to local unions that contributed the most in each district. The IBEW also encourages local unions to reward individual members for outstanding contributions.

The IBEW asks that local unions collect voluntary contributions from all rank-and-file members. However, before we can expect members to participate, local union officers should lead the effort by being the first to contribute.

Whether your local union has an established political program or no program at all, find out what you need to know about your local union fundraising program on page 21.

RAISING POLITICAL FUNDS

Some of the most common ways to solicit funds from members include check-off and fundraising events. Check-off is the process by which an IBEW member authorizes the deduction of a contribution to the IBEW PAC directly from their paycheck. There is tremendous potential in check-off. It requires only a small commitment from each member to accumulate a steady flow of resources for our PAC. Although the contribution may be small, the deduction is continual and can add up during the year.

Because of the complexity of the process and laws that apply to financial institutions, the IBEW Government Affairs Department advises local unions to have legal counsel review a check-off plan before implementation.

Suppose your local union does not already have a check-off program. In that case, there are several options for creating a plan, including check-off by negotiation, check-off on demand, vacation fund check-off, and financial institution check-off. For more information and forms, contact the IBEW Government Affairs Department.

Types of Check-Off

Check-Off by Negotiation. Check-off is something the local union can negotiate, just like any other contractual demand. The most common issue when negotiating check-off through automatic payroll deduction is who will bear the cost of implementing and maintaining payroll deduction. Federal law requires that the union pay the costs of establishing and maintaining the payroll deduction plan. Still, the FEC has stated that the negotiating parties can agree in their collective bargaining agreement that:

- The employer has estimated the payroll deduction plan in advance
- The employer has incorporated the cost into the collectively bargained wage and benefits package

If a local union believes an employer is trying to charge fees over implementation and maintenance, the business manager should contact the IBEW Government Affairs Department or seek legal counsel.

Check-Off on Demand. Suppose an employer or any of its subsidiaries, branches, divisions, or affiliates uses payroll deduction to collect political contributions. These deductions can be from non-bargaining employees or shareholders. In that case, the local union has the right to payroll deduction for members who contribute to the IBEW PAC. The local union is also entitled, by law, to use any method of soliciting contributions that the employer uses. Just like check-off by negotiation, when establishing check-off by demand, an employer may charge the local union the cost of implementing and maintaining payroll deduction.

After confirming that an employer uses payroll deduction to collect political contributions, the local union must make a written request to the employer to establish its payroll deduction system.

The IBEW Government Affairs Department has prepared the sample letter on page 15 for your use. Copy and paste it onto your local union letterhead and send it to your employer to notify them that you are demanding, by law, the non-negotiable right to have a political check-off.

Federal law requires an employer with payroll deduction to comply with the local union's request for its payroll deduction system. If an employer refuses the local union's request, there are remedies for this violation of federal law. For further information and assistance in this situation, don't hesitate to contact the IBEW Government Affairs Department or your legal counsel.

Contract Language. Once you have decided on a method to obtain a political check-off, you will need to draft language appropriate for your agreement with the employer. The following is sample check-off language for your contract:

The employer agrees to deduct and transmit to the Treasurer, [insert name of union PAC], the amount of [insert amount], for each hour worked from the wages of those employees who voluntarily authorize such contributions on the forms provided for that purpose by [insert name of union PAC]. These transmittals shall occur [specify frequency, e.g., weekly, monthly], and shall be accompanied by a list of names of those employees for whom such deductions have been made and the amount deducted for each such employee.

Other Check-Off Methods. When a local union cannot negotiate a check-off with an employer and does not qualify for check-off on demand, it should explore other ways to collect funds. Two examples include vacation fund check-off and financial institution check-off.

Sample Letter to Employer

[Insert name of union] represents members working for your corporation, including its subsidiaries, branches, divisions, and affiliates. The Federal Election Campaign Act, 2 U.S.C. Sec. 441b(b) (6), provides that:

Any corporation, including its subsidiaries, branches, divisions, and affiliates, that utilizes a method of soliciting voluntary contributions, or facilitating the making of voluntary contributions, shall make available such method, on written request, and at a cost sufficient only to reimburse the corporation for the expenses incurred thereby, to a labor organization representing any members working for such corporation, its subsidiaries, branches, division, and affiliates.

This letter is the written request which will oblige you to make available to us the methods of soliciting voluntary contributions or facilitating the making of voluntary contributions used by the corporation (including its subsidiaries, branches, divisions, and affiliates).

We request that you state to us the methods of soliciting voluntary contributions or facilitating the making of voluntary contributions used by the corporation (including its subsidiaries, branches, divisions, and affiliates). We will then determine which of these we will also use.

This request is made with the understanding that our correlative rights are qualified by the obligation to reimburse the corporation for any expenses incurred thereby. We are, of course, prepared to meet that obligation.

To minimize unnecessary paperwork, this request is intended to be of a continuing nature. If the corporation (or its subsidiaries, branches, divisions, and affiliates) determines in the future to utilize a method of soliciting voluntary contributions or facilitating the making of voluntary contributions, we expect to be promptly advised of that action. We will then determine whether to take advantage of our correlative rights.

