

Summary of Advocacy Committee Meeting  
December 4, 2025 1 pm Eastern

1. Welcome and Introductions

Steve Arms, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance is recorded in Attachment 1 – Five voting members (quorum met) and two Associate members.

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent. Jerry will raise a concern about the newsletter in new business.

The October and November meeting minutes were distributed for review. The October minutes could not be approved last month due to a lack of quorum. A motion was made by Robin to approve the October 2, 2025, and November 6, 2025, minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Devon and unanimously approved.

2. Boston Conference

- The Thursday field trip to IDEXX is sold out.
- Current registration is slightly over 100 attendees and with exhibitors it is about 120. Our target for attendance is 200. A reminder email will be sent to encourage more registrations.
- The registration deadline and hotel cutoff is December 19, 2025. Registration fees increase after the deadline.
- Meeting room logistics were finalized with the hotel.
- A sidebar meeting will be planned with Christine Sotelo regarding California's application. (*Addition: This meeting was not held because Christine could not attend the conference.*)

3. 2027 Meetings

- January 2027: Long Beach, California
- August 2027: Chicago (O'Hare area)

4. Update/Continuation of Single PT Discussion from Last Meeting

There is no immediate committee action needed on this topic. Jerry may discuss with stakeholders at the Boston meeting.

5. EPA Region 9 Audit Questioned the Validity of the 2007 Cynthia Dougherty Memo

Ilona provided an update from the NELAP AC December 1<sup>st</sup> meeting where Christine Sotelo (California) provided a presentation discussing an issue raised during their EPA Region 9 evaluation. EPA Region 9 questioned aspects of audit practices, including reliance on the Cynthia Doherty memo.

Concerns may stem from how nonconformances are written (lack of specific method-based examples). The concern relates to whether methods are being adequately looked at during assessments. Assessment reports may not be referencing method issues adequately. The

discussion emphasized the importance of quality management systems (QMS) versus purely method-based audits. There needs to be both.

Other states have not experienced similar pushback, but the NELAP AC agrees that this needs to be addressed so there will not be issues in other regions. Christine will set-up a meeting with EPA Region 9 and include Kristen, Michella and Ilona. Michella Karapondo also offered support as needed if additional follow-up is needed.

The Committee agreed existing white papers and case studies supporting QMS should be shared with Christine so she can use them in her discussions with EPA Region 9. Jerry will compile this information.

6. Cannabis Regulators Association (CANN-RA.org)

No update.

7. Updated NELAP Vision and Outreach Plan

There is no update, but Jerry does plan to reach out to the new EPA Administrator.

8. New Business

- Newsletter

Though this was not on the agenda, Jerry wanted to discuss the distribution of the last newsletter. There were concerns that the sender address was an unfamiliar domain and it was “no-reply”. There were several people that commented that the email landed in their spam folders or that they didn’t receive it at all. Jerry will discuss alternative email delivery options with Jan to prevent this in the future.

9. Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be in Boston on January 14, 2026, at 2pm Eastern. The next teleconference will be February 5, 2026, at 1pm Eastern. An agenda and any needed documents will be provided prior to the meeting.

Steve adjourned the meeting at 1:57pm Eastern.

**Attachment 1 – Advocacy Roster**

	Name	Stakeholder Group	12/4/25- Quorum Present
1.	Steve Arms, Chair	Other	Present
2.	Mike Delaney	Other/ TNI Ambassador	Absent
3.	Zonetta English	Lab/TNI Ambassador	Absent
4	Marlene Moore	Other and NEFAP	Present
5.	Janice Willey	Federal	Absent
6.	Robin Cook	Lab	Present
7.	Sharon Mertens, Vice Chair	Lab	Absent
8.	William Lipps	Other	Present
9.	Devon Morgan	Lab/TNI Ambassador	Present
<b>Associate Members</b>			
	Sheela Agrawal	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Celeste Crowley	Other	Absent
	Paul Junio	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Silky Labie	Other	Absent
	Ashley Larssen	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Judy Morgan	TNI Ambassador	Absent
	Lily Sanchez	TNI Ambassador	Present
	Aurora Shields	Other	Absent
	Elizabeth Turner	Lab	Absent
<b>Staff</b>			
	Jerry Parr	TNI ED	Present
	Ilona Taunton	PA	Present

**Attachment 2 – Agenda, December 4, 2025**

1. Welcome and Roll Call
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of October and November Minutes
4. Conference Update – Boston, MA
5. 2027 Meeting Location Update
6. Update/Continuation of Single PT Discussion from Last Meeting
7. EPA Region 9 Audit Questioned the Validity of the 2007 Cynthia Dougherty Memo (see attached)
8. CANNRA Update
  - Status of Providing TNI Documents
9. NELAP Vision and Outreach Plan
  - Continue discussion of how TNI might assist EPA's drinking water lab certification efforts if Agency staffing/funding gets drastically reduced
10. Update on New Business, if any
11. Adjourn