Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs

Remote position within commutable distance to Washington, DC

Position Overview

NELP seeks a Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs to lead and coordinate the organization's federal policy advocacy strategy and advance a proactive agenda for improving the lives of the nation's workers. The Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs will identify federal policy opportunities, develop and lead legislative and administrative campaigns, and help translate NELP's policy priorities into concrete federal policy outcomes. The role requires strong knowledge of labor and workforce issues, strong knowledge of the federal policymaking process, sound political judgment, and the ability to build effective relationships with congressional offices, federal agencies, national partners, and other key stakeholders.

The Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs reports to the Vice President of Advocacy & Partnerships and works closely with NELP's Advocacy & Partnerships and Policy teams to ensure that federal policy strategy is informed by NELP's expertise, connected to state and local work where appropriate, and aligned with the organization's strategic priorities. The Senior Director will also coordinate across functional teams to develop and advance federal policy initiatives and campaigns.

NELP's three priority areas guide this work:

- Worker Transitions — Support workers through economic change and industry transitions.
- Wages & Affordability — Raise wages and make essentials affordable for all workers.
- Worker-First Enforcement & Protections — Strengthen enforcement and ensure worker-first protections.

About the National Employment Law Project

Founded in 1969, the nonprofit National Employment Law Project (NELP) is a leading advocacy organization with the mission to build a just and inclusive economy where all workers have expansive rights and thrive in good jobs. Together with local, state, and national partners, NELP advances its mission through transformative legal and policy solutions, research, capacity building, and communications. Our victories over the last decade have impacted the lives of an estimated 100 million workers and their families. We lead and collaborate in fights for higher pay and just benefits, secure and safe jobs, and support at each stage in a worker's life. For more information, explore our website: www.nelp.org

What You Will Do

Federal Policy Strategy & Campaign Execution

- Lead the development and advancement of a proactive federal legislative and administrative policy agenda aligned with NELP's mission and three strategic priorities, translating that agenda into legislative and regulatory proposals and contributing to bill language, agency comments, policy briefs, testimony, sign-on letters, and other advocacy materials.
- Identify emerging federal policy opportunities, assess political and policy landscapes, and recommend strategic approaches to advance worker-centered policy solutions.

- Develop, lead, and coordinate federal policy campaigns and initiatives, working with the Vice President of Advocacy & Partnerships and relevant NELP teams to establish goals, strategies, timelines, and measures of progress.
- Conduct political and power analyses to identify decision makers, champions, opposition, leverage points, risks, and viable pathways to federal policy change.
- Track federal legislative, regulatory, and administrative developments; assess their implications for workers and NELP's priorities; and recommend organizational responses.
- Contribute to NELP's policy development processes and provide expert analysis on federal legislative, regulatory, and administrative matters.
- Provide strategic guidance and technical policy expertise to NELP colleagues and external partners working to advance federal policy priorities.

Congressional & Executive Branch Engagement

- Build and maintain relationships with members of Congress, congressional committee staff, and federal agencies to advance NELP's federal policy priorities.
- Develop and execute federal engagement strategies, including briefings, meetings, hearings, legislative outreach, lobby days, and other advocacy activities.
- Prepare NELP staff, partners, and other stakeholders for congressional and federal agency engagement, including hearings, briefings, testimony, and meetings.
- Represent NELP in meetings with policymakers, federal officials, and other decision makers, and serve as a spokesperson on federal policy matters as appropriate.

Lobbying & Compliance Management

- Establish and maintain processes for tracking and reviewing staff lobbying hours and activities; audit submissions for accuracy and completeness; and ensure required reports are prepared and submitted by applicable statutory deadlines.
- Guide and support staff through applicable lobbyist registration processes, including determining when registration is required and maintaining accurate, up-to-date registration records.
- Oversee organizational lobbying compliance to ensure NELP adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local lobbying laws and regulations.

Partner Engagement & Coalition Building

- Build and sustain relationships with national labor unions, worker organizations, policy and advocacy organizations, and other partners working to advance NELP's federal priorities.
- Convene and participate in national coalitions and partnerships to develop shared federal policy strategies, coordinate advocacy, and build support for policy change.
- Represent NELP in external convenings, coalition meetings, and stakeholder forums, and communicate NELP's policy positions and priorities effectively.

