



# POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 4

Your Voice  
in America!

**PAC ANNUAL MEETING ~ SEPTEMBER 25-28, 2017**

Washington, D.C.

For additional information, contact: [kwisniewska@pac1944.org](mailto:kwisniewska@pac1944.org)

## President's Message



Frank J. Spula, President

Dear Directors,

Since the time of the last newsletter, the Polish American Congress is saddened to lose three of its distinguished, long time members. Former National Director Hilary Czaplicki, a member of the Philadelphia Division, who for many years served as Vice President of the American Agenda as well other positions, passed away on

May 21st. Then sadly last month, President Susanne Lotarski of the Washington Metro Division and Frank Kosowicz of the California Division passed away, as well.

Mr. Kosowicz was truly an activist and patriot in the Polish American community and was instrumental in providing assistance to communist occupied Poland.

Dr. Lotarski joined the Washington Metro Division at the time of its founding forty-one years ago, served on its board and as Vice President and President for many years. She was also Vice President of Public Relations of the National PAC, generous with her time, money and expertise in assisting the Polish American Congress in its purpose. They will be missed, but not forgotten.

With the resignation of Dr. Andersen, we are pleased to have Ms. Klara Wisniewska and Mr. John Czop overseeing the operations of the Washington Office. We are glad to have them on board. Since the time of their hire, they have been very much involved in the day-to-day operations of the office, as well as representing the Congress at various meetings and functions taking place in Washington.

## DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

Future PAC Newsletters will be sent out:

Deadline for submission	Publication date
Friday, October 6, 2017	Friday, October 13, 2017
Friday, December 1, 2017	Friday, December 8, 2017

"Your Voice in America" newsletter is published bimonthly by the Polish American Congress. The purpose of the newsletter is to offer PAC National Directors and PAC Executive Committee members the opportunity to share news and information about their state divisions and offices. The newsletter does not receive funds from any external source. The editor is Dr. Mark Pienkos.

Articles should be between 100 and 400 words. Some editing will be done to match our style guidelines and spatial constraints, as well as correcting grammatical errors. We do not send proofs for approval. When sending photos, please include captions with names, official titles. All submitted materials become the property of the Polish American Congress and may be used to promote the mission of the PAC. Materials will not be returned unless requested.

Articles are due according to this schedule. Send your submissions to PAC National VP for Public Relations, Mark Pienkos at [markpienkos2012@gmail.com](mailto:markpienkos2012@gmail.com).

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Over the last few months, there was a considerable discussion concerning the future of Orchard Lake Seminary in Michigan, as well as the selection of a new Chancellor.

I wrote a letter to Archbishop Vigneron on behalf of the Polish American Congress addressing this issue. Shortly after, I received a communication from the Chairman of the Board of Regents, Mr. Gross, creating a dialogue for further discussion.

A committee representing the Polish American community was formed and a date selected to meet and discuss the concerns of Orchard Lake Seminary. This meeting was attended by Mr. Joseph Drobot, President of the Polish Roman Catholic Union, Mr. Tim Kuzma President of the Polish Falcons and Secretary of the Polish American Congress, Mrs. Ann Bankowski, President of the Michigan Division of the PAC (in the company of her husband Mr. Waldemar Bankowski), Dr. Stanley Sliwowski, National Director of the New Jersey Division, Mr. Korzen of the Washington Metro Division, and Mr. Golan, former

President of the John Paul Society of Michigan. We were able to address our concerns and make a recommendation for the position of Chancellor.

The meeting can be summarized as a SUCCESS for the Polish American Congress. It was through the vigilance of its Directors, and our efforts, that a candidate of Polish descent recommended by the committee was selected. Fr. Krol of New Jersey is the new Chancellor. We are thankful to Chairman Gross and the Board of Regents, as well Archbishop Vigneron for taking into consideration the legacy of the Orchard Lake Seminary, as well as the present interest of Polonia.

We are looking forward to the upcoming meeting in Washington. This conference should provide an opportunity to discuss all relevant issues most efficiently.

Wishing you a splendid balance of the summer!

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## FROM THE DESK OF DEBBIE MAJKA, VICE PRESIDENT FOR CULTURAL AFFAIRS

On November 11, 2018, we will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the restoration of Poland's sovereignty as the Second Polish Republic in 1918, after 123 years of partition by the Russian Empire, the Kingdom of Prussia and the Hapsburg Empire.

