



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 positive 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*—sincerely and 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 advocate 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.
- Feel free to greet committee members ahead of time.
- Be prepared - organize your thoughts beforehand, write them down and bring them with you.
- Just like in county hearings, direct your comments through the chairman to a member of the committee.
- Keep your statement brief and to the point.
- Focus on the impact to your constituents.

Senate Information - (602) 926-3559
House Information - (602) 926-4221
www.azleg.gov

Lobbying Effectively

- Keep it simple and succinct.
- 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 numerous topics, so it is important you explain your issue clearly - and sometimes often.
- Never be afraid to admit 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 your position on an issue of importance to you.
- Follow up with a thank you note or e-mail restating your position.

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

Communicating & Writing Effectively

Your e-mail or letter should be short and to the point:

- Clearly state your purpose for writing, include the action you are asking the legislator to take and why it matters to you.
- Outline one or two critical points; use facts, figures and stories to illustrate how the issue impacts you or your constituents.
- Ask the legislator to support your position on the issue. Thank them for their consideration and include your contact information.



Understanding the Legislative Environment

Often behind-the-scenes activities at 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 issues that are important to your county. This does not mean they do not care about your priorities.
- The budget factors into nearly 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 share a very small staff and they have very busy schedules that can change at a moment's notice.
- There are countless demands on legislators' time; show up on time for meetings, exercise patience and understand that waiting is part of the process.

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

Online Tools:

www.azleg.gov

- **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 a keyword or sponsor name.
- **Watch Online:** Legislative proceedings can be viewed online, either live or through archives, at www.azleg.gov.
- **Watch In-person:** 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. Indicate your position and note that you do not wish to speak.
Contact CSA at (602) 252-5521 if you are not yet

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** - Meeting of all the members of one political party or affiliated group (*i.e.*: Republican Caucus or Hispanic Caucus).
- **COW** - Committee of the Whole, when bills are debated, and possibly amended, by the full house or senate chamber.
- **Fiscal Note** - A written 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.
- **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, where a piece of legislation is presented to the members of either chamber. During third read, the full chamber votes on a final version of a 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** - Latin for "without (a fixed) day," which is used to describe the adjournment 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.
- **Structural Deficit** - A budget deficit that results from a fundamental imbalance in government receipts and expenditures, as opposed to a deficit based on one-time budget variables or short-term factors that cause temporary budget deficits.
- **Vehicle Bill** - A bill that is introduced with the intention of amending it with a strike-everything amendment.