Organizational Leadership & Coordination

- Work in close partnership with the Vice Presidents of Advocacy & Partnerships and Policy, and in coordination with NELP's Policy team, to ensure that federal advocacy priorities are strategically aligned and effectively coordinated.
- Collaborate with research, legal, and impact & narrative strategy colleagues to develop integrated strategies and materials that advance federal policy campaigns.
- Coordinate, as appropriate, with the NELP Action Fund and other affiliated advocacy entities to support aligned federal advocacy and electoral or legislative strategies, consistent with applicable legal and lobbying requirements.

- Model NELP's values and foster a collaborative, inclusive approach to working across teams and with external partners.

Team Leadership & Development

- Directly supervise and mentor direct report(s), providing regular coaching, mentorship, and accountability to support high-quality work and professional growth.
- Oversee the recruitment and development of staff to ensure the team has the necessary skills and expertise to meet our strategic goals, providing professional development opportunities and supporting continuous learning and growth.
- For direct reports, assign and manage work, ensuring staff have clarity on priorities, timelines, and expectations.
- Lead staffing decisions for your team and ensure ongoing professional development and performance evaluation of staff.
- Contribute to departmental planning, budget management, and resource allocation across campaigns.
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive team culture that reflects NELP's organizational values and commitment to racial equity.

Who You Are

- You have a minimum of 7–10 years of progressively responsible experience in federal policy advocacy, legislative or regulatory strategy, or campaigns focused on labor, employment, economic security, or workers' rights.
- You have 3+ years of supervisory experience and are skilled in developing, coaching, and empowering staff.
- You have a strong understanding of the federal policymaking process, including congressional legislative processes, federal agency rulemaking, and administrative advocacy.
- You have professional experience working on Capitol Hill or at the U.S. Department of Labor.
- You bring strong knowledge of federal labor and workforce policy issues.
- You have demonstrated success in developing and advancing federal policy strategies, campaigns, or legislative and regulatory initiatives.
- You are a registered lobbyist or willing to register as a lobbyist.
- You have experience building and maintaining effective relationships with congressional offices, federal agencies, national advocacy organizations, labor unions, and other policy stakeholders.
- You are a strategic thinker with strong political judgment and the ability to assess complex policy and political environments, identify opportunities, and adapt strategies as conditions change.
- You can translate complex policy and legal issues into clear recommendations, advocacy strategies, and persuasive written and verbal communications.
- You have experience working in coalitions and coordinating with diverse partners while navigating differing perspectives, priorities, and organizational interests.
- You are an effective manager who sets clear expectations, gives direct and constructive feedback, and creates a team environment where staff can do their best work.
- You are highly organized and able to manage multiple priorities, projects, and deadlines while maintaining attention to detail and follow-through.
- You work effectively in a matrixed, collaborative environment and build strong working relationships across policy, research, legal, communications, and advocacy functions.
- You bring a deep commitment to economic and racial justice and a structural understanding of race, power, and inequality to your policy work.

- You are intellectually curious, collaborative, and open to feedback, and you model a culture of rigor, learning, and continuous improvement.
- You operate with integrity, humility, flexibility, and commitment to NELP's mission and values.
- Candidates must be eligible and authorized to work in the United States.

Start Date, Location, Compensation and Benefits:

This full-time exempt position is remote, but must be in a commutable distance to Washington, DC. as the role requires regular in-person engagement on Capitol Hill and with federal agencies and coalition partners. This position will require some travel, including for NELP internal meetings or conferences. The start date will be as soon as possible.

The annual salary range for the Senior Director of Federal Government Affairs is $145-155K.

Compensation at NELP includes an excellent comprehensive benefits package, including full coverage of family health insurance, a medical reimbursement plan, generous vacation and sick leave, plus additional organization-wide holidays, significant contribution from employer to a retirement plan (both an unelected contribution and employer match); and for qualifying participants, up to 26 weeks paid parental leave, 12 weeks paid medical leave, 6 weeks of paid family medical caregiving leave, a sabbatical leave program, childcare/eldercare reimbursement assistance, and student loan repayment assistance. Staff at NELP are members of Local 2320, UAW, excluding, however, management and certain other categories. This position is in management.

NELP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and an equal opportunity, fair chance employer, committed to building a culture of belonging and inclusion where team members can thrive. All qualified applicants will be considered for employment without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military status, prior record of arrest or conviction, citizenship status, current employment status, or caregiver status.