The 11 November date is the one on which Józef Piłsudski assumed control of Poland. The holiday was established in 1937 and only celebrated twice prior to World War II. After the war, the communist authorities removed the holiday from the calendar, although it continued to be celebrated informally. The holiday was officially replaced by the National Day of Poland's Revival on the July 22 anniversary of the communist manifesto under Stalin. As Poland emerged from Soviet-influenced communism in 1989, the original holiday, on its original date—November 11--was restored.

The date corresponds to other countries' Remembrance Day, Armistice Day and Veterans' Day. All of these holidays and Polish Independence Day are indirectly related because they all emerged from the circumstances at the end of World War I. In other countries, holidays were established in the spirit of grief and horror at the enormous human cost of the war, and they mark the sacrifices of those who fought.

A portion of a painting by Juliusz Kossak - Szarża pod Rokitną, Charge of Rokitna





For Poland, however, the tragedy of the war was tempered by what had been accomplished at its end: the restoration of a sovereign Polish state that had been lost entirely in the partitions of Poland after 123 years of struggle. The Polish holiday is therefore simultaneously a celebration of the reemergence of a Polish state and a commemoration of those who fought for it.

The Polish Government is already planning a massive centennial commemoration. For example, there's a new film in production, entitled, *The Charge of Rokitna*, a Polish Legions cavalry charge against Russia in WWI. The historic film shows the 1914-16 plight of the Polish Legions, set up by Piłsudski. He aimed to regain Poland's Independence in WWI after more than 100 years of partition. But the film isn't about Piłsudski, said the film's director, but... "it is about young people, a generation, thanks to whom we have a Poland, and we do not speak Russian or German. We have our own country and our own culture."

Why do I raise this topic now? I'm suggesting that we, in our respective communities and divisions, begin planning now to commemorate this important date in Polish history and make it a year-long commemoration rather than a one-day event. This holiday presents a unique opportunity to educate our own communities and the non-Polish communities about Poland's glorious, often turbulent history and her triumph over partitioning and dictatorial influences.



Anthony Bajdek, PAC Vice President for American Affairs, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award during the American Council for Polish Culture's annual convention held in Toronto, Canada, August 9-13, 2017.

Tony was recognized not only for his efforts on behalf of the PAC, and inclusion of Poland in the Visa Waiver Program, but also in this Kosciuszko year, as Founder of the American Association of the Friends of Kosciuszko at West Point. This annual academic Kosciuszko Conference and observance is held at the Kosciuszko Monument at West Point.

American Council for Polish Culture past President, and current PAC Vice-President for Cultural Activities, Debbie Majka, made the presentation.

## Dear Council of National Directors and Executive Committee Members,



### ► Please note the important following items:

1. Annual Activities Reports by State Division Presidents and Executive Committee Officers are to be electronically sent to the PAC Washington, D.C. office no later than Friday, September 8, 2017. Reports are to be sent to: [kwisniewska@pac1944.org](mailto:kwisniewska@pac1944.org)
2. Resolutions to be considered at the Council of National Directors Annual Meeting to be held in Washington, D.C. are due no later than Friday, August 28, 2017. Resolutions are to be electronically sent to the Washington, D.C. office: [kwisniewska@pac1944.org](mailto:kwisniewska@pac1944.org)
3. The Executive Council Meeting scheduled for Pittsburgh on August 28, 2017 was cancelled. It will be re-scheduled for a later time.

Thank you.

# *PAC-Michigan holds Pierogi Palooza*

Submitted by PAC - Michigan Division  
President, Ann Bankowski

The Michigan Division of PAC has had a very busy year thus far—besides daily duties and services, in March we held division elections soon followed by our installation and awards banquet, in April we sponsored the annual commemorative mass and program remembering our Polish brethren who tragically died in Katyn and Smolensk, and in May, we again organized the annual Polish Constitution Day observances. On June 2, 2017, the Polish American Congress Michigan Division held one of its most successful social events in years, the “Pierogi Palooza”. It was the second edition of the event (first being held in 2016 to an overwhelming success!).

The event was organized as a fund raiser to help bring in needed money for the Michigan division of the PAC. Maintaining its own building in Hamtramck (since 1978) with a part time staff, providing various services to Polish immigrants, promoting our cultural heritage, protecting our group’s good name, acting as an umbrella organization for organized Polonia and serving as its voice, requires ongoing commitment by volunteers and financial support.

