GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE
FY2025-2026
Annual Report

Co-Chairs:

- Sarah JanTausch
- Steven Thomas
- Contact email- governmentrelations@ncda.org

Committee Organization:

- **Board Liaison:** Marty Apodaca
- **ACA Contacts:** Guila Todd & Caitlin Flanagan
- **Committee Members:** The NCDA GRC list sits at **104 people**. It includes 15-20 active members and an additional 30 interested parties who engage as needed on key topics. Please contact co-chairs for the list.

Committee Activities to Date

Global Advocacy Summit:

- Hosted a **global advocacy summit** with 50+ registrants from across the United States and 3 other countries (UAE, Morocco, Trinidad & Tobago)
- Trained NCDA members and the public on advocacy through award-winning lobbyist advocacy trainer Luke Crumley
- Provided resource sharing and peer leadership opportunities through state CDA panel

State Capacity Building:

- Created, launched, and implemented grant programs for state CDAs to build capacity and host engagement events with legislators and policymakers at the local and state levels.
- Organized independent reviewers, selected awardees, and announced fund distributions
- Saw an increase in engagement with prospective state divisions (3) who are interested in starting or renewing chapters
- Received engagement from new organizations and members that had not previously engaged with the committee
- Created Advocacy Toolkit PDF as an online resource for NCDA members

Legislative & Regulatory Tracking:

- Following budget approval, a RFP was issued to find a new legislative tracking tool. A new vendor (GovHawk) was selected and secured in May 2026.
- The committee co-chairs worked with the vendor to configure and set up tracking priorities with a full rollout in August 2026.
- Crafted dynamic reporting through the legislative tracking vendor to give direct access for all NCDA members to track federal and state regulations and legislation with the click of a button behind the member paywall.
- Drafted **September 2026 Policy Snapshot of 220 bills and regulations** for GRC and NCDA

Leadership

Committee Reorganization & Structure:

- Re-organization of the committee that included onboarding and training a new co-chair and transitioning out a retiring co-chair.
- Committee capacity building and training to support shift in advocacy priorities.
- Worked with NCDA to update the GR webpages.
- Hosted September Open House for general NCDA members

Strategic Planning & Budget:

- Strategic planning completed by co-chairs for FY2025-2026 year.
- Analysis of federal landscape to evaluate and realign advocacy activities.
- A budget for new programming, legislative tracking tools, capacity building, and direct support for CDAs for state-level advocacy was submitted at the end of FY2024-2025.
- Sarah presented to the board in the fall (FY2025-2026) and worked with Board Liaison, Marty, to align planning with board priorities and outcome targets. Planning and the final budget were submitted in December. The budget was approved in spring 2026.
- Steven presented to the board in Summer 2026 (national NCDA conference) to highlight the value of the new legislative tracking vendor (GovHawk).
- Steven attended national NCDA conference forums to educate members on GRC activities and impact with handouts (Co-Chair meeting, Higher Education constituency meeting)

Coalition Building

- The committee has worked with SHRM, the National Skills Coalition, the American Counseling Association, and is planning further coalition building with national organizations with shared missions.
- Steven partnered with Markell to launch and coordinate a state capacity assessment and evaluation survey to guide future planning and training efforts.

Advocacy, Policy & Public Statements:

- The committee tracks federal and state legislation and regulations on a weekly and monthly basis flagging hot topics for committee review and evaluation.
- The co-chairs flag emergent, high-visibility opportunities.
- Co-chairs worked with the board to complete three key public statements and comments:
    a. Signed on to the **National Skills Coalition Letter** supporting career technical education and other topics. Contact co-chairs for a copy of the letter.
        i. NCDA, along with representatives of organizations across workforce development boards, state and local governments, community and technical colleges, adult educators, labor and labor-management partnerships, community based organizations, workers and businesses, submitted a letter in June 2026 about prioritizing a response to economic changes which affect workers and learners.
        ii. Led a letter-writing campaign for NCDA members in 6+ states that supported continuing advocacy related to the RISE regulations.
        iii. Partnered with Senator Merkley's staff on advocacy related to RISE regulations.
    b. Wrote and submitted public comment on the **federal proposed RISE** (Reimagining and Improving Student Education) rules.
    c. Public comment on **O*NET rules**

Membership Training

- Relaunched workstream structure to fully train up NCDA members and advocates
- Provided training in monthly meetings for committee members.
- Hosted and led training at the NCDA conference to build capacity.
- Scheduled first committee meeting for the new fiscal year
- Scheduled first quarterly town hall meeting for October 2026
- Scheduled first State CDA Advocacy Training for October 2026

Succession Planning

- Selected, onboarded, and trained new co-chair for term commencing 10/1/2026 (NCDA GRC co-chairs each have two-year terms with alternating start and end dates)

Budgeting

- Submitted new and carryover budget request for upcoming fiscal year