



Advocacy Tips

Building Legislative Relationships

- The best time to build a relationship with your legislator is when you don't need something.
- Your legislators serve the same constituency you do; invite them to county events and help them get good publicity.
- Legislators must learn complicated information quickly - help them by providing details on important county issues *before* they must make a decision about it at the legislature.
- *Thank them* - often! Your appreciation goes a long way.

The most effective lobbyists are active, trustworthy local officials and constituents who understand local issues

Testifying Effectively

Committee hearings provide an opportunity to support your position on an issue publicly, in addition to your behind-the-scenes meetings with legislators. When testifying in a committee:

- Arrive early and sign in at an electronic kiosk outside the committee room.
- Be prepared - organize your thoughts beforehand.
- Just like in county hearings, direct your comments through the chairman to a member of the committee.

Senate Information - (602) 926-3559

House Information - (602) 926-4221

www.azleg.gov

Lobbying Effectively

- Keep it simple and be brief.
- Be specific - identify your subject matter clearly and concisely, including the bill number, and let your legislator know your position on the legislation.
- Focus on the impact to your constituents and on the legislator's particular needs and interests.
- Do not assume legislators and their staff understand your issue - legislators must juggle many topics, so it is important that you explain your issue clearly.
- Never be afraid to say you do not know the answer to a question - it is better to follow up with information later than to give an erroneous answer.
- Ask the elected official for their position on the issue.
- Express gratitude for the times your legislator has advocated in favor of an issue of importance to you.

Visit www.countysupervisors.org for additional advocacy tools, resources and information

Writing Effectively

Your letter should be short and to the point:

- Clearly state why you are writing, including what you are asking the legislator to do and why you care.
- Outline one or two critical points; use facts, figures and stories to illustrate how the issue affects you or your constituents.
- Ask the legislator to support your position on the issue and thank them for their consideration.



Understanding the Legislative Environment

Often behind-the-scenes activities of the legislature can shape what happens during your interaction with legislators. It is important to remember:

- Your legislator is dealing with many issues and may need to be reminded of the things that are important to your county. This does not mean they do not care about your priorities.
- The budget factors into almost every decision made by legislators and can be a source of stress and conflict. Keep this in mind when you discuss anything money-related with your legislators.
- Legislators must share a very small staff and they have very busy schedules.
- There are many demands on legislators' time; show up on time, be patient and expect to wait sometimes.

Contact information for all legislators is listed at
at
www.azleg.gov

Tools

- **Find an Agenda:** Committee agendas are listed under the "Committees" tab on the legislative website. They are further divided into committees and hearing dates.



- **Find a Bill:** If you know the bill number, simply look it up in the box in the top right corner of the legislature's website. To search for a bill use the "Bills" tab of the website, which will allow you to search by keyword or sponsor name.
- **Watch Online:** Legislative proceedings can be viewed online, either live or through archives, at www.azleg.gov.
- **Watch Live:** Anyone can watch floor proceedings from the House and Senate galleries, as long as they follow posted rules and restrictions.
- **Participate Online:** At www.azleg.gov, the "Register to Speak" feature allows you to express your position on a bill even if you can't attend the hearing. Outline your position and indicate that you do not wish to speak.

Contact CSA at (602) 252-5521 if you are not yet registered in the legislative system.

Glossary

- **Ballot Initiatives and Referenda** - Both methods to put an issue before voters at an election. An initiative is circulated by citizens, who must collect a specified number of signatures; a referendum is passed through the legislative process directly from the legislature to the ballot.
- **Caucus** - A meeting of all the members of one political party.
- **COW** - Committee of the Whole, the time when bills are debated, and possibly amended, by the full chamber.
- **Fiscal Note** - An estimate of the fiscal impact of a bill, as prepared by the JLBC staff.
- **JLBC** - The Joint Legislative Budget Committee, a legislative committee whose staff is responsible for providing information and recommendations on the state budget, state revenues and expenditures, future needs and the organization and functions of state government.
- **Language** - The term used to refer to proposed changes to statute.
- **Legislative Council** - A legislative committee whose nonpartisan staff is responsible for bill drafting, research and administrative services to the legislature.
- **Reads** - First, second and third reads are stages of the legislative process. During third read, the full chamber votes on a final version of the bill.
- **Reconsideration** - A parliamentary process that allows a proposal to be brought back before the legislative body after it has previously failed to pass.
- **Short Title** - The title of a bill, given by Legislative Council, that reflects the basic purpose of the legislation.
- **Sine Die** - The end of a legislative session.
- **Sponsor** - The legislator who introduces a bill.
- **Strike-everything Amendment** - An amendment that replaces all the language contained in an underlying bill.
- **Vehicle Bill** - A bill that is introduced with the intention of amending it with a strike-everything amendment.