

YLA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Lobbyist



*Preparing the Next
Generation of Civic Leaders*



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Lobbying: The Professional Art of Political Persuasion

Choose the Issues/Bills

- ◆ Select Bill topics that interest you. Choose Bills that will be considered in different time slots.
- ◆ Examine the Bill content carefully.
- ◆ Decide whether you are pro or con.

Research the Issue thoroughly

- ◆ Research both sides of the issue.
- ◆ Talk to experts in your community.
- ◆ Call or write to the "Special Interest" groups who lobby on this issue.

Prepare your case

- ◆ Compile the supporting data.
- ◆ Simplify your message.
- ◆ Do not exaggerate.
- ◆ Be prepared to refute your opponent's position.
- ◆ Anticipate questions.
- ◆ Decide if the problem can be resolved by an amendment.

Pre-YG Strategy

- ◆ Draft your testimony and supporting materials.
- ◆ Practice with your delegation.

Call or write to the:

Committee Chair
Cabinet/Governor
Bill Authors
Other Legislators
Press Editor

Committee Strategy

- ◆ Manage your time wisely.
- ◆ Identify yourself beforehand to the Committee Chair.
- ◆ Keep testimony brief (5 minutes).
- ◆ Make good use of handouts, charts, and graphs.
- ◆ Suggest amendments, if helpful.
- ◆ Prepare individual members with questions to ask the authors.
- ◆ Monitor the discussion carefully.

Floor Strategy

- ◆ Prepare individual Members facts to use in Floor debate.
- ◆ Seek out especially the Members:
 - From the Committee who are sympathetic to your point of view.
 - With a good reputation for speaking articulately.
 - Monitor debate closely.

Lobbying the Governor

- ◆ Attempt to establish an early rapport with the appropriate Cabinet Officer/Lt. Governor/Governor.
- ◆ Should the bill pass the House or Senate, seek a meeting with the Governor.
- ◆ Be brief, yet persuasive.
- ◆ Provide the Governor with an accurate sense of the Committee and Floor debate.

What else?

- ◆ Seek press coverage. Prepare press releases.
- ◆ Build coalitions with other Lobbyists.

- ◆ Be creative. Use your imagination.
- ◆ Be courteous and professional (Your foe in one fight could be your friend in the next round).

Youth Lobbyist Program

Purpose

Lobbyists work to influence the outcome of Legislation before Committees, the Legislature, and the Governor.

Participation

- ◆ Twenty (20) or less students may participate.
- ◆ Lobbyists positions are reserved by November 16th (Ohio), December 10th (WV) on the Participation Agreement.
- ◆ No more than one (1) student per delegation may serve as Lobbyist.
- ◆ Persons registered as Legislators, Supreme Court Judges, or other delegate categories cannot transfer to the Lobbyist program at the Final Deadline.

Training Requirement

Lobbyists must attend their State Lobbyist Training session in February.

If you cannot attend the training session, do not sign up to be a Lobbyist or ask for an exception to this requirement.

Bills You Will Lobby

At the Lobbyist Training, Lobbyists choose 6 to 7 Bills to research and lobby at the Student Legislature.

Preparation

Prior to the Lobbyist Training, Lobbyists research areas of interest. They then choose Bills in those interest areas. Once Lobbyists choose their Bills in February, they prepare to effectively lobby for their position on these Bills before Committee, the Cabinet, and with individual Legislators.

Information

Your Advisor, your Lobbyist Manual, and Lobbyist Coordinator all can help.

The Role of the Lobbyist

Lobbyists represent special interests and work to persuade Legislators to support, change, or oppose Bills. Lobbyists use many techniques to influence Legislation. Included are:

Communication/Influence

Lobbyists ask questions of, talk with, and listen to Legislators and Members of the Executive Office. They prepare "media" type props (posters, pictures, displays, fact sheets, newspaper articles, press coverage, editorials, etc.). Visibility is essential.

Expertise/Information

Lobbyists, because they concentrate on a few Bills, often are better informed and prepared on specific issues than Legislators or the Governor and Cabinet. The advantage of factual and organizational preparedness make the Lobbyists effective opinion makers and cause decision makers to seek them out for information.

Committee Hearings

Lobbyists speak for and against Bills in Committee. They are not members of a Committee and they do not vote. Lobbyists prepare Committee presentations of about 3 – 5 minutes per Bill. Lobbyists are prepared to answer questions from the Committee.

Meetings With Professional Lobbyists

Youth Lobbyists have an opportunity to meet, ask questions of and discuss issues with professional Lobbyists.

Training

Youth Lobbyists training is the Officer and Candidate Training/Bill Rating in February. Additional training is offered by local delegations.

Interest Groups

There are many interest groups. Some are long term while others may exist for only a short time on an issue. Interest groups are often broad in scope and include different perceptions and approaches to problems within their own group. Many are coalitions of several or many different groups with a shared common cause. As a Lobbyist you represent one or more interests and may often participate in coalitions of interest groups.

A few examples of interest groups include. . .

Business	Education
Education Reform	Government & Government Reform
Environment	Financial Institutions
Labor	Law Enforcement
Poverty	Civil Rights
Taxes	Community Development
Tort Reform	

As you prepare to be a Lobbyist, determine the areas you are interested in and want to represent. At the Lobbyist Training you will select the legislation you will lobby based on your interest.

Categories of Lobbyists

Single Private Interest Lobbyists represent a single industry, corporation, or interest.

Multiple Interest Lobbyists contract or free-lance to represent clients in a variety of fields.

