

### ***Finding your Legislator***

- If you want to talk with your legislator, first check the Senate/House floor to see if they're there. (You can also get a sense of whether they're debating a hot-button topic). You might want to take the opportunity to ID other legislators you want to talk with as well.
  - You can see onto the floor from the House or Senate Gallery, both located on the third floor
  - "Face books" are a very helpful tool in identifying your legislator, and figuring out where they sit.
- Head back downstairs to the Sergeant-At-Arms table (green coats in the House; maroon coats in the Senate) where you can fill out a note for your legislator. The Sergeant-At-Arms will carry your note into the chamber and to your legislator
  - It's generally fine to send in multiple notes at once; it's rare for legislators to immediately come out
- Mill around and wait for your legislator to come out.
  - If you wait more than 20 minutes, chances are they won't be coming out ... you can still wait around for them if they come out to talk w/ someone else
  - Sometimes interns will come to talk w/ you. That doesn't mean you're not important; just means they're busy.
  - Legislators are just regular people, don't be afraid of them.

### ***Lobbying Tips***

- **Greeting** – Ideally people will greet the legislator, shake their hand, introduce themselves, [identify any organization they're with], and let the legislator know what cause they'd like to discuss.
- **Content** – The citizen lobbyist should fairly quickly and concisely articulate their position on the issue at hand, offering a few (no more than 3) reasons to support that position (they can be factual, or personal – but if personal, they should be sincere / heartfelt).
- **Commitment** - Citizen should then ask the legislator about their position on the issue (in a diplomatic / neutral way). "Have you decided your position on this issue?" or "Can we count on your support for the bill?"
  - This seems like a pretty basic thing, but it's something that's fairly easy to forget if you're nervous about lobbying for the first time.
- **Responding / Wrap-up** – (*Depending on the legislator's response, this can be one of the trickiest parts of lobbying ...*) Citizen should respond to the information given to them by the legislator. On a basic level, thank them if they're on the same side; and still politely thank them for their time even if they're not on the same side.
  - *Listening* – Find out what the legislator's issue is. If they're on the fence, why is that? Do they need more information? Are they waiting to see where their colleagues will come out on the issue? Are they more concerned about the direction the political winds are blowing? If possible address their issue on the spot. If that's not possible, think about what it will take to resolve that issue (Providing more information? Getting calls to the legislator from their constituents? Asking one of their colleagues to lobby them...)
  - *Lobbying the opposition* - Some legislators will be immovable on some issues. It's best not to waste your time with those people. You aren't going to convince them in that moment ... However frustrating it may be to speak with an opponent, keep in mind this information is still helpful because it enables us to better count our votes.
  - *Reaffirming commitments* – It's always a good idea at the end of a discussion with a legislator to reaffirm any commitments made during that conversation. If you said you'd get them more information, let them know when you'll get it to them. If they said they would vote your way on a bill, thank them again for their support.