



003 - How to Build an Effective Government Relations Program from Scratch

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Lou Lang serves at a state representative in the 16th House District of Illinois and holds the positions of house democratic floor leader and assistant majority leader. Mr. Lang has been an advocate for seniors, women, working families, and the educational priorities of the state. He led the effort for mental health reform and to end senior abuse in nursing homes, increase funding for the state's "Meals-on-Wheels" program and make relief from the high cost of prescription drugs a reality for seniors. Mr. Lang has supported increases in the minimum wage and worked to expand family and medical leave. He led the drive to address the state's school funding problems and sponsored a new campaign to provide full college scholarships to students with a B average or better who attend state universities and community colleges.

Mr. Lang has received numerous awards from, among others, the Illinois Hospital Association, the Illinois Council on Senior Citizens, the Service Employees Union, the Illinois Public Action Council, the Independent Voters of Illinois, and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. He received the "Food for Life" award from Open Hand Chicago for his sponsorship of \$1 million in state grants for HIV/AIDS nutrition programs and the Public Service Award from the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement. Mr. Lang also received the Maccabean Award from the Zionist Organization of Chicago and the Distinguished Service Award from the Zarem/Golde ORT Technical Institute.

Mr. Lang obtained his B.A. at the University of Illinois and his degree in law from DePaul University.

Joanna Monroe

Joanna Monroe is vice president for legal and government affairs and chief compliance officer for Labor Ready, Inc. in Tacoma, Washington. Labor Ready is an international blue collar staffing company, operating under the brand names of Labor Ready, Labour Ready, Workforce, Spartan Staffing, and CLP Resources. A direct report to the general counsel and a member of senior leadership, Ms. Monroe is currently responsible for the day-to-day management of the law department for the company, which employs over 600,000 people a year.

Ms. Monroe is a cum laude graduate of the University of Puget Sound with a Masters.

Introduction

- GR is easy, fun, and there is no better group in the organization to lead this effort than the Legal Team
- Some simple steps taken today will help your company not only effectively respond to adverse legislation, but could serve to create a competitive advantage for the company
- It is not hard or expensive to create a GR strategy for a company
- It will bring the Legal Department glory!

Why build a government relations program?

- There is a saying, when you need a friend in government, it is too late to find one
- One bad bill could wipe out your business
- You can't rely on associations to protect your interests
- Your company thinks you are doing it anyway

How do I get started?

- Assess your current GR/PR activities
- Determine the strategy
 - This will vary for type of business, geography, and issues the business is likely to face
 - National v. multi-state v. local
 - Establish legislative priorities
- Focus on the critical few
- Draft a plan and proposed budget if necessary
- Get buy in for the plan – use of scare tactics

What should the plan consist of?

- Developing key messages
- Identifying legislative targets
- Tracking
- Mounting a grassroots efforts
- Establishing a method for giving money
- Establishing metrics for measuring success

But I have never lobbied before?

- Simple advocacy
- Facility tours
- Fundraisers
- Trips to the capitol
- Coordinating with associations
- Don't break any laws!

SAMPLE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS PROGRAM

THE COMPANY recognizes that increasingly, the fate of the company is determined by legislators and that regulation of the temporary staffing industry would have a significant detrimental impact on our operations. Management further recognizes that the current political climate demands that THE COMPANY make government relations a priority.

The Fundamentals of a Government Relations Program.

Commitment. THE COMPANY must make a commitment of resources, both time and money, to a government relations program. THE COMPANY must have a mandate with a clear set of objectives and a strategic plan in place that directs the actions and energies of the company.

Relationships. THE COMPANY must build relationships with key government Officials. These relationships should be established in a non-crisis period. They should be built on trust through the exchange of information.

Public Relations. THE COMPANY must develop and maintain a positive public image. The company must be compliant with all state and federal laws, and do the right thing in all cases. These critical activities ensure THE COMPANY's credibility, so that when the company needs to make a point, there are people within the government who will believe in the company's position and are willing to lend a hand.

The Goals of the Government Relations Program

- Enhance THE COMPANY's reputation among government officials and the public
- Educate government officials on the benefits THE COMPANY brings to communities nationwide
- Influence the legislative process to prevent regulation of the staffing industry
- Formulate and advocate positions on policy issues affecting the staffing industry
- Strengthen THE COMPANY's impact on public policy through collaboration and the formation of strategic alliances.

Government Relations Action Plan

Grassroots Lobbying Campaign

THE COMPANY will launch a grassroots campaign using its existing nationwide infrastructure. In that regard, we have selected senior members of the operations team to serve as Government Affairs Liaisons (GAL's). THE COMPANY GAL's will be given training, materials, and information on their assigned state government, and dispatched to meet with targeted political officials to educate them on the benefits that THE COMPANY brings to their constituencies. Specifically, GAL's will execute the following program:

Training

GAL's will attend an 8-hour training in Tacoma, Washington on September 17, 2001. The training will cover the importance of government relations to THE COMPANY, an overview of the political process, and basic lobbying techniques. GAL's will be given a state specific packet of information, with the names and contact information of key political officials with whom they are to meet in their assigned state. They will also be provided with state specific materials written specially for legislators that describe THE COMPANY and the benefits it brings to the communities in which it does business.

Lobbying

Following the training, GAL's will set up meetings with the selected political officials. The GAL will locate a field employee who lives in the district of the official to be visited and bring him or her to the meeting. The GAL will have the opportunity to educate the official about the company and offer a branch tour. These meeting should be held with every official selected. The GAL will set up further meetings with officials as becomes necessary. In some states where THE COMPANY has employed a lobbyist or has assigned a corporate attorney, the GAL will work directly with the lobbyist and attorney to arrange for meetings and branch tours.

Networking

THE COMPANY must establish relationships with other businesses and seek allies in its fight against regulation of the industry. GAL's are expected to join the state (or local, whichever is most helpful) Chamber of Commerce and the State Staffing Association. All contact information will be provided to the GAL in their state specific packet. GAL's should attend a networking function at least once a quarter.

Political Contributions

The GAL, with the input of the Government Relations Manager, will determine if political contributions are necessary. The contribution will be made from THE COMPANY PAC or directly by the corporation as dictated by state law.

Communication

The key to a successful grassroots lobbying program is communication. Accordingly, GAL's will complete a form following contact with a political official.

That way, the Government Relations Manager can establish performance measurements and benchmarking data. The form will be contained in the state specific packages distributed to the GAL's

The Federal Lobbying Effort

Recognizing the importance of lobbying at the federal level, THE COMPANY has engaged the Petrizzo Group, a national lobbying firm located in Washington D.C. At a minimum, the Petrizzo Group will make introductions for THE COMPANY's Chief Executive Officer to meet with key federal legislators, including members of the Washington State Congressional Delegation, members of committees that regulate the industry, and members from states in which the company has large markets.

