

Lobbying Strategies at the State Level

Public Affairs Council
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Agenda

- Key State Lobbying Dynamics
- Planning for Success
- Strategic Engagement
- Grassroots Engagement
- Leveraging Relationships & Coalitions



Key State Lobbying Dynamics

- Understanding the 50-State Rules & Procedures
- Leadership vs. Committee Driven Dynamics
- “Speed Kills” – Pace of Legislative Cycles
- National Interests at Stake in Local Issues Fights
- Anti-Federal Policy Mindset
- Out-of-State vs. In-State Perceptions
- Increased Nationalization of Local Elections



What is Success for Your Organization...



Planning for Success

Defined Government Affairs Goals

1. Defense
2. Offense
3. Reputation

Appropriate Resources & Organization

- Staffing
- Intelligence Infrastructure
- Culture

Planning for Success

- Be familiar with the different deadlines and procedures in the states where you are engaged.
- What internal expectations should I set and with whom?
- From what internal stakeholders do I need to get to “buy in” to the strategy?
- Know your state and local ethics laws inside and out.



Planning for Success

- Is my business disrupting traditional statutory and regulatory regimes?
- Do I need to pass or kill a bill?
- Can I amend a bill or live with amendments?
- What is the underlying budget situation



Planning for Success

- Defined Policy “Ask”
- Politically Viable & Understandable Rationale
- Economic/Constituent Impact
- Situational Political Analysis
- Having a “Plan B” & “Plan C”



Strategic Engagement Plan: Strengths & Priorities

- What are my strengths? Political chits, assets located in a key district...
- Is pursuing this bill going to harm my chances in achieving other strategic priorities? Need to assess impact on both short term and long term priorities.
- Should I float a bill this year knowing it's going to die, but with the primary goal of giving the issue a chance to be socialized? If my bill gets slaughtered, do I look foolish re-introducing it next year, thus jeopardizing my longer-term strategy?
- What is my business client willing to live with vs. when is the point to cut and run?

Strategic Engagement: What's Your Message?

- Do I need to launch a full fledged “issue campaign” on this particular public policy initiative?
- Messaging must, must, must be consistent not only from your organization’s GR department but with PR resources as well. Do I need a media relations plan? Am I going to engage grass roots efforts (social media, letter writing, etc.?)
- Can a contract lobbyist deliver the message effectively? Do I need to be on the ground? Do I need my SMEs to attend meetings and hearings?
- You must be viewed by the legislator as a subject matter expert. You and your organization’s credibility is at stake.

Strategic Engagement: Defensive Theory of Escalation

- Limited resources
- 50-state legislative tracking
- Strategic evaluation of responses
 - Getting “on the record” and engaging
 - Leveraging on the ground resources
 - “Parachuting-in” on key issues and threats
 - Targeted grassroots engagement
 - Coalition development
- Retained lobbyists as a last resort



Strategic Engagement: Proactive Theory of Protection

Offense to Achieve Strategic Advantages

vs

Offense as a Means to the Best Defense

- “Mange Your Own Destiny”
- Finding Solutions & Being Constructive
- Cultivating Champions
- Forming & Driving Coalitions



Tailoring Your Message to a State Legislator's Interests: Be Tactful

- Timing – other critical events may be happening the day you decide to storm the Capitol... Are budget negotiations ongoing? Are elections coming up?
- Tell legislators what your opponents are going to say. What are the needs of your opponents?
- If there is a fiscal impact, make it very clear why the costs are far outweighed by the benefits.



Grassroots Development

- Basic Necessity Today
- Finding Engaged Local Interests
- Providing Training and Incentive
- Reducing Obstacles to Participation
- Evolving Social Media Strategies
- Thanking Engaged Participants



Leveraging Coalitions & Relationships

- Local Engagement Critical to Success – Especially if it is a National Interest Issue
- Existing Interested Stakeholder Networks
- Knowing the Local Economic Impact
- Sponsoring and Engaging Local Advocates
- Educating Empowering Local Interests
- Knowing When to Stay Home and Go



Critical Failures

- Flawed Rationale
- Intense Negative Media Environment
- “Not Being Present”
- Lack of Preparation & Multi-Faceted Strategy
- Arrogance About Your Position
- “Washington Knows Best”
- Uncontrollable Political Forces





**The Best Way to Predict the Future...
Is to Create It.**

Thank You

Andrew Hackman

Serlin Haley, LLP

202-570-8526

ahackman@serlinhaley.com

Dustin Brighton

Internet Association

202-847-6410

brighton@internetassociation.org



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