



THE VOICE



OVERVIEW

The first quarter of 2022 took an unexpected and tragic turn with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The team at [Commonwealth Strategic Partners](#) (CSP) has the Ukrainian people in our thoughts and we hope for a quick and peaceful end to Russian aggression before more lives are lost.

Naturally, the invasion of Ukraine took center stage in Congress. Additionally, the announced retirement of Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer and efforts to pass the Omnibus appropriations bill for FY2022 consumed the vast majority of the remaining legislative oxygen this quarter.

CSP Co-founders and Managing Partners George McElwee and Keith Pemrick were formally congratulated by Governor Tom Wolf of Pennsylvania for their recognition among [The Hill's Top Lobbyists 2021](#). CSP represents the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in Washington, D.C. In his letter, Governor Wolf praised McElwee and Pemrick for "delivering results for the commonwealth" and described CSP as "integral" to the administration's efforts in Washington.

The most recent annual [Gallup poll](#) found that lobbyists are the profession that Americans trust the least. To help counter that negative perception, McElwee and Pemrick penned a [response](#) detailing their advocacy on behalf of critical issues such as aviation safety, cybersecurity, and affordable housing. ●

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022

On March 15, President Biden signed [H.R. 2471](#), the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022, commonly known as the Omnibus. This massive spending package included several provisions of interest to CSP and its clients, the most significant of which was the reauthorization of the [EB-5 Regional Center program](#). The regional center program, which had previously expired in June 2021, is a critical initiative that enables foreign investors to obtain immigration visas if they invest in economic development projects in the country. Since the program expired, CSP and client [Invest in the USA](#) (IIUSA) have worked tirelessly to reauthorize it. The Omnibus includes a five-year reauthorization of the program, which will ensure stability in current EB-5 projects, enable investors to continue to obtain visas, and encourage future projects and investments across the country.

Safe Aircraft Maintenance Standards Act

On March 31, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and a bipartisan list of thirteen cosponsors reintroduced the Safe Aircraft Maintenance Standards Act. The bill, which was [previously introduced](#) in the 116th Congress, is a major priority for client the [Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association](#) (AMFA). The bill would apply the same safety standards to foreign aviation repair stations that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) applies to domestic stations, which would improve the safety and quality of maintenance of aircraft used in the U.S. The bill has been a major priority for AMFA and CSP and its reintroduction in the 117th Congress is the result of extensive conversations with legislators, the House Aviation Subcommittee, and staff. Please read AMFA's [press release](#) in support of the bill.



PALA Executive Director Margie Zelenak and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) pose with Zelenak's 2022 Champion of Seniors Award.

Pennsylvania Assisted Living Association

In March, CSP hosted client the [Pennsylvania Assisted Living Association](#) (PALA) in Washington, D.C. to conduct a series of virtual and in-person meetings with several members of the Pennsylvania congressional delegation. The purpose of the meetings was to express support for, and request cosponsorship of, [H.R. 6530](#), the Safeguarding Elderly Needs for Infrastructure and Occupational Resources (SENIOR) Act, which would help nursing and personal care homes in Pennsylvania and around the country endure the additional financial burdens incited by the ongoing pandemic. Additionally, PALA





FUNDRAISING

- In March, Keith Pemrick hosted an in-person fundraiser for Representative Susan Wild (D-PA).
- In March, George McElwee, Keith Pemrick, and Katie Hazlett attended in-person fundraisers for Representatives Rick Larsen (D-WA), Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA), Mike Simpson (R-ID), and Greg Stanton (D-AZ) and the [Republican Governance Group \(RG2\) PAC](#).

EVENTS

- In February, Wesley Trimble attended the [Southeast Regional CISO Policy Roundtable](#) hosted by client the [National Technology Security Coalition](#) (NTSC) in Atlanta.
- In March, Keith Pemrick attended a retreat hosted by the [Blue Dog Coalition](#) in New Orleans. ●

Executive Director Margie Zelenak received recognition as one of ten 2022 Champion of Seniors Award recipients for her tireless advocacy on behalf of Pennsylvania’s seniors.

HELPER Act

Throughout the first quarter, CSP and client Churchill Mortgage Corporation/Heroes First Home Loans continued their advocacy of [H.R. 3172](#) and [S. 2981](#), the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act. The bipartisan legislation, which would empower the Federal Housing Authority to eliminate down payment and monthly mortgage insurance requirements for first responders and schoolteachers, continues to garner significant support. In this quarter alone, CSP facilitated over 50 meetings with congressional staff as well as personal meetings with Senators Bill Hagerty (R-TN) and Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS). CSP also secured over 40 new endorsements from unions, professional associations, cities, sheriffs, and other interested parties.

City of Aberdeen, Maryland

Additionally, throughout the first quarter, CSP facilitated meetings between client the City of Aberdeen, Maryland and the offices of Senators Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Representatives Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD) and Andy Harris (R-MD). Municipal officials participated in Sen. Van Hollen’s information session regarding community project funding. CSP continues to work with Aberdeen to craft appropriations requests for its [Amtrak train station improvement project](#). Aberdeen awaits more information on the outcome of their Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI) grant application and is currently preparing a submission for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant.



Members of Churchill Mortgage/Heroes First meet with Sen. Hyde-Smith. Left to right: T.J. O'Brien, Churchill Mortgage; Jim McQuaig, Churchill Mortgage; Sen. Hyde-Smith; and Sam Royer, Heroes First.



UPCOMING EVENTS

In April, CSP will attend the [2022 IIUSA EB-5 Industry Forum](#) in Orlando. CSP’s Katie Hazlett, Director, Government Affairs will serve on a panel regarding next steps after the reauthorization of the EB-5 Regional Center program. In May, CSP will attend the NTSC’s [Northeast Regional CISO Policy Roundtable](#) in New York.



NEW CLIENTS

In March, CSP welcomed new client [RAVN](#). RAVN is a technology startup focused on designing augmented reality systems for the Special Operations Forces community. CSP began representing RAVN in Washington, D.C. in March 2022.



CONCLUSION

With the winter months concluded, CSP looks forward to a busy and fruitful spring season working to pass critical legislation and advocate for our clients’ priorities.



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