If your local union has a vacation fund, members can contribute from their accounts. Members typically make these contributions on an annual or semiannual basis. Don't hesitate to contact the IBEW Government Affairs Department for assistance in establishing a vacation fund check-off plan.

Financial institution check-off is when a member chooses to make political contributions from their credit union, bank, or other financial institution. A local union must ask each member willing to contribute to sign an authorization card. The authorization card must instruct the financial institution to make a deduction from that individual member's account for the IBEW PAC. Financial institution check-off must conform to various federal and state banking and finance laws. Check-off from a credit union may also require a formal vote by credit union officers for authorization.

Signing Up Members

After choosing the suitable check-off method, the business manager must take on the task of signing up members. Many members will sign up the moment you develop a program for them. Others will sign up when you ask them. Still others may need more encouragement. There are many ways to encourage a member to sign up. As leaders, it is essential to give members of the local union a reason to want to participate.

You should explain the importance of political involvement. You can do this by illustrating what has happened to our jobs, benefits, working conditions, and wages due to some federal, state, or local level political action. The IBEW Government Affairs Department has created an informational trifold brochure that explains how the IBEW PAC works and why members should support it. You can order the PAC trifold, which is free, through the IBEW Store on Local Connections (accessed at: <https://secure.ibew.org/>).

The IBEW Government Affairs Department makes IBEW PAC lapel pins available to each local union participating with our national political fund. The design of the pins changes annually. You are encouraged to order these pins from the IBEW Government Affairs Department and give them to current and prospective members. The pins are a small but successful incentive and are free to the local union, with the understanding that you are issuing them to IBEW members to raise funds for the IBEW PAC. Local unions can order the pins by contacting the IBEW Government Affairs Department.

The AFL-CIO posts annual and lifetime labor voting records (accessed at: <https://aflcio.org/legislative-scorecard>) if the local union is looking for information on candidates. This resource briefly describes critical votes cast by each member of Congress. Use this information to show members how their legislators are doing. You can request this information from the IBEW Government Affairs Department or log on to the IBEW website and visit the Government Action Center. Additionally, members can search their address and learn how their members of Congress align with the IBEW on key legislation by consulting the new IBEW Legislative Scorecard (accessed at: <https://www.ibew.org/votescorecard/>).

Local unions may duplicate the authorization card shown on page 17 through their own means or request printed copies from the IBEW Support Services Department. You may fill in the first sentence of the authorization form to suit your local union's needs. There are unique versions for New York and Michigan that can be requested as well.

Fundraising Events

In addition to raising voluntary contributions through check-off, local unions can meet their fundraising goals by hosting fundraising events. Local unions should develop a schedule for political fundraising events each year and establish fundraising targets and an annual goal. Local unions can combine political fundraising events with efforts already in existence. For example, many local unions have negotiated a check-off program but continue to raise money through fundraising events.

Ideas for events include golf tournaments or dinners. A local union may give away gifts or prizes to encourage participation in drawings to raise money for the IBEW PAC. However, local unions should not conduct raffles or 50/50 drawings to raise funds for the IBEW PAC. These events raise serious tax questions and could jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the IBEW PAC funds. The IBEW PAC Webinar Series highlights fundraising. You can access these videos through Local Connections (accessed at: <https://secure.ibew.org/>) by clicking on the IBEW PAC Webinar Series banner (accessed at: https://secure.ibew.org/Departments/IBEW_PAC_Webinars.asp).

Form 932: Check-Off Authorization—Per Pay Period



IBEW POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)
CHECK-OFF AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize my employer to deduct from my pay \$ _____ each pay period and forward this amount to the IBEW PAC. I understand that the IBEW PAC will use this money to make political contributions and expenditures in connection with federal and state elections.

This authorization is signed voluntarily and not out of any fear of reprisal. I am aware that I may revoke this authorization at any time, without reprisal, by notifying the IBEW PAC in writing. Contributions to the IBEW PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Signature of IBEW Member _____ Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Local Union No. _____ Card No. _____

Form 932 6/19

Form 932H: Check-Off Authorization—Hourly



IBEW POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)
CHECK-OFF AUTHORIZATION

I hereby authorize my employer to deduct from my pay \$ _____ per hour for all hours worked and forward this amount to the IBEW PAC. I understand that the IBEW PAC will use this money to make political contributions and expenditures in connection with federal and state elections.

This authorization is signed voluntarily and not out of any fear of reprisal. I am aware that I may revoke this authorization at any time by notifying the IBEW PAC in writing. Contributions to the IBEW PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Signature of IBEW Member _____ Date _____

Name (Print) _____

Local Union No. _____ Card No. _____

Form 932H Rev. 3/18

IBEW PAC Contribution Center

The IBEW PAC can now accept credit card contributions from members through the IBEW PAC Contribution Center. Members can make a one-time or recurring donation (accessed at: www.ibew.org/ibewpac/contribute). All U.S. IBEW members may log in with their IBEW card number as their login ID and their last name (no spaces) as the password with the first letter capitalized. A member can change the login ID and password after they log in for the first time. All contributions made through the contribution center are credited to the individual's local union and can be requested back for political donations by the local union. They also count toward the local union's total for yearly PAC awards and the \$12 per member goal for 100 percent PAC participation.