Letter Writing Campaign

The time-tested method of sending a written communication to legislators remains one of the most effective ways to communicate THE COMPANY's message. At least once a year, THE COMPANY, through its Legal Department, will conduct a massive letter writing campaign to state and federal legislators. The materials will be state specific and prepared with the assistance of the THE COMPANY Marketing team. THE COMPANY will develop innovative ways to launch letter-writing campaigns during periods of crisis with the use of its Intranet and IT capabilities

Crisis Management

THE COMPANY can expect to see an onslaught of anti-THE COMPANY legislative initiatives during the 2002 legislative session. Often, these bills are railroaded through committee with little or no notice. THE COMPANY Legal Department will be responsible for monitoring proposed legislation, and for leading the fight against any new bills. Specifically, the Legal Department will

- Assign an attorney
- Associate with State and National Staffing Associations
- Hire a lobbyist if necessary
- Draft talking papers in opposition to the bill
- Along with the GAL, meet with the bill sponsor, committee chair, and other key legislators
- Conduct letter writing campaign
- Conduct e-mailing campaign
- Conduct temporary worker petition drive
- Manage, attend and testify at hearing

COMPANYCAN Member's Guide

This manual was created to give you the tools you'll need to become an effective advocate for the company and the industry.

Section one gives you an overview of **COMPANYCAN** and **COMPANYPAC**.

Section two tells you how **COMPANYCAN** and **COMPANYPAC** fit into the company's Government Relations Program. It also includes contact information for the Corporate Government Relations Team, **COMPANYCAN** Key Contacts, and an overview of the internal resources available to you.

Section three provides the groundwork for grassroots advocacy. You will learn how the legislative process works and find tips for working with elected officials.

Section four is a reference section that includes sample letters, action alerts, talking points on common topics, online resources, and guides to scheduling legislative visits and coordinating LOCAL OFFICE tours.

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COMPANYCAN: Civic Action Network

Mission

By empowering employees to build relationships with policy makers, we will build a nationwide grassroots Government Relations Program that will give us the agility to respond to any legislative opportunity or threat and create a competitive advantage for our business.

How COMPANY CAN works— How you can get involved to shape public policy

The **COMPANY** Civic Action Network (**COMPANYCAN**) allows any **COMPANY** employee to get involved in the political process and tell the company's story to their legislators rather than relying on others to tell our story. Some of the things that **COMPANYCAN** members do include:

- Build relationships with legislators through visits, branch tours, and attending fundraisers sponsored by **COMPANYPAC** and, when necessary, attend legislative hearings.
- Host LOCAL OFFICE tours and help other managers coordinate tours at their LOCAL OFFICES.
- Monitor and alert the Government Relations Team about local political issues that may affect the company.
- Respond to Action Alerts issued by **COMPANY** Government Relations.

- COMPANY** CAN Key Contacts are **COMPANYCAN** or **COMPANYPAC** members who
- Act as regional coordinators and contacts for **COMPANYCAN** members in their areas.
 - Answer questions and provide guidance to **COMPANYCAN** members.
 - Have received extensive training to become an effective advocate for the company.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can be involved?

With the approval of their supervisor, any **COMPANY** employee can be a member of **COMPANYCAN**. All they need to do is express an interest. Key Contacts, who act as coaches to **COMPANYCAN** members in their areas and act as liaisons between the Government Relations Program and **COMPANYCAN** members, will be selected from the active **COMPANYCAN** members.

What will I be expected to do?

As a **COMPANYCAN** member, you are expected to build relationships with your legislators through in-person legislative visits, letters and phone calls. You are also expected to respond to action alerts, monitor local political and business developments, and alert the Government Relations Team about any legislative issue that will affect the company.

How do I become a member?

Call the Government Relations Department or call your regional Key Contact.

How do I become a Key Contact?

Twice a year the Government Relations Team will invite active **COMPANYCAN** volunteers to become Key Contacts. Appointment to the Key Contacts Team requires the support of your supervisor.

Who is my Key Contact?

If you visit the **COMPANYCAN** Website, you will find a list of the Key Contacts for your area.

Why should I join **COMPANYCAN?**

When **COMPANY** is successful, we all benefit. **COMPANCAN** helps protect the company from negative legislation and promotes positive legislation to give the company a competitive advantage.

How is **COMPANY CAN different than **COMPANY PAC**?**

Any **COMPANY** employee can join **COMPANYCAN**. The program empowers **COMPANY** employees to develop relationships with legislators and promote the company's interests.

COMPANYPAC completes the political loop by allowing eligible **COMPANY** employees to pool their contributions and support candidates who understand the company and its employees. By helping to elect responsible legislators, we further help protect the company from negative legislation.

Government Relations Overview

A popular political dictum says, "**When you need a friend in politics, you can't find one.**" That simple phrase explains why **COMPANYCAN** and **COMPANYPAC** can help protect the company from adverse legislation and promote positive legislation.

Like many companies, **COMPANY'S** Government Relations Program started in response to a threat. Responding to a threat is a short-term need, but the need for good government relations is continuous. The company relies on the Government Relations Team to identify threats and implement our strategy for overcoming them. It relies on you, our Key Contacts to create the relationships we need to succeed in the long-term.

Every year **COMPANY** faces new legislative challenges that would directly affect the way we do business. **The Government Relations Department is here to protect the company from burdensome regulations.** However, without political allies and pre-existing relationships with legislators, we fight an uphill battle. The battle is especially tough when other people, including those that oppose us, tell our story. When we talk to a legislator in Georgia, Texas, or Arizona, they want to know who in their state cares about our issue. You, their constituents, are among the most politically powerful people in the state. You are the people who care about our issues, and who vote to re-elect or fire the politicians in your state. When you link that power with grassroots activism, which means putting a face and a voice with a vote, you gain even more political power.

Winning at Grassroots

Grassroots is one-on-one communication between constituents and their legislators. Grassroots communication demonstrates to legislators or regulators that their constituents and community members support our company and our position. As Michael Dunn, one of the nation's leading public affairs consultants says, "The purpose of grassroots activities is very clear and simple: to influence legislation. Period.... The most powerful grassroots approach involves political constituents who have a genuine interest—and often an economic stake—in your issues, and who will communicate that interest to their elected officials." He goes on to say, "Lawmakers will always listen to their constituents and care what they think because their constituents are the ones who help them get and keep their jobs."

Grassroots can be as simple as writing a letter or making a phone call to ask your representative or senator to support or oppose a bill. Constituent letters are especially useful if the legislator is on the fence and has not decided how to vote. **The constituent who regularly calls or writes gains even more recognition.** Four or five letters or phone calls a year is all it takes. Regular communication shows that you really do pay attention and care about the issues.

Constituents who develop personal relationships with lawmakers really begin to make a difference. If you do that, you'll rank high on the legislator's list of contacts. The constituent who meets regularly with a legislator, provides important information, volunteers for campaigns, hosts meet and greet events or fundraisers becomes an ally that the lawmaker will likely turn to as a trusted source of information.

The Gallup Organization conducted a survey of 149 Members of Congress to determine what captured their attention: letters and phone calls from constituents and managers of branch offices within legislative districts and visits from CEOs of companies that had a significant worker base in the legislator's district were all ranked as some of the most influential techniques. Furthermore, a survey of Senate offices revealed that it takes only seven apparently spontaneous constituent letters to cause a senator to assign an aide to the issue.

Contrary to popular cynical sentiment, legislators want to know what their constituents think and what matters to them. Like you, however, legislators don't want a bunch of faceless spam in their in-boxes. They want real contact with real voters.

"Be tactful. An argumentative approach to a legislator who may already agree with you can cost support." (*How to Win in the Legislature*, NCSL) Even if you disagree with a legislator, you must treat them with respect. You may stand on different sides of an issue this time. Next time you may be standing next to each other.