This year this event was called Pierogi Palooza II and once more it was held at the Polish National Alliance Council 122 Banquet Hall in Hamtramck.

What was different about this year’s event was that, though there were not the long lines with guests waiting outside around the building as there were at last year’s event, participants were treated to a more varied menu of 15 varieties of pierogi from area vendors: Polish Village Café, Środek Campau Quality Sausage, Bożek Meat Market, and Old World Gluten-Free (which also features vegan pierogi), and, once again, kielbasa on a bun (with or without kapusta), tasty desserts of torte or paczki (Sweet Dreams Bakery and Bartz Bakery), and of course various beverages from the bar, including Polish beers.

The crowd was entertained all evening by the Kielbasa Kings Polka Band, providing listening and dancing pleasure for young and old. Earlier, Mr. Stasiu Śmigielski entertained everyone on his accordion with beloved Polish musical selections. Two young adult area Polish folk dance groups provided added fun with suites of regional Polish folk dances - the Wawel Dance Ensemble and the Polanie Song & Dance Ensemble. The Polanie Song & Dance Ensemble dancers, who are participating again this summer in the World Polish Folk Dance Festival in Rzeszow, Poland, also featured a lively and entertaining “Charleston”, which they will perform in Poland this year, representing an “American dance”. This year the Pierogi Palooza guests came and stayed much of the evening, enjoying an authentic Polish American experience, while food take-out was also available. Once again this year they were able to browse and purchase unique Polish souvenirs from the Polish Pride of Michigan kiosk or view interesting facts about PAC-MI, Poland, and Polonia featured in the Polish American Congress exhibit. Share the wealth raffle drawings and 15 attractive gift basket raffle drawings allowed a good number of guests to leave even more “enriched”.

Of course, as with any event, there were the financial sponsors, item donors, and volunteers who contributed materially as well with their time and talents. To all of them and everyone else who made this event a success, we send our sincerest “thank you” and Bóg Zapłać!

## **Below from left:**

1. “Polanie” performs Charleston at the Pierogi Palooza.
2. One of the volunteers serves a tray of pierogi.
3. Volunteers at the “sweet” booth offer delicious paczki.





# A STORY WORTH READING... *TWICE!!*

Don Pienkos, Chair  
U.W.-Milwaukee Polish Studies Committee  
Past Polish American Congress National Director

The Spring 2017 issue of the Polish American Studies journal included my short article entitled, "Sharing the Polish Experience." The article recounts the work of the Polish Studies Committee of the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee faculty committee that has brought together as many as six outstanding scholars specializing in the history, literature, language, and political experience of Poland and the Polish emigration story. It deserves to be read – and considered – by the leaders and members of the Polish American Congress everywhere. This committee has been active since its formation in 1979. Over the years, its members have given hundreds of public lectures and organized dozens of conferences, film showings, and pictorial exhibitions – all aimed at enlightening the people of Wisconsin about the rich Polish experience. The Polish Studies Committee has always cooperated with our Polonia organizations as well.

All this in addition to its members' continuing work in teaching their classes about Poland and putting forth their published research for their scholarly colleagues across the country and abroad.

Moreover, the U.W.-Milwaukee Polish Studies Committee owes its existence to the outstanding work of the Polish American Congress, which pressured, persuaded, and collaborated with the University and the Wisconsin State Legislature to fund permanent faculty positions in Polish literature, language, and history – positions that continue to be filled in outstanding fashion to this very day.

What the Wisconsin Division of the Polish American Congress did is exactly what the PAC across our country should be doing today. Not just talking among ourselves, but **DOING** something tangible and lasting for the greater good

Please take time to read my article – "Sharing the Polish Experience" – in the Spring 2017 issue of the Polish American Studies journal and you will see what I mean! Thank you.

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## THE PAC NATIONAL OFFICE PREPARES FOR THE CND MEETING

John Czap, Director of Policy Development and Administration

The Council of National Directors (CND) of the Polish American Congress (PAC) will meet in Washington, DC 25-28 September 2017 in a political context shaped by both hopeful and fearful events.

On the hopeful side, Warsaw hosted THE THREE SEAS INITIATIVE CONFERENCE early in July. Poland as the key country of the Intermarium, the lands between the Baltic, Black, and Adriatic Seas, guides this project. The goal is to avoid a power vacuum from developing in this region between Germany and Russia. The way to achieve this purpose is to build a regional grouping, with lines of communication running from north-to-south, to link together the countries of the Intermarium, rather than from west-to-east, which divides these countries from each other. A unified Intermarium will promote economic growth, energy independence, and collective security.