UNDERSTANDING IBEW PAC FUNDS

The IBEW PAC maintains several separate accounts from which IBEW local unions can make political contributions. The two main accounts are the IBEW PAC Voluntary Fund, in which individual IBEW members make voluntary donations, and the IBEW PAC Education Fund, which includes contributions from IBEW local unions designated for political purposes as well as contributions from individual members that do not satisfy all of the federal requirements for the voluntary fund.

Local unions must make all checks given to the department, regardless of account, payable to IBEW PAC.

Voluntary Fund

The IBEW PAC Voluntary Fund contains voluntary contributions from IBEW members, most commonly from monthly payroll deductions. Voluntary contributions are the only funds permissible to contribute directly to federal candidates, but local unions can also use voluntary funds for state or local candidates.

Within 30 days of deducting a voluntary contribution from an IBEW member, the collecting agent should transfer the voluntary funds to the International Office by check payable to IBEW PAC. This procedure relieves the local union of reporting requirements and potential tax liability. Depositing voluntary contributions into a local union account or holding contributions for longer than 30 days is strongly discouraged. We discourage this because of the complexity of the laws governing voluntary contributions and potential tax liability. However, the IBEW Government Affairs Department understands this is impossible in certain circumstances.

For example, some employers will send a local union one check in an amount covering multiple types of deductions from employees who are IBEW members. The local will need to deposit a check of this type into an account. Then the local union must create a new check payable to IBEW PAC Voluntary Fund in the amount of members' voluntary contributions. The local union must also keep accurate records of deposits and withdrawals associated with the deposit account.

The account should be a separate, non-interest-bearing account. However, it is acceptable for the account to be a general local union account. For the IBEW PAC Voluntary Fund to accept contributions from a general local union account, the local union must send a letter stating that:

- The funds are voluntary contributions
- The local deposited the funds temporarily in the local union's general account
- The local separated other deductions from the original check
- Proper records of the deposits and withdrawals of voluntary contributions were kept by the local union

Checks received by the IBEW Government Affairs Department without a letter will be deposited into the IBEW PAC Education Fund. Local unions can find a sample letter on Local Connections (accessed at: <https://secure.ibew.org/>) through the IBEW Government Affairs Department link (accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/PAC-Sample>).

Education Fund

The IBEW PAC Education Fund contains contributions from members and local unions that do not meet one or more of the requirements of voluntary donations. General treasury contributions voted on and approved by the local union membership are deposited into the IBEW PAC Education Fund. The IBEW can use education funds for lobbying or issue advocacy, such as opposition to right-to-work laws or GOTV efforts. We can also use these funds for state candidate and committee contributions where permissible.

Local Union PAC Fund

The IBEW strongly recommends that you do not contribute directly from your general fund to a state or local candidate, even if state law allows you to do so. We recommend this because the tax liabilities and a possible audit could result from such a contribution. Similarly, the IBEW International Office does not contribute directly to political candidates from the general treasury.

A local union may request a contribution for a candidate from the IBEW PAC by completing a political contribution request (PCR) form. You can locate the PCR form on Local Connections through the IBEW Government Affairs Department link. To avoid unnecessary delays, a local union should take the time to make sure that they have completed the PCR form (accessed at: <https://ibewextranet.org/politicalcontributionrequest/#/home?1792120063594>) thoroughly and accurately. The IBEW Government Affairs Department PAC team will require the local union to fill in any missing information before they can complete the request.

Political contribution request approvals are based partly on the total amount contributed by a local union to the IBEW PAC and the amount of money requested back. Records of a local union's IBEW PAC contributions are updated monthly. Local unions can find their contribution request history on Local Connections under the "local union contribution report" button. Please see the instructions on how to fill out the PCR in Chapter 4.

Federal election law prohibits unions from contributing union treasury funds to federal candidates. But union treasury funds can be used for communications with members about issues and candidates. Therefore, local unions can and should use local union treasury funds for federal, state, and local elected offices. In addition, local unions can also use general treasury funds to conduct voter registration drives and GOTV efforts aimed at members and their families.

FOLLOWING LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Federal Laws and Regulations

Under federal law, a PAC may contribute up to \$5,000 to a federal candidate for each election. The primary election and general election are considered separate elections. All contributions from the IBEW PAC, IBEW districts, IBEW local unions, and IBEW state associations count toward this \$5,000 limit. A contribution to a federal candidate from any of these sources impacts the total amount the IBEW PAC can contribute. Donations beyond the \$5,000 limit are unlawful and can result in fines and other penalties.

The IBEW must have only one federally registered PAC because of complex FEC reporting requirements, shared contribution limits, and stiff penalties for noncompliance.

The IBEW strongly discourages local unions from creating a federal PAC of their own. However, as mentioned above, a local union may contribute to a federal candidate by requesting funds from the IBEW PAC. The IBEW PAC will file all required reports with the FEC. If a local union has a federal PAC, they must notify the IBEW Government Affairs Department when making any federal contributions.

State and Local Laws and Regulations

Countless laws and regulations govern political contributions on the state and local levels. Each state, district, and territory has specific contribution limits and reporting requirements. The IBEW Government Affairs Department ensures that the IBEW PAC complies with all state and local regulations.

