

**Panel on Public Affairs**  
**Meeting Minutes February 7, 2020**  
**APS Washington Office of Government Affairs**  
**529 14th Street, NW, Suite 1050, Washington, DC**

**Members Present (19):** J.Wells (Chair), D.Dahlberg (Chair-Elect), W.Collins(Vice-Chair), J. Adams, L. Aycock, S.Blessing, S. Fetter, E. Gawiser, L.Grego, D.Gross(virtual), C.Gutierrez, F. Hellman, M.Hockaday (virtual), N.Holtkamp, B. Klein, T.Mason, B.McCurdy, C.Nitta, R.Orbach, D.Stamper-Kurn, J.Wurtele

**Members Absent**

**(1):** D.Ernst

**Advisors/Staff Present:** P.Bucksbaum, M.Elsesser, K.Kirby, J Oliver, J. Russo, F Slakey

**Virtual Attendees/Guest:** A.Flatten,  
T.Hodapp, F.Lamb, M.Raizen

**Call to Order: J.Wells called the meeting to order at 8:06 A.M**

**Welcome, Approval of Minutes** A call for edits to the October 2019 minutes was made. **MOTION: To accept the October 2019 minutes, as presented.** **ACTION: The motion passed, with 3 abstentions.**

**OGA Advocacy Update**

APS Office of Government Affairs (OGA) staff M. Elsesser provided an overview of advocacy activities, including; Federal Science Agency Budgets, Combating Sexual Harassment in Science Act, Keep STEM Talent Act, Methane Emissions Regulations and Helium. In particular OGA worked with US Senator Richard Durbin's office to introduce the Keep STEM Talent Act, which was also introduced in the House. The OGA also mobilized in key states working with APS members to write op-eds and hold in-state meetings. **ACTION:** OGA will circulate the Cedar Rapids op-ed regarding the Keep STEM

Talent Act by

James Vary to the full POPA committee.

## **Physics & the Public Subcommittee**

**Guest - Amy Flatten, APS Director of International Affairs**, provided an update on her effort to develop a revision of the APS Statement on the International Nature of Physics. She will work with CISA to provide an updated Statement in advance of the June POPA meeting. POPA provided points to be considered in the revised statement:

- Openness and scientific mobility are essential to the advancement of science
- APS values the contribution of scientists working and studying outside of their country
- There are growing challenges to immigration to the US

***ACTION:*** Amy Flatten, APS Director of International Affairs, will work with CISA to develop a statement in advance of the June POPA meeting, taking into consideration the points raised during the POPA discussion.

**Blessing**, Chair of Physics & the Public Subcommittee discussed the possibility of drafting a Statement on Holistic Evaluation of Graduate Student Applications. Various POPA members made suggestions about what could be included in the statement:

- The purpose of a grad education
- Holistic evaluation of applicants should support that purpose
- Subject preparation is an important part of a holistic evaluation
- Best practices
- The PGRE has shortcomings so don't use it as a cutoff score

***ACTION:*** The Physics & the Public Subcommittee will develop a statement in advance of the June POPA Meeting, taking into consideration the points raised in the POPA discussion and seeking feedback from relevant APS committees including the Committee on Education.

## **National Security Subcommittee**

**Wells**, Chair of the National Security Subcommittee, provided a brief overview of the U.S. Missile Defense Proposal and introduced Fred Lamb.

**Guest - Fred Lamb**, proposed a study of U.S. missile defense and national security. The Missile Defense Study would produce an unclassified educational report that assesses the capability of the US MD system. The proposed study is aligned with the only existing APS Statement concerning missile defense. This Statement is up for review this year, and the report would provide information that would be valuable in re-examining and updating this Statement. The objective of the report would:

- Focus on selected key elements of the U.S. missile defense program that are intended to disable or destroy ICBMs or their warheads in flight
- Provide technically-informed, accurate, and readily understandable analyses and assessments of these key elements

- Support informed discussion and decisions about missile defense by members of the APS, members of Congress, officials in the Executive Branch, and the general public

***MOTION:** to approve the proposed study (Dahlberg, Orbach) **ACTION:** the motion passed (20 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention)*

## A “new Bell Labs”

**Guest - Mark Raizen**, provided an overview of his ambition to create “a new Bell Labs”, a 501C3 Nonprofit called the Pointeman Institute that would offer faculty fellowships to support high-risk research. Raizen noted that the aim is to establish world-class research centers and serve as a nucleation site for new ideas. He asked APS for a letter of support that would assist him in advancing the idea.

***MOTION:** recommend that the APS Board endorse the Pointsman Institute (Dahlberg, Wells)  
**ACTION:** the motion failed (0 in favor, 19 opposed, 2 abstentions)*

## Ethics Subcommittee

Kirby, APS CEO led a discussion about a revision of Statement 19.1 - APS Guidelines on Ethics from the Standing Ethics Committee. The Standing Ethics Committee provided a particular suggestion for edits: add the words "without proper attribution" to the section of [APS Statement 19.1 - APS Guidelines on Ethics](#) as presented below:

### I. THE RESEARCH RECORD AND PUBLICATIONS

#### PLAGIARISM

##### **Recommended Implementation**

1. All sources of materials should be disclosed or cited, no matter what the dissemination medium. If other people’s or the authors’ own written or illustrative material is to be used, permission must be obtained from the copyright owner. When most of the content has been duplicated from other works **without proper attribution**, the resulting work is a redundant publication or plagiarism and is not publishable.

***MOTION:** to approve the Ethics Committee suggested edits*

***ACTION:** The motion failed (0 in favor, 17 opposed, 4 abstentions)*

***ACTION:*** Kirby will forward the POPA Committee comments and suggestion to the Ethics Committee

### **Energy and Environment Subcommittee**

**Orbach**, Chair of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee gave an overview of methane flaring and discussed the possibility of a POPA study on the issue. Collins and Orbach will report back to POPA in October with an updated proposal for consideration.

***ACTION:*** the methane flaring study proposal was tabled until October

**Next Meeting** The date for the next POPA meeting will be June 5, 2020

### **Adjournment**

***ACTION:*** D. Dahlberg adjourned the meeting 2:50 PM