



2023 National George Texido Legislative Officer of the Year

Lt. Col. Mark Kempton, California Wing

Civil Air Patrol volunteer Lt. Col. Mark Kempton led and managed the wing's government relations staff consisting of eight group government relations advisors and group commanders to provide local, state, and federal relations support for a state with operational boundaries comprising an area of over 155,779 square miles of land, 7916 square miles of waterways, and 40 million people. The entirety of which provide substantial opportunities, both realized and yet-to-be realized, for CAP engagement. In his role leading the wing's National Legislative Day Hybrid Campaign efforts, Kempton orchestrated an effective virtual and in-person engagement strategy for California wing, including inaugural participation of the wing's diversity officer in Washington, D.C., achieving an unprecedented 100% recorded engagement rate with California's congressional delegation.

Kempton's experience as a legislative officer allowed him to better develop the wing's government relations office. He developed a legislative/congressional member introductory flight process, offering expedited flight experiences for new Civil Air Patrol (CAP) members from state and federal government. This initiative provided firsthand insight into CAP's operations and capabilities for new congressional squadron members. Kempton directed and led the wing's government relations staff in development of a squadron engagement strategy focused on enhancing local, state, and federal relationship opportunities for all 76 squadrons. He collaborated with wing's cadet programs leadership (senior and cadet) to initiate a cadet government relations apprenticeship program to actively engage cadets in wing's government relations outreach. He established a wing-level civic leadership academy (CLA) workgroup, including elements of the wing's senior- and cadet-level command structure. The workgroup significantly advanced development of a wing-level CLA to educate cadets about the California state government and the wing's role in the state while inspiring greater future participation by cadets in CAP's national Civic Leadership Academy. The inaugural wing CLA, which will run concurrent with wing's state legislative day, is now anticipated this year.

Kempton has had great success in continuing and strengthening the wing's relationship with the state government. He successfully arranged a resolution from the state legislature recognizing wing's continued service to California, further solidifying CAP's role and contributions within the state. He worked with the California office of emergency services (OES) to strategize on the revival of AB1071, a bill that would require the OES to biennially convene key personnel and agencies that have emergency management roles and responsibilities, including CAP, to participate in tabletop exercises in which the percipient's emergency preparedness plans are discussed and evaluated under various simulated catastrophic disaster situations. Kempton arranged meetings with the Lt. Governor's office, continuing to a marked increase in wing's engagement with state agencies/departments such as the OES, the department of water resources, the department of

transportation, and the California military department, increasing CAP's visibility and ensuring that OES budget line item (\$88,000) remained unaffected by the state's budget shortfall.

At the national level, Kempton worked with government relations staff from Missouri wing to provide input regarding potential new state government engagement opportunities. He supported fellow Pacific Region government relations advisors in discussions about how to protect state funding during periods of financial downturn. He provided support to national government relations staff in the form of input on proposed elements of the government relations specialty track.