"Avoid stereotyping members, especially when it is based on pre-conceived notions because of party or philosophical or geographic labels.... All Democrats are not liberals; all Republicans are not conservatives. It will take time, but try to get to know the basic philosophy of individual legislators." (*Making Your Case: How to Win in the Legislature*, NCSL) Just as you treat each of your customers as individuals, you also want to connect with legislators on a personal level. Remember that

just because the last Republican or Democrat you talked to held certain views that the next one you may take a different position.

"Do not ignore members of the minority party. Their votes may make the difference between winning and losing. And they may be the majority the next time around." (*Making Your Case: How to Win in the Legislature*, NCSL) You wouldn't turn a customer away just because they're small or don't shop at the same grocery store. We need friends on both sides of the political aisle. Democrats may control your state Senate this year, but after the next election it may be the Republicans. Furthermore, a member's power changes during their career. You never know when that new, freshman representative will become the Chair of the Labor Committee. If you have spent time building that relationship and sharing the **COMPANY** story, you know the new Chair will listen to your concerns.

"Maintain a positive attitude about legislators and politicians. Much of the legislative process is based on mutual trust and respect.... Any successful and respected lobbyist will tell you that the most essential ingredients for success are integrity, honesty and truthfulness." (*Making Your Case: How to Win in the Legislature*, NCSL) While the newspapers and political talk shows may focus on the scandals and tell you otherwise, most politicians, and most lobbyists are honest. They do what they do because they want to make a difference and think what they are doing will help the people of their community, state, or country. You may not share their view, but acknowledge that many are serving out of a sense of duty and treat them with integrity.

"Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand." (Karl Menninger) You listen to your customers to find out what they need and why they need it. It is especially important to listen to your legislator's point of view. When you really listen, you begin to understand why the legislator is supporting or opposing a bill. When you understand why, you can begin to form a response. When you form a response, you may find that you agree with some of their points, which may allow you to find a compromise that addresses their needs and your needs.

Local Political Issues

Although they may not make national news, local politics affect you just as much as state and federal politics. The Government Relations Department uses a variety of resources to track state and federal legislation, but we lack the ability to track what is happening in your city and county councils.

Recently city councils have created new ordinances that affect the way we put people to work—and in some cases, even our ability to conduct business within city limits. Unfortunately, due to our inability to track local legislation, we may not find out about the legislation until it is too late.

We rely upon you to follow local news and keep an eye on your city and county councils. Furthermore, although we track state legislation, you may hear about proposed state legislation before we do. When you hear or read about proposed ordinances that may affect our business, call the Government Relations Department so we can help you develop a strategic response. Of course, responding to local issues will be much easier if you already have relationships with your council members.

Top 10 Ways to Get Involved

(Based on same title from Public Affairs Council)

You question the ability of one voice to make a difference? "Individuals should understand that they can actually influence the legislative and regulatory arena," says Patrick Johnston, a former member of the California State Senate and Assembly. "The key? All you have to do is... something."

10. Host a LOCAL OFFICE tour

Invite your state representative or senator to tour your LOCAL OFFICE.

9. Join the group

Do you belong to a social club or service organization? The people you meet in these arenas may have misconceptions about **COMPANY** and the **COMPANY** industry. Seize the moment to educate them on our business.

8. Attend council meetings

Most city and county councils meet on a regular basis, as do their associated committees. Attend a council or committee meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting, introduce yourself to the council or committee members.

7. Find out about your elected representatives

Do you know who they are and their positions on key issues that concern you and your business? These are important questions and critical to your involvement in the legislative process.

6. Write a letter to your elected representative

You don't need to ask for something the first time you write a letter. You could write to let them know how our company benefits the people in their district.

5. Pay attention

If you read something in your local newspaper or hear about an issue that will impact your business, alert the Government Relations Department.

4. Volunteer your time

Candidates for elected office can't do it all on their own. They rely on volunteers to help in their campaign office or walking precincts.

3. Recruit a co-worker

Share the **COMPANYCAN** program with a co-worker and let them know how they can get involved in the company's legislative outreach. Contact the Government Relations Department to sign your co-worker up.

2. Register to vote.

Make certain that your registration is up-to-date with your current address.

1. Vote in every election.

And if you can't make it to the polls on Election Day, make sure you request an absentee ballot.

10 Tips for Effective Grassroots Advocacy

(By Patrick B. Haggerty, Courtesy of Public Affairs Counsel)

1. Be an unashamed clock-watcher

Don't waste anyone's time. Get to the point fast and focus on your issue. But do it with finesse. Don't give the impression you are in a hurry to rush off. Nice and easy does it every time.

2. Be a great communicator

Keep everything clear. Explain the logic of your position in straightforward terms - jobs, cost, how many people will be affected, etc. Always have a "position paper" that details your logic. (It's a must to have a "leave behind" for office visits.)

In all communications, be sure to include the Bill number and/or name of the legislation or regulation, and, of course, your name, postal and e-mail addresses, home and office phone numbers.

3. Be nosy

Ask your lawmakers to state their position. If it agrees with yours, ask what you can do to strengthen that support. If it is different from yours, ask what information or show of public support is necessary to change that position.

4. Be oblivious to rank

Remember, the lawmaker's staffers are as important to you as the lawmaker. They are often the ones who prepare the issue summary, including a vote recommendation, for the lawmaker.

5. Show them the numbers

There's strength in numbers. This is true for financial support as well as for all forms of communication. Remind your lawmaker how many people (read votes) in your organization share your position. Again, think volume.

6. Be a glutton for punishment

The more responsibility and involvement you assume, the more vigorous the commitment and support you can expect from your lawmaker.

7. Be flexible

Sometimes you and your lawmaker will have to compromise. Assess what you can realistically achieve now and work on the rest later. And be patient. Sometimes decisions will take months.

8. Be a gracious host

Invite your lawmaker and staff to your place of business or other appropriate location to put a human face on your issue.

9. Be a good winner and a good loser

Don't burn bridges. Your adversary on one issue may be your ally on the next. Write a thank-you note to the lawmaker no matter what the outcome.

10. Invest in the future

At least six times a year, take 30 minutes of your time to contact a lawmaker by letter, phone, e-mail, office visit, etc. That will make you more active than 99.9 percent of all citizens and therefore 99.9 percent more legislatively successful.

Who's Who at the Capitol**Speaker of the House and President pro tem of the Senate**

These are the two most powerful members of the legislature. In their respective chambers, they are the ones in charge. In most legislatures, they decide which committee a bill is referred to. If they strongly support a bill, it will likely pass. The opposite is also true.

Majority Floor Leader

Second to the Speaker of the House or President of the Senate, the Majority Floor Leader guides the day-to-day operations of the chambers. He or she controls the calendar of bills on the floor.

Minority Floor Leader

First, remember that this person may be the Majority Floor Leader after the next election. This member acts as the voice of the minority party and coordinates the minority party's activities.

Whips

The Whips assist their party leaders in determining how party members will vote, and when necessary, will recruit votes along party lines.

Committee Chairs

Committee Chairs decide if and when a bill introduced to their committees will be heard. In a few states all bills introduced to a committee must be heard, but in most states, the chair may decide whether a bill is ever heard.