In a few states, each local union is considered a separate entity with its own contribution limit. In those states, the IBEW PAC and each affiliated local union could contribute the maximum amount allowed by law. The creation of local union PACs for state and local contributions in those states might increase the ability of the IBEW to affect state and local politics. Don't hesitate to contact the IBEW Government Affairs Department for more information.

Some states permit labor unions to contribute to state and local candidates from their local union treasury. Although lawful, local unions should avoid this practice. Unions that use treasury funds to make political contributions will incur a substantial federal tax. Local unions must make all political donations through an established PAC.

How to Start (or Jump-Start) Your Local Union Fundraising Program

STEP 1 Getting Started

First, determine if your local union is already participating with the IBEW PAC. If it is, ensure that it follows all the rules discussed here. Determine if you have a state or local PAC and whether you are collecting and forwarding funds to the IBEW PAC.

Find out your applicable PAC rules by researching your state's website, usually under the guidance of the secretary of state or state campaign finance division. Based on the rules and reporting requirements, you will know if you can or should set up a state or local PAC.

Starting a local union PAC will increase the IBEW's ability to give. There are no shared limits placed on what IBEW as a whole can give. You should have a staff member or legal counsel who understands PAC compliance and is qualified to run a PAC. If not, this is the biggest reason to use the IBEW PAC instead: the PAC staff files all the required compliance reports, ensuring no one goes to jail.

You shouldn't start a local union PAC if your state or county does not allow it, if your bookkeeping responsibilities would be overly complicated because IBEW PACs share a combined contribution limit, or if you do not have qualified staff to file the required compliance reports.

Some states do not allow entities to make political contributions via payroll deduction, so you will need to find alternative methods. If they are allowed, find out whether your employer(s) have check-off established; if so, then it's check-off on demand for you (see page 14). If they do not, you may negotiate for it.

Alternative methods can include other types of check-off, such as vacation fund or financial institution check-off. In addition, the IBEW Government Affairs Department has set up the IBEW PAC Contribution Center (accessed at: www.ibew.org/ibewpac/contribute) for one-time or periodic credit card contributions.

STEP 2

Time for Action

Suppose you are collecting and redistributing PAC funds. In that case, you need to set up a non-interest-bearing bank account to hold and potentially split funds. When the employer sends a local union a check that includes all benefits (including PAC donations), the local union must split the check and temporarily deposit it into a separate account. If the local union receives any bank fees associated with the account, the local union cannot remove those fees from the members' contributions. However, the local union can cover this fee outright or request reimbursement from the PAC.

Get members signed up. Talk about issues, not party politics. Do your research into the candidates and issues facing the members of your local union. You can order IBEW PAC informational brochures and PAC pins from Local Connections—these are free to you to help educate and get members involved in the PAC program.

You should order IBEW Form 932: Dues Deduction Cards (per pay period and hourly examples can be found on page 17). Every member who signs up for PAC deductions must sign Form 932. You can edit the language on these forms to fit your goal; please work with the IBEW Government Affairs Department staff to change it. The local union must keep the member's Form 932 on file for as long as it receives the member's PAC deductions.

Host a fundraiser, like a spaghetti dinner, a golf tournament, or another special event. You can also take collections at events or union meetings. Remember, local unions must accompany each contribution with the member's name, card number, and contribution amount.

Send the money in a timely fashion, with proper notice. When the employer first distributes the money, we have 30 days to deposit it into the federal PAC. After 30 days, the local union cannot use the funds for federal or most state candidates.

STEP 3

Get Involved

If your local union actively supports the IBEW PAC, requesting political funds is simple. An IBEW local union can request PAC funds for political candidates, political committees, ballot measure committees, GOTV, and other political efforts. To request a check from the PAC, fill out a PCR form found on Local Connections. The International President approves all checks. Please allow at least a week of processing time when submitting your request. Contributions will enable you to attend events, get facetime, and push your agenda where it counts.

CHAPTER 4

HOW TO REQUEST POLITICAL FUNDS

PAC funds can be requested for political candidates, political committees, ballot measure committees, GOTV efforts, and other political efforts. If your local union is actively supporting the IBEW PAC fund, then requesting political funds is a simple process.

THE POLITICAL CONTRIBUTION REQUEST (PCR) SYSTEM

The PCR system homepage is located on Local Connections under the IBEW Government Affairs Department tile. From this page you can view the request by clicking on the Request ID on the left side of the grid or start a new request by pressing the “Start a Request” button. By clicking on the “ID” button you can view read-only versions of the requests that have been completed.

The IBEW Government Affairs Department now can send back a PCR for missing information or questions. An email notification will be sent to the email on file to return to the PCR system to add the needed information.

REQUESTING PAC FUNDS

The PCR form is set up to default to your local union number. If you are also the chair of a state association or conference, you will have the option to request funds on behalf of those entities as well. The current business manager information should auto-populate, or you may need to enter it and click the “Save Info” button if it’s your first time using the form. Please make sure the email address given is valid and belongs to the person who should be contacted with any questions or issues on the submitted PCR form.

