



NEWS

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Civil Air Patrol to bestow highest honor on Senator Harkin as members make annual trek to Capitol Hill

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – Before Civil Air Patrol’s Command Council convenes in Washington, D.C., this week for its annual winter meeting, it will gather on Capitol Hill for Legislative Day on Feb. 27 to brief Congress on the U.S. Air Force auxiliary’s primary missions of emergency services, aerospace education and cadet programs. Legislative Day will also feature induction of U.S. Senator Tom Harkin into CAP’s Hall of Honor.

Civil Air Patrol will thank Harkin for his 30 years of CAP service during a congressional reception in the Senate’s Russell Office Building. Harkin – a former Navy fighter pilot who commands CAP’s Congressional Squadron – will become the 34th person inducted into the Hall of Honor in CAP’s 72-year history, and only the second member of Congress, joining former New York Congressman and fellow CAP Col. Lester Wolff, who was inducted in 1985.

“This Legislative Day is extra special,” said CAP National Commander Maj. Gen. Chuck Carr. “In addition to the opportunity to tell CAP’s stories of service, sacrifice and love of country to our representatives and senators, we will also pay tribute to Sen. Harkin, who has been a staunch supporter of CAP’s missions for America.”

Soon after joining Civil Air Patrol in 1984, Harkin worked on the first full appropriations bill for CAP and has touted CAP’s volunteer missions and programs to his Senate and House colleagues ever since. To do this he often reached across the aisle to work with his Republican colleagues on CAP issues and missions vital to the nation and thousands of communities. He has also repeatedly promoted the cost effectiveness of CAP with government agencies such as the Air Force and Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Harkin has been a rated CAP mission pilot and flown a number of training and actual missions, including counterdrug flights off the southern tip of Florida. He also has served as an adviser to CAP’s national commanders, providing valuable insight on how CAP can best address some of its budget and operational challenges. Most recently, he introduced Congressional Gold Medal legislation honoring the unusual service of CAP’s founding members during World War II, which quickly passed the Senate under unanimous consent and with 83 cosponsors.

CAP officers and cadets visiting Capitol Hill for Legislative Day will urge support for H.R. 755, the companion House bill to honor founding members of CAP with a Congressional Gold Medal for their volunteer service in conducting combat operations and other emergency missions during World War II.

CAP's Command Council will follow Legislative Day with its annual winter meeting, scheduled for Feb. 28 and March 1 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Washington.

The Command Council consists of CAP's national commander, national vice commander, chief of staff, CAP's eight region commanders and its 52 wing commanders representing the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Its members serve as advisers to the national commander.

Civil Air Patrol, the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, is a nonprofit organization with 60,000 members nationwide, operating a fleet of 550 aircraft. CAP, in its Air Force auxiliary role, performs about 85 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCR with saving an average of 71 lives annually. Its volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. The members play a leading role in aerospace education and serve as mentors to more than 25,000 young people currently participating in the CAP cadet programs. CAP received the World Peace Prize in 2011 and has been performing missions for America for 72 years. CAP also participates in Wreaths Across America, an initiative to remember, honor and teach about the sacrifices of U.S. military veterans. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com or www.capvolunteernow.com for more information.

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