Caucus Chairs

These members do most of their work before session when they call party members together to discuss partisan issues and determine party positions on anticipated legislation.

Working with Legislative Staff

"Never underestimate the importance of getting to know, and working with, legislative staff... Ultimately, decisions are made by legislators, but those decisions may be influenced by the input of staff." (*Making Your Case: How to Win in the Legislature*, NCSL).

State Legislative Staff**Session Staff**

This non-partisan staff is supervised by the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate. Session staff is responsible for assisting the legislative body with enrolling and engrossing bills, reading of bills and committee assignment, tracking amendments, recording votes, posting schedules, and much, much more.

Research Staff

These non-partisan staff members are topic specialists who provide background information and research to any and all members on issues that come before the body.

Sometimes the research staff also serves as **Committee Staff**, who record votes, prepare minutes and reports, and provide research as requested.

Legal Staff

Most legal staff members have a background in law and are non-partisan. They often draft legislation and ensure that bills are written according to accepted legislative format, conform with constitutional provisions, and determine whether bills affect existing statutes.

Partisan Staff

Partisan staff members work for the Democratic and Republican caucuses of both chambers. They provide additional research and information to party members upon request and assist caucus leadership prepare for caucus meetings.

Personal Staff

Individual legislators are frequently granted at least one personal staff member, especially in those states that have full-time legislatures, such as California. Personal staff may work at the capitol or in the district office, or, in some cases, both. Personal staff assists with scheduling, bill drafting, and responding to constituents.

Congressional Staff

Scheduler/Executive Assistant

This person is responsible for managing the legislator's time, calendar, and daily schedule. Many legislators will tell you that this person is the one who keeps it all together. This is an important person, and one to know and treat well.

Chief of Staff or Administrative Assistant (COS/AA)

This person reports directly to the member and is responsible for office operations. He or she acts as the primary advisor to the member.

Legislative Director (LD)

This person monitors the legislative calendar and makes recommendations regarding specific issues.

Legislative Assistants (LA)

These staffers normally have expertise in a particular area of focus for a given legislator. For instance, if the member is on the transportation committee, he or she may have a Legislative Assistant who specializes in transportation issues. Depending on their responsibilities, legislators may employ several Legislative Assistants, each who specializes in a different area.

Other

Press Secretary, Communications Director, Legislative Coordinator, Caseworker.

What's Going on in their Heads – How to Work with Congressional Staff

(From Rikki Amos, Public Affairs Council)

First and foremost, staff are hired to represent the member – not their own issues.

- It doesn't matter where they stand personally on an issue, it is their job to advise the member in the member's best interest.
- So while you may ask what a staff member personally thinks about an issue, they shouldn't tell you.

In that vein, staff are representatives of the member.

- They are representing the member "in absentia."
- Talk to them as if they were the member.

They may not give you a guaranteed commitment on their final vote on a bill well before the vote takes place – and that's okay.

- Try to get their commitment to your position in general instead.
- This is because bills often change significantly up until the very end. If one particular amendment passes, it may force the member to vote differently on final passage.
- Forcing a member or staff to absolutely say they will vote for or against a particular bill before they have the final bill could borrow trouble that may not be necessary or even relevant.

Look to speak to the staff member responsible for that piece of legislation.

- Don't automatically seek the highest pay grade person you can speak to in the office.
- Look to speak with the person assigned to that topic, regardless of level in the office – they are the one advising the member as he or she goes to vote. That briefing often includes information on who in the district is advocating on that legislation.
- If you haven't talked to that staffer, your message may not be passed along.

Yes, they are young.

- Yes, they have not necessarily developed their issue area expertise by actually working in the industry.
- They work on the Hill because they have expertise (sometimes developing) on the legislative process. They know the ins and outs of how a bill becomes a law, how to amend a bill, and the politics of politics. As an advocate, embracing this situation opens the opportunity to offer yourself as that issue area expert while you get the benefit of an interested and open ear in return.

What gets their attention: Know your audience, own your message

"Trust plays a major, but unwritten, role in the legislative process. Legislators cannot be expected to be knowledgeable about every proposal that comes before the legislature... When bills outside their area of expertise are considered, they rely on the knowledge of other members whom they trust." (*Learning the Game*, NCSL)

The Congressional Management Foundation surveyed Capitol Hill staff and asked them what types of messages make the biggest difference. Staffers said that **the more personalized the message is, the more it will influence the legislator or staffer**. They also shared that a poorly handled message or method of communicating can actually harm an organization's efforts.

A positive, honest approach is one of the keys to successful communication. Threats and half-truths undermine your message and give your opponents an opportunity to criticize you and punch holes in your message. If you are not 100% positive about the answer to a question, don't make one up. Nothing will make you lose face faster than getting caught giving the wrong information. If you do make a mistake, as soon as you realize your error, call the legislator back and provide the right information.

According to one successful, long-term lobbyist, **"Nothing is more powerful in a political debate than acknowledging that your opponent's argument has some degree of legitimacy."** As mentioned before, acknowledging their points shows that you are listening. Sometimes when you show that you understand why a legislator supports or opposes a bill, they begin to see you in a different light. Instead of a staunch opponent, you become a reasonable constituent, and a possible ally. They may soften and begin to ask how you can work together to accomplish their goal while protecting your interests.

Below are the most common forms of communication between constituents and their legislators and a discussion about how to effectively use each one.

Letters & Faxes

Writing letters to your state legislators can be effective if you write early and follow it with a phone call. While writing a letter is certainly better than doing nothing, letters from known constituents mean more. Again, it always ties back to the relationship.

Sometimes you will receive action alerts asking you to write letters to state or federal legislators. These action alerts will come with a sample letter attached. Feel free to personalize the letter, especially if you have a relationship with the legislator. Always change the letter to include your name and contact information.

Ever since the anthrax scare in Congress, mail takes weeks to make it to congressional offices. Due to the screening process and preventive treatments the mail is exposed to, the letters arrive in poor condition. Two suggested solutions:

1. Fax the letter, and if possible, address it to the correct aid. Fax letters to state and federal officials when time is limited.
2. Mail the letter to the legislator's local district office.

Other tips for writing letters:

- Don't wait until the last minute. Write as soon as you find out about a bill. Don't send your letter during recess. Try to send it so it will get to the elected mid-week.
- Legislators treat form letters and mass-mailed postcards like the plague. So should you. Customize your letters whenever possible.
- If the letter is prompted by a call to action, put it on company letterhead. If you choose to put it on plain white paper, make sure you include your return address on the letter as well as the envelope.
- Identify yourself in the letter, and if you are writing as a representative of the company, include that in your introduction.
- If you are writing about a specific bill, include the bill name and number.
- Explain how the bill, or elements of it, will affect you and your temporary workers, customers, etc. If you can, make your case personal by telling a (true) story or using specific examples.
- Use facts. Legislators love facts and numbers. They show that you know your stuff (if the facts are true and can be substantiated), and they give the legislator something to help support their own position if they agree with you.
- Do not let your letter flow to a second page. If you can't say it on one page, you are saying too much, and chances are that a multi-page letter will not be read.
- Ask for a reply if you want to know your legislator's position on the issue.