At the top of the form there is a section for comments. This is used to let us know if you need the check by a certain date, that your local union sent a check to the PAC to offset the request being made, or if you would like the check sent somewhere other than the local union address. Relevant forms such as an event flier, W-9, invoice, or letters from candidates/committees can be uploaded with the “Select Files to Upload” button to help us with needed compliance requirements.

Political Contribution Request List
For Local 9999

Office: (202) 728-6046
PAC@ibew.org

Start a Request

of Requests: 386

ID	Date Requested	Status	Amount Requested	Requested By	Candidate Name	Committee Name	Office Sought	Election Date

The PCR form is adjustable to either a “Candidate committee” or “Other” to show only relevant fields for you to complete. It is important to select the right mode to capture all the necessary information and ensure compliance. See above for an image of the PCR form.

The following information is needed for a candidate committee:

- First, middle, and last name of the candidate
- Official candidate committee name
- Office sought
- Whether the candidate is an IBEW member
- Date of election (primary, general, special)
- Committee phone number
- Committee address (street, city, state, ZIP)
- Committee ID or FEC ID number
- Employer identification number (EIN) or Tax ID
- County and district in which the candidate is seeking office
- Amount requested

Once all fields are complete, you have the option to print, submit another request, or exit. After submitting, the PCR is processed by IBEW Government Affairs Department staff, who will reach out via the email given on the form if there are any questions or issues with the request. All PCR forms received are reviewed and approved by the International President before they are disbursed and mailed back to the local union for distribution. Please allow necessary time to process.

DELIVERING THE CHECK

When contributing to a candidate, it is best for a local union to present the check directly to the candidate face to face. A local union can present a check in any way it desires; however, two of the most effective ways are at a campaign event or at a local union meeting. Presenting a check to a candidate at the local union meeting is ideal because the membership is part of the process, and the candidate has an opportunity to address members directly.

CHAPTER 5

ADVOCACY

MEETING WITH YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Issue advocacy or lobbying is the practice of influencing decisions made by our elected officials. There are more than 12,000 registered federal lobbyists working on Capitol Hill alone. In addition, thousands of lobbyists work in your state capitals and city councils, each speaking on the issues that affect the groups they represent. Members of Congress and their staff members rely on these professionals to alert them to legislation and provide information. The process through which legislation is enacted is complex (see How a Bill Becomes a Law in the Appendix on page 30), making it critical to include top priorities in the first drafts of a bill.

The most influential lobbyist, though, is not a professional one—it is you. The voter. The constituent. The IBEW member. A resident of a lawmaker’s home district or state is the best person to influence them on legislation. The meetings, phone conversations, letters, and emails you use to communicate with your legislators and members of their staff have an enormous impact on the outcomes of our issues.

It is always important to remember that members of Congress work for their districts and states. The more members of Congress hear from their constituents about a particular issue, the harder it is for them to vote in a different direction. Ignoring their constituents is a sure way for a member of Congress to lose their reelection. Therefore, local unions must make legislators aware of the opinions and values of the members of the IBEW.

While mailing letters, sending emails, and making phone calls to the office of your member of Congress are important, the effectiveness of an in-person meeting is unmatched. Building a relationship with your member of Congress can be advantageous when you need to influence a government policy before Congress or a federal agency.

The IBEW Government Affairs Department monitors federal legislation that affects working families and keeps track of how members of Congress vote on our issues. We ensure that members of Congress are aware of the IBEW’s positions by sending letters from the International Office (an example can be accessed at: <https://tinyurl.com/Sample-IBEW-Letter>). You can also see the Sample Letter to a Member of Congress in the Appendix). After a candidate is elected,

How to Give IBEW Members a Bigger Platform

Teaching a union member about politics is more manageable than teaching a politician about labor issues. IBEW members are our own best promoters.

That’s why there is no better person to represent union members and the middle class on workers’ issues than an elected official who is a union member.

The IBEW strongly encourages its members to run for public office, quasi-governmental boards, and commissions and to accept public positions within their communities.

As of September 2022, there were 289 IBEW members in elected or appointed public positions across the United States and Canada.

we hope local union members will hold them accountable for their votes. The IBEW Government Affairs Department has developed a scorecard to help members monitor their congressional delegation (accessed at: <https://www.ibew.org/votescorecard>). Please use the information in this manual to educate local union members on the legislative process.

SCHEDULING A DISTRICT MEETING

Each member of Congress has two primary offices: their office in Washington, DC, and their office in their home state or district. If a member of Congress represents a large geographical area, they may even have multiple district offices, so if a trip to Washington is unfeasible, there are other ways to contact your senators and representatives. Nearly every senator has multiple offices in their home state. You can set up a meeting by following the steps below.

Find the local office you would like to visit. U.S. senators and representatives maintain offices in their home states that allow their constituents to meet with them or their staff. You can find information about the local offices of your senators and representatives on their websites.

For U.S. senators (accessed at: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/>), click on your senator's name for a direct link to their website. For U.S. representatives, also called congressmen/congresswomen (accessed at: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/>), click on your representative's name to visit their website.

Contact your legislator's office to set a meeting.

