

MARYLAND GIRL SCOUT LEGISLATIVE PATCH PACKET

Your Government In Action



Girl Scouts of Central Maryland
4806 Seton Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215
410-358-9711
www.gscm.org

MARYLAND GIRL SCOUT LEGISLATIVE PATCH PACKET

This patch project is designed to help girls become familiar with the Maryland General Assembly and its legislative process. Girl Scouts 11 years of age and older are encouraged to participate and enjoy learning how this aspect of government works.

The Maryland Legislative Patch Project consists of seven (7) activities. To receive the patch, each girl is required to complete at least four (4) requirements, including the two starred (*) activities.

Under each requirement, there is an assignment. Complete the assignment (on the back of the form or on another sheet of paper.) for each of the requirements you chose to do. Write down your explanation for each answer and send it with the form in the back to earn the patch.

Girls who complete the patch requirements may purchase the patch directly from the GSCM Store. Please send the answers to each of the completed requirements and the attached form to: Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, Program Department, 4806 Seton Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215

Requirements:

1. LEGISLATIVE LINGO!

Legislators and other politicians have their own lingo. Below are a few of the key words used. Define the following words -

- amendment
- bill
- constituency
- conference committee
- first reading
- guarantee date
- grassroots organization
- joint resolution
- legislature
- lobby
- roll call
- standing committee
- veto

Assignment: write down 8 of the 13 definitions and one example of how it might be used in daily legislation.

2. THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW!

Have you ever found yourself saying this? You are a member of the legislature in Maryland. You are at a constituency meeting. One of your constituents proposed a bill that you feel is worthy of becoming a law. Draw a diagram to show the process that a bill would need to pass through in Maryland to become law. Begin from the bill's drafting and follow through to its approval by the Governor. Identify the potential challenges along the way. What obstacles may you face?

Assignment: Answer the questions above and include the diagram of how a bill becomes a law.

****3. WHO'S WHO IN THE LEGISLATURE?**

In Maryland, what are the elective positions in the legislature? Who represents your political district? On which committee(s) does he or she serve? Is this a Standing Committee? Check your representative's position on social and/or educational issues that are important to you.

Assignment: Answer the questions above. Write a paragraph about what your legislator stands for.

****4. GET YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

Learn about being an advocate. Girl Scouts of the USA is encouraging girls to speak out for what they believe in. read about what they have to say:

http://www.girlscouts.org/for_adults/leader_magazine/2006_summer/advocacy.asp

Talk with a legislator that is an advocate about a certain subject that interests you. Find out how you can make a difference: write a letter of support, rally your friends and girls from your troop to talk to their legislators about something they believe in.

Assignment: Submit your letter of support.

5. WOMEN IN THE LEGISLATURE

"There will never be complete equality until women themselves help to make the laws and elect lawmakers." – Susan B. Anthony

Wanted – More Women in Politics

Women comprise 52% of the population but make up only 15.3% of elected officials in the United States Congress, and only 22.8% in all state legislatures combined (as of 2/08 from GSUSA.)

Interview a female member of the legislature personally, or through one of her staff members. You may also conduct an interview by telephone or submit your questions in a letter. Develop a biographical sketch of your legislator. Find out if she was a Girl Scout. If so, how did her Girl Scout experience help prepare her as a politician? Does she chair a committee? Which one? What motivates her most as a legislator?

After the Interview:

- Record accurately with whom you have interviewed, the date of the meetings, what was discussed, and the names of additional contacts.
- Write a thank you note after each interview. Express your appreciation for the assistance you received and mention one or two specifically helpful points.
- Be sure to keep copies of all correspondence.

OR

Develop your own political campaign to become a member of the state legislature. What skills are you acquiring in Girl Scouts that will help prepare you for your position. Will participation in grassroots organizations be a hindrance or help?

Assignment: Write about your experience with a woman in legislature. What did you learn? Submit your answer.

6. BOOK OF LAWS!

Visit your library. Browse through the Annotated Code of Maryland. The annotated codes of Maryland can also be found on the web at .

<http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/AnnotIndex.htm>

Use the search feature on the page to access the codes. Check the laws written prior to 1960. In your opinion, are any of these laws obsolete? If you answered yes, select one of the obsolete laws and E-mail a letter to your legislator, stating your opinion and reasons why the law should be repealed or amended.

Assignment: Submit your proposition that you wrote to your legislator about a law and your opinions.

7. PREPARE AND SHARE

Prepare a presentation to be shared with students in your class or members of your Girl Scout troop or group. Your presentation should include information from your visit to the legislature and/or knowledge acquired while participating in the patch project.

Assignment: Create a presentation and share it with a group. Send an outline of topics you plan to handle or an agenda that you will use at the event. Send any photos or other paper work from the presentation.

Resources:

1. Obtain Legislative Lingo, The Library and Information Services Division of the Department of Legislative Reference, General Assembly of Maryland publication from the Volunteer Resource Center at the Council Service Center -

OR

Call (410)841-3810 (Baltimore area)

Other areas 1-800-492-7122

To learn more:

- GSUSA publication – LEARNING ABOUT GOVERNMENT - Partnership for Trust in Government – Activities for Cadette and Senior Girl Scouts available from the Girl Scout store.
- Maryland Government. The Electronic Capital – <http://maryland.gov/portal/server.pt?>
- Living the Legacy: The Women’s Rights Movement 1848-1999 – www.legacy98.org
- National Organization for Women – www.now.org
- Susan B. Anthony University Center – www.rochester.edu/SBA/index.html
- Ms. Foundation for Women – www.ms.foundation.org
- Vote Smart – www.vote-smart.org

MARYLAND GIRL SCOUT LEGISLATIVE PATCH PACKET FORM

Please complete and return to: Girl Scouts of Central Maryland, 4806 Seton Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215, Attention: Teen Program

Please also attach 1 assignment from each of the 4 requirements completed in the patch packet.

Girl's Name: _____ Troop # _____ Telephone No. _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ Email Address: _____

Date completed: _____

Age level (check): Junior Cadette Senior

Patches:

Patches are available at the council store.

Please contact store for prices and information: 410-358-9711, ext 202

We would like to hear from you!

Did you complete this packet in Annapolis and interact with legislators there? If so, who did you talk to?

Name two things you learned about Maryland legislation?

Are you interested in a career in legislation? If so, why?

If you could learn more about one topic discussed in this packet, what would it be?

Do you have any comments or questions?