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NFDA Members Showed Up for the Funeral Service Profession and Stood Up for Those They Serve.

Funeral professionals advocate for families, honor the deceased and advance funeral service at NFDA's 2026 Advocacy Summit.

Brookfield, Wis. – The National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) once again demonstrated why it is the leading voice of funeral service in the United States and around the world, bringing an unmatched show of strength, credibility and purpose to Washington, D.C., for the 2026 Advocacy Summit.

“Funeral service professionals have a powerful story to tell, and our members brought that story directly to Capitol Hill in a meaningful way,” said NFDA President Dan Ford, CFSP, CCSP.

“They’re not speaking in generalities. They’re sharing real experiences from the families and communities they serve every day and that really resonated with lawmakers. What truly sets NFDA apart is that our advocacy doesn’t stop when the Summit ends. Because we have a full-time lobbyist in Washington, D.C., we are advancing the profession’s priorities every day. This event amplifies that work in a highly visible and impactful way.”



Elevating the Voice of Funeral Service

During their meetings with members of Congress and their staff, NFDA members advocated for key legislative priorities affecting funeral homes, grieving families and communities nationwide, including:

- [**Consensual Donation and Research Integrity Act \(S.1270 / H.R.2589\)**](#) – NFDA members confronted the reality of unethical body brokers by demanding dignity, transparency and accountability because the deceased deserve respect, not exploitation.
- [**Funeral Coverage Act \(H.R. 2436\)**](#) – Association members stood up for grieving families by supporting legislation that expands the use of tax-free HSA funds to help pay for funeral and burial expenses.
- [**Death Tax Repeal Act \(S.587 / H.R.1301\)**](#) – NFDA fought for tax reform that will protect family-owned funeral businesses so they can remain pillars of their communities and continue caring for families with compassion and stability.
- [**Multiple bills to improve funeral and burial benefits for veterans**](#) – NFDA members honored those who served by advocating for veterans’ funerals and burial benefits that reflect our nation’s gratitude.
- [**No IRIS Act \(S.623 / H.R.1415\)**](#) – NFDA pushed for sound science to be used by the EPA as the assess formaldehyde.

More than 160 NFDA members representing 36 states and Washington, D.C., conducted 205 meetings with federal lawmakers, delivering a clear message: funeral service is essential, grieving families must be protected and the funeral profession will be heard. Meetings took place across both chambers of Congress, including 69 Senate meetings and 136 House meetings, ensuring broad engagement with lawmakers and their staff on issues impacting funeral service and the families they serve. This level of access and engagement reflects NFDA's leadership in advocacy. NFDA is the only national funeral service association with a full-time lobbyist in Washington, D.C., ensuring the profession maintains a consistent, credible voice where policy decisions are made.

With comprehensive issue briefings, talking points and on-the-ground support from NFDA staff, participants were well-prepared to engage in substantive, solutions-focused conversations with policymakers.

"One of the most effective ways to educate policymakers is by connecting them directly with the professionals doing the work," said Lesley Witter, NFDA senior vice president of advocacy and federal lobbyist. "Our members bring credibility, compassion and firsthand insight to every conversation. NFDA's strength is our consistent presence in Washington. We are actively engaged year-round in the legislative and regulatory process, building relationships and ensuring funeral service is understood and making sure the voice of funeral service is heard where decisions are made. That consistency drives real results."

More Than Meetings, a Lasting Impact

Beyond the numbers, the Advocacy Summit created meaningful opportunities for funeral service professionals to build relationships with elected officials and serve as trusted resources on issues affecting their communities. For many attendees, the experience was both impactful and inspiring.

"It's a little overwhelming at first, but [NFDA] give[s] you all the tools you need to succeed," said Kelly Walker of Anderson's Tribute Center in Hood River, Oregon. "It makes you feel like your voice is important. It's been an empowering experience that I would recommend to anybody."

"This is how our nation works – how we make change, how we advocate for ourselves," said Logan Bryant of Smith Funeral & Cremation Service in Maryville, Tennessee. "It's an incredible chance to participate in our nation's democracy and represent the families we serve."

A Year-Round Commitment to Advocacy

While the Advocacy Summit is a cornerstone event, NFDA's work in Washington, D.C., continues every day. With a dedicated full-time lobbyist, NFDA ensures that funeral service remains visible, respected and well-represented at the federal level.

At a time when legislative and regulatory decisions increasingly impact small businesses and the families they serve, that sustained presence is critical.

Looking Ahead

NFDA will continue to build on the momentum generated at this year's Summit, strengthening relationships with policymakers and advancing priorities that support funeral service professionals and the grieving families they serve nationwide.

The 2027 NFDA Advocacy Summit will take place April 28 through 30, 2027, at The Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., and is open to any member who wants to make a difference in their profession and for the families they serve.

NFDA is the world's leading and largest funeral service association, serving 20,000 individual members who represent nearly 11,000 funeral homes in the United States and 49 countries around the world. NFDA is the trusted leader, beacon for ethics and the strongest advocate for the profession. NFDA is the association of choice because it offers funeral professionals comprehensive educational resources, tools to manage successful businesses, guidance to become pillars in their communities and the expertise to foster future generations of funeral professionals. NFDA is headquartered in Brookfield, Wis., and has an office in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit [NFDA.org](https://www.nfda.org).

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Members of the Media: A selection of photos from the 2026 NFDA Advocacy Summit, including the above photo, can be downloaded here: <https://filecloud.nfda.org/url/kexdemqizgyag7qb>.