- Follow up. If your legislator voted as you wished, say thank you. If they voted contrary to your wishes, write them to express your disappointment. Always be gracious, tactful, and polite.
- If you are writing about multiple bills, try to write different letters for each bill. The one exception is when several bills address the same topic.

E-mail

According to feedback from Congressional staffers, *Congressional Quarterly* wrote, "Congressional offices that receive e-mail through Web-based services, where correspondents must use a lawmaker's own mail form, have installed filters to block messages that don't come from their states or districts."

This means that if you are a constituent, your e-mail will get through, but it might not get read if it doesn't make it past the human filter. If a legislator receives 1,000 pieces of e-mail in any given day and one staffer, likely an intern, is assigned to sort that e-mail, your message must stand out from the hundreds of spam-style broadcast messages that have become so common. How? Personalize your message, make sure you include your contact information, reference your last contact, and make sure your "Subject" line is distinct.

Unless you are writing in response to a last-minute call to action, a phone call or faxed letter are better options. If you still decide to send e-mail:

- Do NOT use emoticons :0).
- Treat your e-mail as you would a letter (see below).
- If you are sending a copy of the e-mail to others, use the Blind Copy, BCC, field.
- To give your e-mail any hope of being read, call the legislator's office to find out which staffer deals with the topic and get that person's e-mail address. Of course, if you're going to call to get the e-mail, just use the call to state your position. Follow the call with the e-mail if you have more to add or facts that you want to provide.

Phone calls

Calling your legislators is a quick, easy way of getting in touch. It is especially easy to call your federal senators and representatives. Search the online congressional directory at <http://thomas.loc.gov> or call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard:

U.S. Senate—202-224-3151
U.S. House of Representatives—202-225-3121

All state legislatures also have a central switchboard. Visit your state legislative Website to find the phone number. Or, to find the legislator's direct number, visit www.vote-smart.org.

- Ask the switchboard operator to connect you to your senator or representative.
- When you reach the legislator's office, ask to speak to the aide who handles the issue you're calling about. (If you are calling about a company-related issue, most of the time you are going to the aide responsible for labor and workforce issues.)
- Give your name and address and say that you are a constituent. Sometimes you might call a legislator who represents the district or state where your branch is, but not the district or state that you live in. If that is the case, let the aide know that you are calling on behalf of your company and the people we employ.
- Then say that you would like to leave a message for the legislator.
- Keep your message brief and to the point.
- Make sure you mention the working name of the bill as well as the bill number.
- Nobody has enough brain cells to memorize the specifics of every bill that is introduced, so you'll also want to give a one-sentence description of the bill.
- Ask for your legislator's position on the issue. If the legislator shares your position, thank them for their support and tell them why you share that position. Legislators appreciate adding to their list of support points.
- If they hold a different position, briefly state why you support or oppose the legislation. It's best to make this a personal statement by tying your reasons to your experience or business.
- Answer any questions that the aide has and thank them for their time. Whether the legislator shares your position or not, be respectful. Next time around, they may be on your side.
- Do not debate the bill on the phone. Just state your position. If you have more to add, you can write a follow-up letter.

Meeting preparation

Next to a LOCAL OFFICE tour, an in-person meeting makes the deepest impression. Whether the meeting is over a cup of coffee at a local restaurant or at the capitol, you should prepare in the same way. In-person meetings are the best way to develop a lasting relationship.

Most politicians are happy to meet constituents, especially state legislators. It's an effective, and often enjoyable, way for them to find out what their constituents think. Remember, however, that legislators have a lot of demand on their time. You will need to be patient when scheduling the meeting. Call your legislator's office as far in

advance as possible. Two months notice is a good start. If something prevents them from making the meeting, do not feel put off. Simply reschedule.

Before the meeting

- What are you going to say? Even if it is just a get-to-know-you coffee break, what do you want them to know about you and your business?
- What do you know about them? If the answer is not much, get online and look at their biography and their legislative record. Many legislators keep archives of newsletters or press releases they send to constituents. Read them. Also read your local (or national if appropriate) paper to keep abreast of political issues that concern them.
- If the legislator is unable to meet with you, ask if you can meet with an appropriate staff member. Staff may be able to give you more time and attention. Staff also have a great deal of influence over the member, which is often underestimated by constituents.
- Who is going to talk? If you are going with a group, decide who is going to talk about which topics. Make sure you are all on the same page.
- Are you going to discuss a specific piece of legislation? Do you have talking points about how it will affect your business? Do you know what the other side is saying, and do you have answers to their objections? Are there areas where you are willing to compromise with the other side?

During the meeting

- If you meet over coffee, make sure you know your ethics rules before you offer to buy them a cup of coffee. These rules vary by state. If you have any questions, call the Government Relations Department.
- Address the member using his or her title, e.g., Senator Boxer; Representative Reichert. If you know that the member holds a leadership position, such as Speaker, Majority Leader, Chairwoman, use the title: Chairman Boehner. This added display shows that you also understand the significance of their position.
- Arrive on time, but not too early. If you arrive too early, you may be in the way or interrupt another meeting. Arriving on time shows you respect the legislators time. However, be prepared to wait. Legislators have a lot of demands on their time and they could be called to a vote or urgent business on a moment's notice.
- If you are discussing a specific bill, take along a fact sheet or letter to leave with the legislator after your discussion.
- Always be polite. You may ask what the legislator's position is on a topic, but do not force them to commit to one vote. Things change in committee, new facts may come to light, and forcing commitment can alienate them. Even if you disagree, treat the legislator as you would a valued client.

- Someday you may be on the same side of an issue. As the Public Affairs Council points out: **Politics and partisanship are two different things. Even debates with people of opposing positions on such issues can be handled positively and/or respectfully.**
- Listen. Answer their questions, and don't be afraid to ask questions to find out more about the legislation. The member will appreciate that you understand that bills are multi-faceted.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, don't guess. Giving inaccurate information harms your credibility. Purposely lying will destroy it forever. If you don't know the answer, say so. Call or write with the answer as soon as you know it.
- Offer your services. Members can't be experts on every issue they vote on. You, however, are an expert on your business and the temporary staffing industry. Let your senator or representative know that she can call on you for information or to discuss how a bill might affect your company.

Understanding Your Audience: A Checklist

By Stephanie Vance, *Government Relations Magazine*, Courtesy Public Affairs Counsel

Before communicating with anyone about anything, you first need to understand your audience. This rule absolutely applies in the legislative setting. Following is a list of things you should understand about the elected officials you are dealing with.

Political views

Of course, the most basic thing to understand is whether he is a Democrat, Republican, or third-party member. But you also want to understand where his views fall on the spectrum. Are they conservative? Liberal? Does he consistently vote the party line, or does he often switch?

Legislative initiatives

In addition to understanding what the elected official is working on in your area of interest, you should also have an understanding of the full range of her legislative items. This will help you understand the office's shifting focus and time-management efforts. The Library of Congress's Thomas Web site allows you to look up every bill that your member of Congress has introduced.

Main policy interests

Most elected officials ran for office out of a strong desire to promote a cause or work on a particular set of issues. Effective advocates will figure out what those issues are and determine whether their issues can be framed in those terms. You can find out a great deal about elected officials' interests by visiting their Web sites. To find congressional members' sites, visit the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate on the Web. To track down state legislators, check out the National Conference of State Legislatures, which provides links to each state's governing body.