Readers may recall that the Polish State, then based in London, put forward a similar plan during World War II. This was the project of a Czechoslovak -- Polish Confederation as the nucleus of a larger regional grouping, which did not succeed, according to Professor Piotr Wandycz, due to Soviet opposition. Today, the Kremlin does not want the Intermarium project to go forward. A strong and truly sovereign Intermarium will prevent the re-establishment of a Russian sphere of influence in this region, and attenuate German economic hegemony.

At the opening of the Warsaw Conference, President Donald J. Trump delivered the best speech ever by any American leader on why Poland is an asset to the United States. Our President made it clear that the shared values of freedom, family, and free enterprise unite Americans and Poles. President Trump movingly described the long history of struggles and sacrifices by Poles to defend freedom in the Intermarium.



# Happy Labor Day from your PAC Executive Committee!



Moreover, our President's speech clarified the role of Poland and the Poles in World War II. This is especially important because large sections of world public opinion still give credence to Stalinist propaganda's Black Legend, which put forward the false view, in order to turn opinion in the West against Poland, that after the surrender of Nazi Germany the Soviet Army's occupation of Poland was necessary to protect Jews. This wrong view still harms Poland, our kin country.

The PAC has been advocating several policies to help build a strong Intermarium. First, Poland promptly must accede to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), now administered by the Department of Homeland Security. Until very recently, the State Department had been responsible for VWP. Nevertheless, the State Department's Consular officials in Warsaw still are the decision-makers and they still are rejecting more than 3% of tourist visa applications. Poland's accession to VWP will allow Polish business people to travel without delay to the United States. This will facilitate business affairs and thereby strengthen Poland's economy, which will promote economic growth in the Intermarium. Second, working with the Trade and Investment Sections of Poland's Consulates, the PAC's National Office is raising awareness of direct investment opportunities in Poland.

Thanks to President Spula's strong leadership there is now a House Resolution (H.R.2388) introduced by Congressman Mike Quigley (D-IL5) calling for Poland's accession to the VWP. This is the first time that Poland's accession to VWP has NOT been part of an omnibus bill, like the JOLT Act.

President Spula's Political Action Committee supports Congressman Quigley's re-election campaigns. There is a Political Action Committee based in Michigan. This writer plans to work with his colleagues in New Jersey to set up several Political Action Committees so we can reward our friends with campaign contributions in the 2018 Congressional Elections.

There is an often tacit electoral calculation linked with every policy decision. No elected official wants to be penalized on Election Day for supporting the PAC'S legislative agenda. This is why we need Political Action Committees, separate corporate entities funded by those who support the PAC'S agenda, which contribute to election campaigns.

When presenting the PAC'S agenda to members of Congress and their staffers on Capitol Hill and putting forward our views at panel discussions and other policy study events at research institutes, often called think tanks, like the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA), and other venues, the PAC Washington Office does so as a member of a 501 (c) (3) organization -- the Central and East European Coalition (CEEC), which represents approximately 25 million United States citizens whose kin countries are in the Intermarium. The Joint Baltic National Committee, the Ukrainian Congress Committee of America and the PAC are the largest and most active member organizations in the CEEC.

This year, the greatest success of the CEEC was to hold numerous educational meetings with members of Congress and their staffers that focused on calling their attention to less publicized matters, like the Kremlin's strong support for the aggressive imperialist views of Russian ideologues like Aleksandr Dugin, who advocates the elimination of Poland from Europe's map and the end of independent Ukraine. The CEEC gave members of Congress the information they needed about resurgent Russian revanchism which influences the world view of their constituents whose kin countries are at risk. The CEEC is delighted and counts as one of our successes that both the Senate on 14 June (S.722, Amendment 232, and not S.341 as this writer incorrectly wrote in the previous issue of this NEWSLETTER), and the House of Representatives on 12 July (H.R.3203) voted to continue economic sanctions against Russia for its serial violations of international law including the changing of internationally recognized borders with armed force.