1. Find out when the legislator will be back in their home district. While Congress is in session, your senators and representatives will be in Washington, DC. When Congress is in recess, they will likely be back in their local offices. You can check your senators' and representatives' websites to find out when they are in recess. Although not essential, the best time to request a meeting with a lawmaker is when they are back home in the district. Meeting your representative or senator at home emphasizes the point that you are representing their constituents—the members of the IBEW—with genuine concerns they need to address.
2. Request a meeting. Most legislators' websites include a "Request for Meeting" form that you can fill out online or offer an email address for the person in charge of scheduling appointments. Before calling your lawmaker's office, fill out the form or send an email request for a meeting. If you are sending an email, it should contain the following:
 - a. Your name and address (to show that you are a constituent)
 - b. The issues you wish to discuss
 - c. The local office you want to visit
 - d. The dates you can meet (include several dates or a wide time frame, so there is flexibility in scheduling the meeting)

A sample email to request a meeting can be found below:

Dear scheduler,

A delegation of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local *[insert number]* who live and work in the *[insert number]* district would like to schedule a meeting with *[Representative/Senator insert name]* during the upcoming congressional recess period.

If they are unavailable, we are interested in meeting with any staffer on their behalf, particularly those who cover *[infrastructure/labor standards/*

apprenticeships/electric vehicle charging installation standards/pensions/local projects/etc].

Please advise of their available dates and times. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,
[sign name]

3. Follow up on your request with a phone call a day or two after you anticipate your communication has arrived. Ask for the person in charge of scheduling your lawmaker's appointments. The following script can help guide your conversation.

YOU: Hello, my name is [insert name], and I live in [insert location]. I wanted to follow up on my request to meet with [Congressman/Congresswoman/Senator insert name] regarding issues of importance to IBEW Local [insert number] and its membership. Is [Representative/Senator insert name] available to meet with me on [insert date]?

OFFICE: I'm sorry—the Representative/Senator isn't available on those dates.

YOU: Could you let me know some dates that they or a staff person might be available to meet with me?

4. Write down the date, time, and person with whom you spoke. Then, if you have not heard back in a few days, call again to follow up. Be polite but persistent!
5. Recognize that you might meet with a member of your legislator's staff. Sometimes legislators may not be available and the scheduler will create a meeting with a staff member, which is still an excellent opportunity. Legislators rely heavily on their aides to make decisions, as aides are policy experts. Your meeting with a staff member can inform their recommendations to your legislator and also build a meaningful relationship with your lawmaker's office.

Confirm your appointment. Call or email your legislator's local office the day before your meeting to confirm your appointment. Your legislator's office may request a list of those who will be in attendance if there are attendees other than yourself.

Before you go. Find how your members of Congress score on votes key to the IBEW: visit the IBEW scorecard (accessed at: <https://www.ibew.org/votescorecard>) and enter your full address.

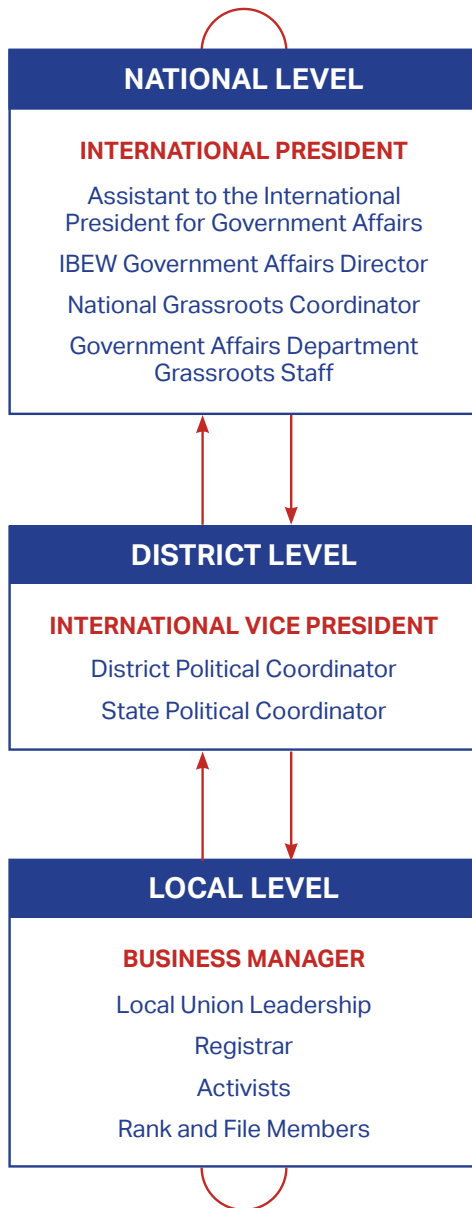
KNOWING THE RULES OF LOBBYING

- **Be prepared:** Bring fact sheets, backup materials, memos, or letters for the legislator, along with extra copies for the staff. Know the issues; understand who supports you and who opposes you. Be prepared to answer questions. Not every legislator can meet with you in person. If you meet with a staff person, don't be insulted. It is often a key staff person who writes bills or works on specific issues. Before arriving, take some time to lay out your points to keep the conversation clear and on track.
- **Know the audience:** Legislators have opinions on topics. Check the legislator's record on the planned issues to be discussed. The track record of the lawmaker may require a search for common ground or a "thank you" for the work done.