Committee assignments

Make sure you understand not just the committees on which your elected officials serve, but each committee's jurisdictions, schedules, and foci. This will help you realize how your elected officials can be most useful to you on your issues. The Web sites mentioned in point three will help you track down this information.

Biographical information and personal interests

Is the elected official married? What about personal interests? What college did she attend? Understanding these kinds of things will help you make personal connections. Visit the legislator's Website to research this information.

Percentage of vote in past election

Knowing if the elected official is in a swing district, meaning the vote is likely to swing between Democrats and Republicans, or in a safe seat can tell you a lot about the office's focus. Members in unstable seats tend to focus almost exclusively on parochial, local interests, while members in safe seats have more flexibility to stretch their legislative interests.

Aspirations

Does the elected official have ambitions to reach a higher office, secure an assignment to a different committee, or become a member of the legislative leadership? Understanding what the elected official hopes to gain in the future is critical to understanding his actions today.

Dos and Don'ts for a Successful Congressional Meeting

(Rikki D. Amos, Public Affairs Council)

1. Schedule in Advance

- In whatever manner is best received by that office (phone, fax, e-mail).
- Your first point of contact is the member's scheduler.
- Stay on topic – no bait and switch.
- Constituents first and foremost – they increase the likelihood of getting an appointment and they are the most influential contacts.

Don't drop by unless you have absolutely no other choice – schedules and resources are already stretched to the limit. Drop by appointments can increase anxiety and sometimes strain relationships. If you must drop by, be gracious about the options available to you.

2. Be Conscientious of Numbers

- Meeting space is very limited and causes anxiety for offices trying to facilitate multiple meetings.
- Don't take 10 people when 3 can make the same case.
- Constituents first – only take non-constituents if they serve a particular role that is relevant to the specific member.

Don't say 3 people will be attending and then arrive with unexpected guests. Unexpected additions strain resources and meeting preparation. Yes, everyone may want to meet Hillary Clinton or John McCain but if they aren't constituents or aren't already scheduled to attend, they should not join the meeting.

3. Be on Time (but not too early)

- Allow time for security line delays. You will be re-screened every time you enter a new building.
- It takes about 15 minutes to cross from the House side to the Senate side.
- Leave buffer time for a successful or delayed meeting. If you are unexpectedly running late, call the office as a courtesy.

Don't arrive late and then be surprised or angry that your appointment has been canceled or is now with someone different.

4. Be Flexible

- You may be on time but the member may be delayed due to floor votes or other meetings. Roll with it; don't fight it.
- Standing in the hall for a meeting is not uncommon. Sometimes that is the only space available.

Don't complain about the meeting space - make the most of the time and attention you have devoted to you. After all, isn't it more beneficial to spend all of your time talking about the extremely important issue that took you there anyway?

5. Engage with Staff

- If the member is unavoidably delayed and you are offered the opportunity to meet with staff, take it. Staff members are valuable resources for keeping your issue in front of the member.
- If you do meet with the member, ask which staff member is responsible for handling that issue so that you may keep in touch.

Don't discuss the member's campaign or campaign contributions. It often places staff in awkward situations.

6. Be Brief but Make Your Case

- Get to the point but be prepared to share further information if asked.
- Start positive – thank the member for something they've done.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the member's position on your issue.
- Connect the issue to the member's constituency – jobs, community, etc

Don't talk for so long on one issue that you miss any others.

7. Give and Take

- Outline specific requests for what you would like the member to do.
- Ask (don't demand) for reaction or feedback on your position.
- Offer to provide additional information or be a resource.
- Invite the member to a site visit, local event, or conference reception.
- Leave behind one page outlining your specific requests.

Don't be intimidated. Members of Congress and their staff are not experts in all fields. You have as much to offer to them as they have to offer you.

8. Follow Up and Through

- Say thank you with a follow up letter or e-mail and use that letter to reiterate your discussion.
- If you promised to provide more information – provide it.

Don't drop the ball – this is your opportunity to prove that you are a resource.

9. Be Passionate, Committed, Persuasive, Clear, and Respectful

- Even if members and staff disagree with your position or issue, they will respect your feelings.
- People who show they care are memorable.

Don't threaten members or staff with political retribution (i.e. promising to talk negatively about a member, spread rumors, etc).

10. Build Relationships

- Smile and greet people by name.
- Members and staff need to hear from you as much as you need to talk to them.

Don't insult politics and politicians in general. Members and their staff have chosen this profession for a reason and many are good people trying to do something.

Fundraisers & Social Events

Our Political Action Committee, **COMPANYPAC**, contributes to candidates who understand the company and our industry and the issues that we face. Attending fundraisers attaches a person, a face, and a voice to the pooled resources of our eligible-class employees. And, it's another way for you to meet a legislator or would-be legislator.

If you attend a fundraiser sponsored by **COMPANYPAC**, you will receive an event memo that contains background about the candidate as well as details about the event. Prepare for a fundraiser just as you would for a legislative visit, except leave the literature at home.

Remember that a **fundraiser is the wrong time to ask for a commitment or a political favor**. Leave those discussions for an official legislative visit. Most of the time people treat fundraisers like social occasions and may avoid talking about politics. Nevertheless, review our talking points and be prepared to discuss issues of concern, but again, this is not the time to ask for favors.

Communicating with Elected Officials at Social Events

(adapted from the Public Affairs Council)

1. Support the Positive Atmosphere of the Event

Social events, receptions, and meet and greets are positive environments. Be part of the positive environment that encourages officials to leave pleased with the time they took out of their schedule to attend.

2. Be Cautious of Political Commentary

Be wary of making comments about the "other" party or other specific legislators. You never know whether the guest standing next to you is close to that person or a member of that "other" party. You will find close friends who viciously battle each other across party lines. Never put a legislator in a situation where they feel they must defend another legislator or the institution.

3. You are a Representative of Your Organization

Remember that even if you pay your own way to a fundraiser, you will be associated with your company. Be prepared to answer questions about the company and issues that concern it.

4. Avoid Sticky Conversations

The world of politics is skittish right now regarding financial support and an interpretation of a *quid pro quo* with regard to financial support and political support. Avoid the issue by sticking to the social aspects of the event. This is especially true if the event you're attending is NOT a fundraiser. Avoid comments such as "Our PAC has contributed \$X in the past two cycles and still you haven't voted for X. Why?"

5. Meet their Staff

Legislators attending social events are in great demand. By nature, your interactions with them might be very brief. If a member of their staff is

attending, you'll have better luck spending more time with them. Plus, then two people will be aware of your interests.

6. Know Interesting Facts About Them & Show Interest in Them

Again, spend some time on the Internet reading about the legislator. Does she like to ski in her free time? Did he sponsor a well-known bill in his first term? Find out what concerns them and which committees they serve on. Make it personal by finding out what makes them tick. What is their primary goal as an elected official? Perhaps she's a doctor who wants to make childhood cancers a thing of the past.

7. Show Interest in Them

It's fine to talk about what you think and what concerns you. Then turn the tables and ask about THEM. "What's the biggest issue facing YOUR district?" is a good one to start with.