Let us now consider the fearful side of the prevailing political context. When CEEC delegations meet with members of Congress and their staffers, or put questions to panelists at think tank events, the focus is on ZAPAD 2017. The CEEC describes the threat posed by the monster Kremlin war game that will be played starting 14 September 2017. ZAPAD (which means west in Russian) challenges us with an aggressive scenario: Russia repels with 100,000 troops and tactical nuclear weapons NATO'S invasion of Belarus. As in the past, the Kremlin's leaders could use war games to cover the annexation of territory to push forward their project of restoring to the Russian Federation the lands of the former Soviet space.

Opinion among experts is divided on whether ZAPAD will lead to more Kremlin orchestrated bloodshed in the Intermarium. Our CND meeting will begin 11 days after the start of ZAPAD. Therefore, the Washington Office is preparing two options for Tuesday 26 September, POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS ON CAPITOL HILL: ADVOCACY DAY FOR POLAND. First, an emphasis on advocating Poland's accession to VWP and ending "double taxation" for Polish American retirees in Poland. Second, we must be prepared to demonstrate a steadfast resolve to meet the challenge of Kremlin aggression on NATO's doorstep.

# *PAC Interns in Action*

## The authors of the following article are:

**Lukasz Rzycki**, born in the U.S.A., grew up in Poland, and moved back to the U.S. for college; will be a senior at Cornell University (Ithaca, NY), Fall 2017, and plans to work in the United States after graduation. Lukasz is a citizen of both the U.S.A. and Poland.

**Marysia Armstrong**, also is a citizen of both the U.S.A. and Poland. She grew up living in both countries, and will be moving with her family in the Fall 2017 to Poland where she will finish her last year of secondary school. Marysia plans to continue her studies at a university in the United Kingdom.

**(Editor's Comment:** Dziękuję Bardzo to both Lukasz and Marysia not only for their well-written and comprehensive report, but also for their assistance to the Polish American Congress during their internship. They are pictured below with John Czop, Director of Policy Development and Administration.)

## Our impressions

The Polish American Congress (PAC) offered two internships for summer 2017. We were fortunate to intern at the PAC National Office, 1612 K Street in central Washington, D.C. from July 6 through August 4, 2017. The National Office is located on a street where all the major lobbyists have their headquarters. The PAC National Office is adjacent to the elegant American Legion building that bears the motto "For God and Country" and a famous relief sculpture of a mid-20th century American infantryman. The National Office's central location made it easy for us to participate in events on Capitol Hill and at research institutes, also known as "think tanks." We are convinced that our internship at the PAC National Office gave us experience that will be of value in our future endeavors.

## Understanding the Global Political Context Shaping the Advocacy of Polish-American Interests

A major benefit of working for the National Office of the PAC is the proximity to legislators and policymakers on Capitol Hill. The National Office is also close to principle "think tanks" like: the Atlantic Council, the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA), the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), and the Institute for World Politics (IWP). We participated in panel discussions at these think tanks and observed general agreement that this September's Zapad wargames demonstrate the Kremlin's aggressive posturing in world politics. The scenario of Zapad 2017 is a NATO invasion of Belarus which Russia repels with 100,000 soldiers. At the panel discussion on Zapad at the Atlantic Council, where Ian Brzezinski is director of the General Brent Scowcroft Center, the PAC delegation asked one of the panelists, (Norway's military attaché): "How likely is it that the Kremlin will decide to leave behind a large number of troops in Belarus after Zapad is over, thereby destabilizing the balance of conventional forces in Europe?" The Norwegian military attaché responded that this question goes to the heart of the matter of the Kremlin's intentions and will be explored by future panels on Zapad 2017. The Institute of World Politics is investigating possible geopolitical implications of a future world order at this dangerous and unpredictable moment in world politics.





On Capitol Hill, the PAC delegation, and the delegations of other member groups of the Central and Eastern European Coalition (CEEC), participated in a panel hosted by the United States Helsinki Commission on how independent nations on the Russian Federation's periphery may achieve energy independence and thereby cease relying on Moscow for oil and natural gas. In addition to raising awareness to the threat raised by Zapad 2017 on Capitol Hill and encouraging members of the House of Representatives and the Senate to vote-up legislation calling for renewal against sanctions against the Russian Federation, the PAC delegation both independently and with our colleagues who serve on the CEEC called for Poland's accession to the State Department's Visa Waiver Program (VWP). We compiled persuasion points which we used in our meetings with members of the House of Representatives and their staffers to persuade them that supporting Congressman Mike Quigley's Poland Visa Waiver Act (H.R. 2388) benefits both state-to-state and people-to-people relations between the United States and Poland.