- **Keep it brief:** Legislators and staff get thousands of documents on issues. They need concise facts. A one-page sheet with “must-know” information and a short memo are enough. If asked for more information, have it ready. Every detail may feel critical, but overusing the same talking point can lead to tangents. Refine talking points to focus on the highest-priority items.
- **Identify everyone attending:** Use your IBEW title if you are an officer, business agent, steward, or staff person. Be sure to point out where you live if you are a constituent. Try to have a role for each person attending and plan who will speak ahead of time. Telling personal stories is an effective way to make a point and convey a message.
- **Say what you know:** It’s okay if you don’t know the answer to a question. Tell the legislator you will find the answer and get back to them. You will lose credibility if you give false or misleading information. Be prepared to answer the common questions that guide lawmakers on policy proposals—how does this impact their district and constituents?
- **Be specific and direct about what you want:** Make sure the purpose of the meeting is clear. Have bill numbers ready. If it is a budget item, try to have information about what provision it is in the budget bill. Make sure you ask the legislator what you are looking for directly. Is it to vote one way or another on an issue? Is it to speak to the leadership? Is it to write a letter on a topic or ask for funding for a program?
- **Stay focused during the meeting:** Legislators are good at not answering questions and changing the subject, so try to keep them on the topic during the meeting. Avoid small talk until after the meeting and steer the conversation back to the issue if someone goes off on a tangent. Focus on getting answers to your questions. Avoiding small talk will maximize the use of the allotted time, and staff will work to keep the legislator on schedule. Share the floor with fellow attendees. Bringing in several perspectives creates a prosperous conversation.
- **Stay calm, don’t argue, and keep control of the meeting:** The legislator may need time to absorb the information, so you may not get answers during meetings. Legislators are human beings too. Please treat them with courtesy, dignity, and respect, allowing for focus on the discussed priorities and leaving a positive impression. Don’t let the legislator distract you from the purpose of the meeting. If they ask you for something unrelated to the issue, let them know you will take their information or questions and get back to them. Keep your agenda front and center.
- **Anticipate the arguments of your opponent:** Tell your legislator if there is opposition to your issue. Prepare your legislator to answer the opposition, and don’t let them get blindsided.
- **Follow up and follow through:** Everyone who attends the meeting should send a thank you note to the legislator. The note should provide contact information and remind the legislator of their commitment to your issue. In addition, answer any questions the legislator asked and give any information requested. Do this promptly to determine what your next step is.

APPENDIX

IBEW Grassroots Program



International President

Assistant to the International President for Government Affairs

IBEW Government Affairs Director

National Grassroots Coordinator

Government Affairs Department Grassroots Staff

International Vice Presidents: Appoint district and state coordinators.

District Political Coordinators: Coordinate with national grassroots coordinator and state coordinators.

State Political Coordinators: Coordinate with local union business managers and registrars.

Local Union Business Manager: Work with local union president to appoint a registrar to work with local union members and AFL-CIO on grassroots campaigns.

Local Union President: Appoint a registrar for the local union. Get all officers of local union involved in the local's political program. Have duties and qualifications for registrar.

