
A Look at the DAR Policy on Political Non-Affiliation

Posted on [April 23, 2011](#) by [DAR President General](#)

It must be that time of year again! While I'm not sure political campaigning ever *stops*, the run-up to the 2012 presidential election has begun, and with it, unfortunately, I have received some letters from members concerned that the fractious political climate has begun to seep into DAR events and activities.

As you know, the DAR is a nonpolitical organization – you have surely heard this many times. I want to explain what this policy means for us, how to apply it and why we choose it. I hope this information will provide you with guidance as you plan your programs and attend events. First of all, here is our policy on political non-affiliation, taken directly from the DAR Handbook:

The NSDAR is nonpolitical. The National Society maintains no lobby at national, state, or local government levels, contributes to no political party nor to candidates in any way, initiates no legislation and does not have a legislative chairman. As an organization we are interested in preserving and maintaining our Constitutional Republic and we constantly urge our members, as good American citizens, to be informed and vote.

Each member, Chapter and State Society is cautioned to refrain from any activity performed in the name of the DAR which might be construed as political.

What does this mean? Well, first, let me repeat that it is so important that each of you, as citizens, are engaged in the political process. This policy is absolutely not meant to take that right away from you. However, it is also important that you remain vigilant in preserving the National Society's neutrality and informing the public that DAR is nonpolitical.

This certainly means avoiding political discussions and campaigning at chapter meetings and other DAR events. Also, take caution when you are discussing politics, especially if you speak to media or write letters to the editor. Avoid mentioning your DAR connection in a way that might make it seem as if you are a spokesperson for our organization or otherwise presenting "the DAR point of view."

So why are we so careful to avoid political affiliation? First of all, political discussions and activities may be construed as lobbying or campaigning, which, for our class of 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, is illegal. Failure to adhere to the IRS's guidelines in this matter could result in the loss of our tax-exempt status, which would be ruinous. You can read more about this on the [Relations with the IRS](#) page of the Members' Website, or on [the website of the IRS](#).

Perhaps more importantly, however, invoking the authority of the DAR or using DAR time to take stands on divisive political issues creates a contentious environment that is uncomfortable and unwelcoming to many,

including both longtime and prospective members. One of the great strengths of the DAR is that we allow women of diverse backgrounds and beliefs to come together in support of our timeless objectives of historic preservation, education and patriotism. It is a rare opportunity these days to find a positive, uplifting way to work in support of these objectives, and it is up to each of us to ensure that the DAR, at all levels, maintains that positivity.

I hope all of you will remember these guidelines, and follow not just the letter but the inclusive spirit of this Handbook policy. Think of the good work you do with DAR as a break – I find it a most welcome relief! – from political controversy.

Like Be the first to like this post.

This entry was posted in [Chapters](#), [Leadership](#), [Membership](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).

Theme: Twenty Ten Blog at WordPress.com.