Public Utilities Lobbyists are employed by utility companies because they are regulated by the state. These single interest Lobbyists must have a detailed knowledge of state rate-setting.

Association and Labor Union Lobbyists represent large statewide associations like teachers, state employees, voters, nurses, workers, etc.

Local and Regional Government Lobbyists represent cities, counties, associations of city and county officials, mass transit districts, and other regional government groups.

State Agency Lobbyists, often called "Legislative Coordinator," "Council," or "Legislative Secretary," represent state agencies. They do not have to register as legislative advocates.

Public Interest Lobbyists as a category identifies those who represent consumer protection, environment, civil liberties, children, the poor, etc.

Lobbyists do not recognize the distinctions or categorization of their work. When they are competing for the attention of a Legislator they see their similarities rather than their differences. Lobbyists see themselves as essential to the democratic process. They are communicators of their "employers" or "clients" concerns to the Legislature and administrative agencies.

"Communication is the basic commodity around here," said one salaried Lobbyist. "The biggest problem is getting an opportunity to communicate with a Legislator. It is increasingly hard to find them in their offices, because they are at hearings while the Lobbyist is at other hearings, or the Legislators are working back home. So you try to get a few minutes in a hallway or at a dinner or luncheon. The problem is finding time to make one's concerns known so that they can be dealt with."

The information that Lobbyists provide is essential to the legislative process and can help protect the public against capricious or faulty legislation. Professor Frank Newman of the University of California

School of Law in Berkeley emphasized this in testimony before a legislative committee. "I think we would have a healthier government if we had more Lobbyists and more groups of our citizens were represented."

Techniques of Lobbying

GOAL:

To secure passage, defeat or amendment to a particular Bill. All the activities of the Lobbyist are geared to achieve this goal. How you get there is just as important, if not more so than achieving legislative success. The key is to learn, to help educate others, to work well with others, and to have a good time in your work.

TOOLS:

The most important tools of a Lobbyist are credibility, good information, and making the best of their own personality. There is no stereotypical model for a Lobbyist. Lobbyists are most effective when they work hard, are prepared, are honest, and are friendly. Most important, be yourself. Give the Legislators a positive reason to agree with you.

GETTING READY:

Before you are at Youth in Government, read and understand the Bills you are lobbying. Do the research necessary to answer these questions:

- ◆ Do problems exist making the proposed change of law necessary?
- ◆ What changes will the Bill make to existing law?
- ◆ Will the Bill help solve the problem? How?
- ◆ What are the arguments supporting and opposing the Bill?
- ◆ Is the Bill well written?
- ◆ What amendments could improve the Bill?
- ◆ Do you think the Bill should be passed?

DOING IT:

- ◆ Prepare a 3 – 5 minute speech supporting your views and present it to the Committee hearing your Bill. Remember, prepare before Youth in Government.
- ◆ Do some real lobbying! Before the Committee hearing, talk to each Legislator and try to convince them to support your position. Good times to do this include:
 - Before the Committee meets. Approach them, introduce yourself.
 - If the Bill is about to reach the House or Senate, stand outside the Chamber and talk with Legislators as they arrive.
 - At the hotel, meal times, breaks.
 - Almost any time you see a Legislator who will be voting on your Bill, talk with them.
- ◆ Make the Bill partly yours by writing an amendment. Convince Committee Members to support your idea. Get the Authors to support it.
- ◆ Prepare a handout explaining your position. Have copies for every Committee Member, the Authors, and the Governor's Cabinet. Handouts need to include your name, the Bill number and title, and a brief statement of your position.
- ◆ Convince the Youth in Government Press to cover your Bill.
- ◆ Gain the support of the Governor and Cabinet.
- ◆ If the Bill is passed out of Committee and you want it defeated, try to get the Governor to veto it.
- ◆ Build coalitions. If you are in favor of the Bill, work with the Authors and others who support it. If you want it defeated, work with those who are against the Bill.
- ◆ Remember: Your work to influence legislation is about making our state a better place for everyone.

Lobbyist Guide for Writing Speeches

- ◆ Choose Bills of interest to you. Read and make sure you understand the Bill.
- ◆ Write down your best arguments for your position. Briefly list the facts, examples and quotations supporting each of your best arguments. Organize your arguments in a logical order. Use your best ideas and arguments first.
- ◆ Anticipate what your opponents will say. Write down each of their best points that you think of and

your response.

- ◆ On another piece of paper, outline your speech. You only have 3 – 5 minutes to make your point. Concentrate on making and supporting only a few major points that support your position.

Introduction: State your name and tell the Committee whether you favor or oppose the Bill.

Signposting: State in the order you will present them, the major points you will make.

The Speech: Discuss each major point. Develop your support for each point through facts, quotations, stories, examples, etc.

- ◆ Organize the points you make in a logical manner that leads to a conclusion of why the Committee should vote the way you want.
- ◆ Discuss why the opposition's arguments are not valid and why their conclusions are not logical.
- ◆ Visual aids help. Be creative and present what you think is most important.
- ◆ Conclusion: Tie together your main points in a few sentences and explain why they lead to only one conclusion, voting your way. Be persuasive. Then, thank the Committee and, if you wish, leave time for questions.

Your Presentation

Visual aids help get your point across. Pictures, graphs, and handouts relevant to your speech help give a visual picture of the problem that will stay in the minds of the Committee. Be Creative!

How you make your presentation is as important as how well you write it. Know your speech so you can tell the Committee a story rather than reading them a speech. Put a lot of energy into your delivery and remember to always have eye contact.