

Western Governors' Association

Job Description

Policy Advisor

The Western Governors' Association (WGA) is a non-governmental association established in 1984 to represent the Governors of the 22 westernmost states and territories. The association is an instrument of the Governors for bipartisan policy development, information exchange, and collective action on issues of critical importance to the western United States. For more information on WGA, please visit www.westgov.org.

Position

The Policy Advisor is responsible for managing a portfolio of issues to advance bipartisan Governors' policy. The position typically involves working constructively with a bipartisan group of Governors and their staff, direct engagement with federal lawmakers and their staff, senior agency personnel, and key stakeholders to advocate for legislation, regulation, and public policy. Key to the success of the position is building and maintaining relationships with government representatives and other stakeholders. The Policy Advisor is a valued member of a dynamic policy team that reports to the WGA Policy Director.

Key Responsibilities

Legislative and Regulatory Monitoring and Analysis: continuously track and analyze proposed legislation, regulatory changes, and appropriations processes to assess their effect on the organization. Conduct research and analyses of federal legislation and regulatory actions and provide reporting and strategic recommendations to Governors' staff.

Policy Development and Advocacy: work with Governors' staff on bipartisan policy through the development of WGA policy resolutions. Implement advocacy strategies to influence federal legislation and executive branch action that align with Governors' policy.

Government Engagement and Coalition Building: build and maintain strong relationships with congressional staff, federal agency officials, and administration personnel. Work with allied associations and other stakeholders to build advocacy coalitions that amplify influence and implement Governors' policy.

Communication and Messaging: draft official correspondence, testimony, regulatory comments, policy briefs, and other communications to convey the organization's positions to government officials and the public.

WGA Meetings: assist with developing content for WGA's annual and winter meetings.

Internal Coordination: work collaboratively with WGA staff to ensure alignment on policy priorities and messaging, and complete other duties as assigned.

Qualifications

Skills: a successful candidate must demonstrate an understanding of the federal statutory and regulatory frameworks and policy issues affecting the West. Prior experience with, and a practical understanding of, a broad range of western and federal (natural resources, environmental management, agriculture, rural development) policies is sought. Strong analytical, writing, and relationship-building skills are essential, including:

- Proven experience working on western and federal natural resources and environmental (air, water, waste) policies and the ability to work effectively on cross-cutting environmental, natural resource, agriculture, and rural development issues. In-depth knowledge of relevant policy issues and a demonstrated ability to analyze and communicate complex policy matters in clear, concise, and actionable ways is a critical asset.
- Clear understanding of federal legislative and regulatory processes. Demonstrable understanding of federalism and the interplay of state and federal authority in the development and management of federal policy.
- Keen political acumen and sound political judgment are requisite traits for a successful candidate to handle complex and sensitive issues that may arise during political interactions.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and stakeholders to build bipartisan consensus with diverse arrays of interests on difficult policy issues. A successful candidate will have strong organizational, interpersonal, and listening skills and a proven ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with government officials, policymakers, and stakeholders.
- Organizational skills to manage multiple tasks, projects, and deadlines simultaneously while maintaining attention to detail.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to craft persuasive messaging in support of the Governors' priorities. This includes formal correspondence and testimony to the U.S. Congress and regulatory comments to various executive branch agencies.

Education: a bachelor's degree in political science, public policy, or experience in a field of natural resources management or economic development.

Experience: two to four years of work experience. Past work within the federal government, congressional offices, a state agency, or non-governmental or industry associations is preferred.

Compensation and Benefits

The position is full-time and located in Denver, Colorado. The association currently operates on a hybrid work schedule with three days per week in the office. Given the collaborative nature of the position, we are only considering candidates who are in or willing to relocate to the Denver area. There will be an occasional need to work additional days in the office with limited advance notice. The position also requires travel to Washington, DC, and locations in western states on a regular basis.

WGA is an equal opportunity employer and offers a comprehensive benefits package, including health insurance, paid time off, and participation in WGA's retirement plan. The salary range for this position is \$65,000-\$80,000 annually. Actual compensation within the range will be dependent upon the individual's experience, skills, and qualifications.

Application Requirements

Qualified candidates should submit an application package including: a cover letter, a resume, and one writing sample that demonstrates writing and research competencies. All application materials should be sent to Troy Timmons, WGA policy director, at ttimmons@westgov.org. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.