Grassroots Advocacy in Home Care

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Welcome To Washington DC!
Lobbying
A Two Step Process

• Lobbying in Washington DC
  Fast pace
  Schedule ahead of visit to DC
  One of many…

• Lobbying at home
  Make a difference at home
  Easier access

How A Bill Becomes A Law

A person or a group comes up with a great idea for a bill.
How A Bill Becomes A Law

• They bring the idea to their legislator, who agrees to author a bill

How A Bill Becomes A Law

• A senator or representative introduces a bill

• It is sent to the clerk of the Senate or House, who gives it a number and title

• Next the bill is assigned to the appropriate committee(s)
How A Bill Becomes A Law

Committees review and vote on the bill.

- Committees specialize in different areas, such as foreign relations or agriculture, and are made up of small groups of senators or representatives.
- Depending on the topic of the bill, it will be scheduled to be heard in committees related to the issues within the bill.

How A Bill Becomes A Law

- The committee may reject the bill and “table” it, meaning it is never discussed again.
- Or it may hold hearings to listen to facts and opinions, make changes in the bill and cast votes.
- If most committee members vote in favor of the bill, it is sent back to the floor of the house of origin for more debate and a vote. If it passes it is referred to the other legislative branch.
How A Bill Becomes Law

• Bill continues same process with committee votes. If passed in committees it goes for a floor vote.

• If it passes the floor vote it goes back to its house of origin for a concurrence vote

How A Bill Becomes A Law

• House of Representatives bill goes to Senate

• Senate bill goes to House of Representatives
How A Bill Becomes A Law

- If it passes both houses, it goes to the president for his signature

If He Signs It, We Have A New Law
How A Bill Becomes A Law

• If the President vetoes it or just doesn’t sign the bill…. it dies…

How A Bill Becomes A Law

• Congress can try to overrule a veto. If both the Senate and the House pass the bill by a two-thirds majority, the President's veto is overruled and the bill becomes a law.

• This doesn’t happen frequently
Why Do We Care?

• Does what we do matter in this process?

Legislative Attack in California

• Domestic Worker Rights Bill
  ~required paid vacation, sick time,
  21 day severance pay

• Home Care Licensing
  ~required listing on public website with each aide’s name, address and employer
Counterattack

• Divided up the state into 4 areas

• Each took responsibility for a geographic area

Counterattack

• Identified a constituent for each legislator

• That person scheduled the district meeting
Counterattack

• Bring more providers to meeting
• Have 1 provider lead discussion and keep it on track
• Others give their own examples
• Where possible, offer reasonable alternatives
• Always offer to be a resource

Counterattack

• Polish up your presentation skills!!
• Important to read your audience and respond in kind
• Be very concise!
• When you ramble, they lose interest
Counterattack

• Schedule appointments with all legislators
• Focus on those legislators who will hear the bill in a committee
• Laser focus on the chairs of those committees

Communicate!

• Communicate! With each other so all efforts coordinated
• Communicate! With your state association and lobbyist to apprise them of your meetings
• Communicate! With your legislator and their staff after the meeting AND after they have voted your way
• Develop google group to communicate with each other
Preparing For Your Visit On The Hill

• Make the appointment
• Call at the local or Washington Office to set up your appointment
• BE PERSISTENT!
Preparing For Your Visit ON The Hill

• Know where you are going… what building is your visit in?

• Account for logistics traffic, security meeting place

• Professional attire

• Name tag or identification

• Away you go

Preparing For Your Visit On The Hill

Once you have your appointment set:

• Do your homework on your meeting
• Are you meeting directly with the Senator or Congressperson or a staff person
• Know the title of person you are meeting with find any background you can to better understand their role
• Bring your materials to leave with the office
• Bring business cards …always!
The Visit

• Remember on a busy day a Congressperson or Senator may have 30 to 40 “visits” with constituents in any given day…
• That is a lot of listening over and over again
• Your message
  • Simple, accurate and clear
  • Don’t get down into the weeds, especially on the first visit