Successful LOCAL OFFICE tours

LOCAL OFFICE tours can do more to solidify your relationship with a legislator than anything else, except for volunteering on a campaign. A legislator who is on the fence about **COMPANY** may jump to our side and become an ally after they see the concern with which we assign and care for our employees. A legislator who is already a friend, will have a much better idea of how we put people to work, which will help them better sway their colleagues during debate. When a legislator or administrative official visits a LOCAL OFFICE, they can truly say they've seen how we do it. Legislators also love LOCAL OFFICE tours if it gives them an opportunity to meet with a number of their constituents.

Careful planning is the key to a successful branch tour, and like any other successful legislative meeting, the process starts with a bit of research.

The Invitation

Call the Government Relations Department to help you plan the event.

Call your legislator's office. Explain who you are and what you do, then ask when the legislator might be available to visit your LOCAL OFFICE. U.S. senators and representatives may try to schedule the visit during the spring or August recesses. The best time to catch state legislators is during the interim, after the year's session has ended. Follow the call with a written invitation. If the legislator is a federal legislator, fax the letter or e-mail it to a specific contact in his or her office.

Not a campaign stop. Be sure that the legislator understands that this will not be a campaign visit or a fundraiser. Different laws apply to campaign stops and fundraisers.

Give them options. Suggest multiple dates and times and be willing to work around the legislator's schedule.

Don't give up. Sometimes it may take months and several attempts to successfully schedule a LOCAL OFFICE tour. Legislators are busy people and their schedules often have to remain fluid so they can respond to the demands of the legislative schedule.

Before the tour

Invite your co-workers. Invite your co-workers as well as other nearby LOCAL OFFICE managers and **COMPANYCAN** members to join you. Ensure that you have adequate coverage during the tour so that you aren't forced to stop the tour to conduct business. Share what you know about the legislator with the other people you invite.

Do your research. Visit the legislator's Website and read their biography. Search the newspaper for recent news about them. Is your guest concerned about specific issues that will need to be addressed? Have they sponsored legislation that will affect the company? Have you, or has anyone else at the company, developed a relationship with them? Share this information with any other employees who will be present.

Know your numbers. Legislators are most interested in what happens in their districts and how our business affects their constituents. You'll want to be able to tell them how your business helps the economy or the people in the district. Be prepared to discuss the hard dollars, such as, "in 2005, we contributed \$35 million to the state's economy."

Tell a story. Before the visit think of a few success stories about your business. Also, if you have partnered with any community organizations such as food banks, Habitat for Humanity, or other social service agencies, make sure you mention that.

Who is going to say what? Determine in advance who will demonstrate the various parts of the business.

Clean it up. Make sure your LOCAL OFFICE is clean, and you have bottled water and a fresh pot of coffee ready.

Start the presses? Talk with the legislator and/or staff to determine whether local media is welcome. If so, contact the Public Relations Department and obtain assistance.

During the tour

Make the Introduction. Greet the legislator at the door, introduce yourself and anyone else attending, and offer them a cup of coffee, water, or whatever else you have on hand for your employees.

Tell the COMPANY story.

Be prepared to discuss the issues that affect the company by answering questions they may have about business practices. Remember to be positive, enthusiastic, considerate and appreciative. Make sure you give the legislator a copy of our legislative brochure and any additional information sheets that the Government Relations Department provided.

Be a good listener.

Most politicians like an audience, and listening is one of the most important aspects of any visit or branch tour. Your guest may not always agree with you, and it's important to understand the message that the guest is trying to convey. When the legislator asks questions, provide direct answers whenever possible. If you don't know the answer, say you'll get back to him or her, and remember to do so.

Say thank you.

Tell your guest that you appreciate the work that they do. Remember to follow up with a thank you letter for the visit.

Take pictures!

Make sure someone in the LOCAL OFFICE has a camera and is assigned to take pictures while you conduct the tour. Taking pictures during the tour captures a real-life moment rather than the canned smiles of posed pictures. Send copies of the pictures to the Government Relations Department so that they may be shared with others via the Website and in newsletters.

After the tour

Say thank you again.

Send a thank you to the legislator and a copy to any staff that attended.

Make sure to follow up.

Answer any open questions that came up during the tour and make yourself available as a resource to answer questions about the company and the industry.

The supporting cast.

Thank your other guests, including your employees and other managers who might have attended.

Keep in contact.

Write or call your legislator at least twice each year to let them know what is happening with your business in their district and to ask if they have any questions.

CAUTION: *There are legal issues to consider when conducting campaign-related visits. If the legislator is visiting as part of a campaign, you absolutely must call the Government Relations Department before committing to the event.*

Facts to know and share

- How many workers did your branch put to work last year? How many people did the company put to work in the state?
- How many customers did you serve last year?
- How many dollars did the company contribute to the state's economy through temporary worker wages?
- Who are your most well-known customers? Who are some of your smallest customers?
- If you have a good safety record, share it.
- Do you partner with local organizations that help your workers? Who? How?
- Tell them about the Community Involvement Fund if you have used it.

Best Times to Schedule Site Visits

With state legislators, find out when session ends and invite them for a tour then. However, issue the invitation before session ends. Sometimes you will need to invite the legislator a few time before you succeed in setting a date. With local officials, nearly any time works as long as you can work around their schedule. Most local council members also have day jobs—serving on the council is their night job, their temporary job.

For most of the year, members of Congress are in Washington, DC. However, during recesses and scheduled breaks, legislators return home. Some legislators return home for a long Friday to Monday weekend at least once a month. Call the District Scheduler to discuss the best opportunities. Below are the typical time frames each year when Congress is on a district work period.

- President's Day (mid-February)
- Easter/Passover (March or April)
- Memorial Day (late May)
- Week of July 4th
- Summer (August to Labor Day)
- Target Adjournment (early October)

Follow up

After you've visited a potential customer for the first time, chances are you're going to follow up with a second visit, a phone call, or some other sort of contact. You'll also need to follow up to nurture your new relationship with your legislator. To develop a truly useful relationship you must remember to follow up.

- After your meeting or LOCAL OFFICE tour, write a thank you letter.
- If you see an article or pick up some literature about a topic you know is important to your legislator, send it to them along with a brief note.
- Every time you write, call, or visit your legislator or their staff, mention the last time you contacted them.
- Did your LOCAL OFFICE make a goal? Do you have a good success story to share about a worker or a small business that used your LOCAL OFFICE? Let your legislator know.
- Try to contact your legislator at least twice a year, quarterly is better.
- Ask to receive the legislator's newsletter. Respond when you see something that interests you.
- Don't forget to do the same thing with any staff members that you have worked with.

Samples & Resources

- **COMPANY** Issue Talking Points
- Responding to Objections
- Sample Action Alert
- Sample Phone Call Action Alert
- Legislative Event Checklist
- LOCAL OFFICE Tour Checklist & Agenda
- Sample Letter: Legislative Request
- Sample Letter: Thank You for Legislative Staff
- Sample Letter: Thank You for Members
- Forms of Address
- **COMPANYCAN** Legislative Event Report
- Legislative contact tracker
- Useful Websites
- American Staffing Association

(via e-mail)

COMPANYCAN: Action Requested on AB 123

We are facing a legislative challenge that will impact your business. If passed, Assembly Bill 123 would require staffing agencies, including temporary day labor staffing services, to divulge their bill rates to their temporary workers upon dispatch. Next Wednesday the bill will be heard in the Commerce and Labor Committee. Please take a few minutes now to call or send a fax to your legislator explaining why this bill is unnecessary and could harm your business and your ability to put people to work.