The events at CEPA and the Atlantic Council both identified a Russian threat as imminent--the unprecedentedly large Zapad Russian military exercises in September very well could announce more aggression. Similarly, the Institute of World Politics event addressed the possible geopolitical composition of the future world order in our uncertain times. On the legislative side, on Capitol Hill, we attended a public briefing on the issue of energy security on Russia's periphery, and a kickoff celebration for the Estonian EU Council Presidency. Attending educational events across D.C. enhanced our points of persuasion in our Capitol Hill meetings by providing a fact-based discussion of Polish American interests to the legislators with whom we met.

#### **Advocacy for Poland's Inclusion in the VWP**

We spent most of our time working on raising awareness of the need to include Poland in the State Department's Visa Waiver Program. Currently, Polish travelers need to obtain a tourist visa for any travel to the United States. Applying for a visa is not only expensive, but delays and inconveniences businesses. This can be corrected by Poland's inclusion in the VWP which would allow for visa-free travel for up to 90 days. This has been a long-term legislative priority issue for the PAC. This summer, we met with Congressional representatives to persuade them that Poland's omission is a relic of the past that needs to be changed.

We urged them to add their names to the growing list of co-sponsors of Congressman Mike Quigley's Poland Visa Waiver Act (H.R. 2388).

During the eleven meetings we held on the Hill during our time at the PAC, we are thrilled to report our effort to push forward H.R. 2388 in the 115th Congress, as there was little awareness of this bill's presence. Representatives on both sides of the aisle support this initiative, which presents a likely success for PAC. On the Republican side, we met with the offices of Chris Smith (NJ-4), Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25), Devin Nunes (CA-22), Dana Rohrabacher (CA-48) and Tim Murphy (PA-18). On the Democrat side, we met with Zoe Lofgren (CA-19), Debbie Dingell (MI-12), Joe Courtney (CT-2), Matt Cartwright (PA-17), Lloyd Doggett (TX-35) and Andre Carson (IN-7). Ranking members of Congress gave us good advice on what our next steps should be. We need to try to meet with the Leadership of the House of Representatives so this issue gets traction. In particular, we hope (and encourage anyone interested on this issue) to target: Jim Sensenbrenner (WI-5), Bob Goodlatte (VA-6), Ed Royce (CA-39), Kevin McCarthy (CA-23) and Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (WI-1). We are thankful to the Trade & Investment section of the Polish Consulate in New York City, the U.S. Travel Association, and the Heritage Foundation for providing us with current thinking and data on this topic.

#### **Fundraising to support the National Office**

Our responsibilities also included asking members of the Executive Committee, Council of National Directors, and members of the PAC, to contribute funds to re-equip the outdated office equipment in the National Office. We set a goal of \$5,000 to meet the requirements of the challenge grant set by the Polish American Congress Charitable Foundation. We are thrilled to announce we exceeded expectations and raised more than the target goal of \$5,000!

To sum up, interning at the PAC sharpened our analytical skills, made us more aware of how the global political context shapes our legislative agenda – especially advocating for Poland's accession to the Visa Waiver Program – and introduced us to the world of Washington research institutes and think tanks. Specifically, how they affect legislation under consideration by Congress.

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# POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

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Founded in May, 1944, the Polish American Congress is a National Umbrella Organization, representing at least 10 million Americans of Polish descent and origin. Its membership is comprised of fraternal, educational, veteran, religious, cultural, social, business, political organizations and individual membership. The Polish American community prides itself on its deeply rooted commitment to the values of family, faith, democracy, hard work and fulfillment of the American dream. We are present in every state and virtually every community in America, on various social, business and economic levels.

The Polish American Congress, an “umbrella” organization, is a federation of over 3000 Polish American organizations and clubs, ranging from national fraternal benefit societies, such as the Polish National Alliance, Polish Women’s Alliance, Polish Roman Catholic Union, Polish Falcons and others, including veteran, cultural, professional, religious and social associations, with aggregate membership of over one million. The PAC by-laws also provide for individual membership, as well as associate membership.

The PAC promotes civic, educational and cultural programs designed to further not only the knowledge of Polish history, language and culture, but to stimulate Polish American involvement and accomplishments.

The governing body of the PAC is the Council of National Directors, consisting of directors elected by their respective State Divisions or National Organizations and up to 10 at-large directors elected by the Council. Day-to-day operations are conducted by the Executive Committee elected by the Council of National Directors for a two year term.

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