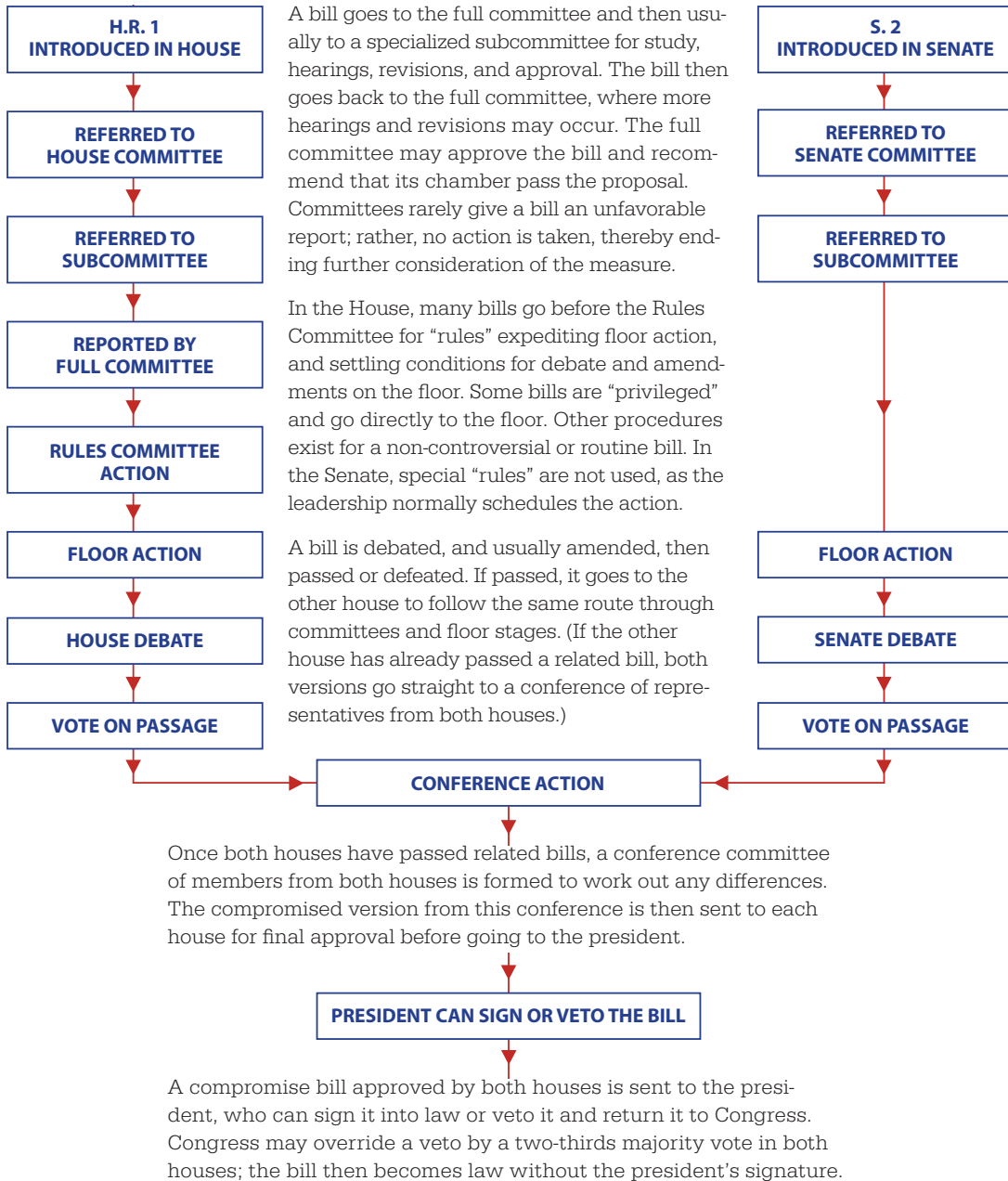
Local Union Registrar: Develop grassroots communication structure. Register local union members and their families to vote. Encourage vote-by-mail and early voting. Educate and engage local union members in politics. Recruit activists and volunteers. Coordinate with IBEW and AFL-CIO political programs. Grow the IBEW PAC.

Local Union Officers: Work with president, business manager, and registrar to recruit volunteers and activists for the local union political program.

Rank and File Members: Work with local leadership and registrars on grassroots programs. Register and educate other union members, family members, and friends.

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

This diagram shows the most typical way in which proposed legislation is enacted into law. There are more complicated, as well as simpler routes, and most bills never become law. The process is illustrated with two hypothetical bills, House Bill Number 1 (H.R. 1) and Senate Bill Number 2 (S. 2). Bills must be passed by both houses in identical form before they can be sent to the president.



SAMPLE LETTER TO A MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM INTERNATIONAL OFFICE



**INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD
OF ELECTRICAL
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900 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
202.833.7000
www.ibew.org

KENNETH W. COOPER
International President

PAUL A. NOBLE
International
Secretary-Treasurer

January 26, 2023

VIA EMAIL

To: All Members of the United States Congress

Re: Debt Limit

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the more than 775,000 active and retired members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), I urge the United States Congress to move to lift or suspend the debt limit as soon as possible and avoid any possible default on the federal debt. Failure to lift or suspend the debt limit will have dire impacts on IBEW members' livelihoods and every working American.

The IBEW represents workers in a wide variety of industries, including members working in construction, electrical generation, transportation, telecommunications, manufacturing and in the public sectors in every state and every congressional district in the country. IBEW members' work is predicated on market certainty, which includes the federal government providing stable "rules of the road" and upholding its debt obligations. Defaulting on our nation's debt obligations would completely undermine market certainty for IBEW members and their employers, leading to significant job losses and shrinking retirement savings, including their hard-earned pensions and 401(k) accounts. In addition, failure to lift or suspend the debt limit would likely imperil critical federal obligations, including Social Security and Medicare payments, funding for infrastructure, servicemember salaries and much more.

The economic impact of the United States' failure to raise or suspend the federal debt limit is well documented. Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody's Analytics, found that a prolonged impasse over the debt ceiling would cost the U.S. economy up to 6 million jobs, wipe out as much as \$15 trillion in household wealth, and send the unemployment rate surging to roughly 9 percent. In a letter to congressional leaders, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen stated, "Failure to meet the government's obligations would cause irreparable harm to the U.S. economy, the livelihoods of all Americans, and global financial stability." Moreover, simply raising the prospect that Congress may not raise the debt limit could be enough to cause economic havoc.

With inflation at historic highs, making cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and other federal programs is not the solution. The American people



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All Members of the United States Congress
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Page 2

deserve responsible solutions to the problems they face each day, especially during times of such economic uncertainty.

Playing politics and gambling with the livelihoods of American workers is irresponsible. I urge Congress to act immediately to increase or suspend the debt limit and avoid significant and irreparable damage to hard-working American families.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth W. Cooper".

Kenneth W. Cooper
International President

KWC:efw





INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



CONTACT THE IBEW GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

900 Seventh Street NW
Washington, DC 20001

202-728-6046

governmentaffairs@ibew.org