The Three Step Visit Plan

• Always be professional, start by thanking staff or Member/ Senator for seeing you
• Identify something that you have in common remember you are both from the same home town!
• Offer a concise message, provide a positive slant and know the intention of your visit or “ASK”
The Visit

• Have reference materials that they can follow along with you and that you leave with the office
• Know what your intention is for your visit before you get in there
• Make your visit educational and help them to understand the issue

The Visit

• Do you have an “ASK”?
• If you are asking for their support
• Be clear on what you want
  • Their general support
  • A sign on to a letter
  • Something else they can do?
The Visit

• If you are asking to take an oppose position
  • Know what you are asking them for
  • Formal opposition
  • Soft opposition
  • May not give you an answer at the visit

The Visit

• Ending your visit
  • Be mindful of the time you have been scheduled
  • Remember there are so many others waiting for your seat!
  • Set a follow up if possible in the district
  • Get the business cards from all you talked to
  • Thank everyone for their time to meet with you
  • Leave your materials and business cards
The Visit
Always...Invite them to go on a home visit!

Once You Are Home
• Follow up sooner rather than later
• Write thank you note to each person you met with
• Mention something that was remarkable about your visit so they can connect you to the visit
• Put your business card in with your handwritten note
On Your Return Home
Review the Issues

• Current Issues such as:
  • ACA and employer insurance mandates
  • The companion exemption
  • Other local issues that you care about
  • Find what they are passionate about

Once You Are Home

• Call the district office and let them know you met with your Congress person or Senator
• Get on the mailing list for local events and fundraisers
• Set up a follow up meeting in the district (there are different staff at the local offices)
• Always be more than a “Cold Call”
Before Your Local Visit

Be Prepared

- Determine where you stand on the issues and before you know it you have your platform to discuss

- Learn the pros and cons on the subject, anticipate questions and be able to speak to them

Schedule the District Meeting Appointment

- Check your legislator’s schedule on his or her website and then use that information to help schedule an appointment

- Start with a meet and greet as a way to get to know him or her

- This goes a long way in really starting a relationship with your legislator rather than demanding things the first time you meet them
Lawmaker’s STAFF

- Find out what staffers are responsible for scheduling, get his or her contact information and develop a relationship with that person.

Treat it like a formal meeting

- Follow these steps:
  - Be professional. Dress for success.
  - Be on time. This is a formal meeting no matter how casual your district.
  - Be informed on the issues.
  - Bring business cards.
Give A Bit of History

• Offer a short historical perspective, explain how it became an issue and give an overview of your position and why it is important to constituents

• You have about 15 minutes to get the meeting in so be sure and leave time for discussion, questions and determining next steps

Follow Up

• You can provide a fact sheet or other easy to read relevant information. That could be a great way to reintroduce yourself
Plan your next steps

- Get a schedule of events your legislator is participating in or attending

- Many are free fundraisers. If they fit your interests, you could attend

- Note: information about your contributions monetary or not gets recorded and will become part of your public record

ASK AGAIN ABOUT A HOME VISIT
Schedule a Home Visit

- One other big piece of your strategy is to spend time educating the elected official and their designated staff
- One of the most effective ways to do that in home care is by taking the lawmaker on a home visit so they can witness home care in action

HOME Visit LOGISTICS

- Set this up with the chief of staff or district office
- Get written permission from your client or patient and a waiver if you plan on taking photos
On YOUR HOME Visit

• Set up for photos/ Media coverage

• Set time frame and topics

• Who will attend

• Directions and notifications to all who need them

After The Home Visit

• Follow up with the office

• Get photos to contact if they want them

• Send to media outlets

• Write on your blog
Develop an ongoing strategy

• Develop an ongoing strategy that involves maintaining intermittent contact with the legislator

• Start by sending a hand-written thank you note a few days after the meeting. Then, consider attending local events, meeting in the capitol offices and again in the district offices

At Home

• Be a friend and supporter
• Remember you are a Homecarien!
• Give them real life examples tell stories of constituents
• Support their other efforts
Start All Over Again!

• Set your appointment …

Questions?

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