We are asking each of you, and any other LOCAL OFFICE employees who would like to participate, to contact your legislators and members of the House Commerce and Labor Committee to let them know that you oppose this bill.

It is important that these messages come from you rather than the corporate office because as constituent you vote for these legislators, and your voice means more than a million letters from **COMPANY HQ** State.

Please call committee members now and then call or write your own representative.

Attached:

- *A list of representatives by LOCAL OFFICE zip and a list of committee members.
- *Sample phone script.
- *Sample letter to be mailed or faxed.

Don't forget to make the letter personal and include your own address to show you are a constituent. If you believe that your (personal) representative is different than what is listed, please visit www.vote-smart.org and enter your zip code.

Please let me know when you have completed this task so I can record the contact. Your participation is appreciated and yours could be the voice that makes the difference.

Again, thank you for your time.

Thank you,

Gov't. Relations Coordinator
COMPANY
 XXXXXXX@XXXXXXXX.com
 XXX-XXX-XXXX, extension XXXX

Legislative Event Checklist

- Reserve date and time.
- Review talking points and event memo.
- Rehearse anecdotes, **COMPANY** story, and 30-second commercial.
- Find directions to event.
- Call other attendees and coordinate carpool, meeting place, and logistics
- Show time!
- Follow up with thank you letter to member (get answers to any open questions).
- E-mail or call the Government Relations Department with brief event report: include names of staff members and members that you met and synopsis of any discussions; are there any questions that need answered; do you want help with the thank you letter?

LOCAL OFFICE Tour Checklist & Agenda

Before Event

- Call the Government Relations department for help coordinating the event and for materials.
- Call to invite legislator or official. Offer several dates to choose from. Call early, up to two months in advance.
- Follow phone invitation with formal written invitation.
- Invite your co-workers, local **COMPANYCAN** and **COMPANYPAC** members, and any other employees who would like to meet the legislator.
- Ask legislative staff if press is desired or welcome, if so, call **COMPANY PRESS RELATIONS DEPT.**
- Do your research, know your numbers, think of anecdotes to share.
- Arrange for someone to take pictures.
- Pre-tour discussion with other attendees about who will say what and when.
- Clean your LOCAL OFFICE (including the bathrooms).
- Make a fresh pot of coffee.

During Tour

- All **COMPANY** attendees should be at the LOCAL OFFICE at least 15 minutes ahead of start time.
- Introduce yourself and everyone else.
- Tell the **COMPANY** story (don't forget your numbers).
- Take official through the facility
- Listen to the legislator's concerns and answer any questions.
- Say thank you.

After Tour

- Send thank you letter to official.
- Thank other employees who attended.
- Follow up to answer any open questions.
- Schedule follow up call in three or four months.

Forms of Address

| Addressee | Address on Letter and Envelope | Salutation and Complimentary Close |
|--|--|---|
| United States Senator (in district) | The Honorable (full name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510 or The Honorable (full name) United States Senator (local address) 00000 | Dear Senator (surname): Sincerely, |
| Committee Chair | The Honorable (full name) Chairman/Chairwoman, Committee on (name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510 | Dear Mr Chairman: Dear Madam Chairwoman: Sincerely, |
| United States Representative (in Washington, DC) (In district) | The Honorable (full name) House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 or The Honorable (full name) Member, United States House of Representatives (local address) 00000 | Dear Representative (surname): Sincerely, |

State and Local Governments

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Governor of a State | The Honorable (full name) Governor of (name of State) (local address) 00000 | Dear Governor (surname): Sincerely, |
| State Senator | The Honorable (full name) (name of State) Senate (local address) 00000 | Dear Mr./Ms. (surname): Sincerely, |
| State Representative, Assemblymember, or Delegate | The Honorable (full name) (name of State) House of Representatives (or Assembly or House of Delegates) (local address) 00000 | Dear Mr./Ms. (surname): Sincerely, |
| Mayor | The Honorable (full name) Mayor of (name of city) (local address) 00000 | Dear Mayor (surname): Sincerely, |
| President of a Board of Commissioners | The Honorable (full name) President, Board of Commissioners of (name of city) (local address) 00000 | Dear Mr./Ms.(surname): Sincerely, |

COMPANYCAN Legislative Event Report

Your Name: _____

State: _____ Date of Contact: _____

Elected Official/Staff Contacted: _____

Relationship with Legislator/Staff

Purpose of Visit

_____ Did not previously know of individual

_____ Educational overview of **COMPANY**

_____ Heard of individual but never met

_____ To request specific action on legislation being considered by the State Legislature or U.S. Congress

_____ Met once or twice previously on company and/or other matters

If yes, identify bill _____

_____ Know each other and occasionally visit

Was objective achieved? ___Yes ___No

_____ Friend of contact

Other _____

Describe reaction to issue(s) _____

Other issues discussed _____

Planned follow-up (check all that apply)

_____ Thank you letter completed on _____

_____ Additional meeting scheduled with _____

_____ LOCAL OFFICE tour scheduled for _____

Fax completed form to the Government Relations Department at XXX-XXX-XXXX

Government Relations Relationship Tracker

Do you have relationships with lawmakers in your city, county, or state? If you don't, do you know someone who does? Perhaps your next door neighbor, one of your branch managers, or your sister knows the Minority Whip of your state's legislature.

Please help us create a database to track our relationships with legislators, city and county council members, and other elected and appointed government officials by completing this form. Please record the contact no matter how small it may seem to you.

Please return completed forms to the Government Relations Department by e-mail or fax to XXX.XXX.XXXX.

Your name: _____

LOCAL OFFICE, District, Area: _____

| Name of Official | Type of Relationship | Last Contact |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| <i>Example: City Councilmember Amy Hunt</i> | <i>Golfing buddy</i> | <i>November 2005</i> |
| <i>Example: U.S. Senator Rainer</i> | <i>Call frequently to comment on voting record</i> | <i>Wrote last month</i> |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Comments: _____

Useful Websites

- Project Vote Smart www.vote-smart.org – Enter your zip code to find out how to contact all of your legislators.
- Real Clear Politics www.realclearpolitics.com & Political News Daily www.politicalnewsdaily.com – Collects political news stories from multiple news sources.
- All Politics www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS – CNN’s user-friendly politics page.
- U.S. Senate www.senate.gov and U.S. House of Representatives www.house.gov – Includes a complete list of legislative contacts and a bill-tracking utilities.
- Thomas: Legislative Information on the Internet, Library of Congress—thomas.loc.gov.
- Each state also has a legislative Website that lists information about each legislator and offers a bill search or tracking page. You can find these sites by visiting Project Vote Smart or Politics Nationwide www.politicsnationwide.com.
- Do you know your Constitution? www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution_transcript.html.
- School House Rock tells you how a bill becomes a law: www.school-house-rock.com/Bill.html.
- Learn the terms from the Senate’s online glossary www.senate.gov/reference/glossary_term/cloture.htm and learn more about the legislative process from the Senate’s Virtual Reference Desk www.senate.gov/pagelayout/reference/b_three_sections_with_teasers/virtual.htm.