WHY IS LEGISLATIVE INVOLVEMENT IMPORTANT AND HOW CAN I MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

By: Lou Belch
The Corydon Group

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

"It has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried."

-Sir Winston Churchill
British Politician (1874 – 1965)

REACH OUT!

People can and do regularly have an impact on our system of government, even against well-funded interests!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Mead

THINGS THAT INFLUENCE LAWMAKERS

- CONSTITUENTS
- The News Media
- Scholars and Researchers
- Their Own Life Experiences
- Staff
- Community-based Advocates
- Re-election Campaign Strategy
- Contributions

THE GRASSROOTS STAR OF INFLUENCE

Why does an elected official pay attention to you?

- You can VOTE for them
- You do VOLUNTEER for them
- You do COMMUNICATE with them
- You do CONTRIBUTE to them

REASONS TO BECOME POLITICALLY INVOLVED IN AN ISSUE

- You have experienced a life-changing event
- Someone asks you to join
- You are angered by government
- Government should be doing more about a particular issue
- Through your work or experience you have become an expert
- Work you do is affected by government regulation or reimbursement
- You discover that the opposition is speaking louder

THINGS YOU CAN ASK YOUR LAWMAKER TO DO TO HELP YOU WITH AN ISSUE

- Introduce legislation
- Cosponsor legislation that has already been introduced
- Vote for or against a specific proposal
- Introduce, support, or oppose an amendment to a specific piece of legislation
- Talk to another legislator
- Talk to local news media about the issue you care about
- Visit your local or state organization to gain more information about the issue

WAYS TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR

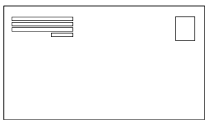
- Mail
- E-mail
- Phone Call
- Personal Visit

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

- Schedule the meeting – call their office, be flexible, be prepared to explain reason for meeting
- Before the meeting – send a confirmation, do your homework, send advance info
- During the meeting – be clear, concise and specific
- After the meeting – send a thank you letter

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LETTER WRITING

- Use proper salutation
- Avoid righteous indignation
- Focus on key points
- In closing – recap your main points and encourage action

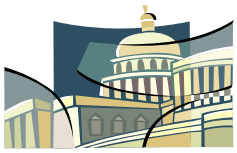


HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

- Indiana Athletic Trainers PAC
- IATA Day at the Statehouse
- Democrat v. Republican Basketball Game
- Write Letters

INDIANA STATE AGENCIES

- In addition to the Indiana General Assembly, there are several state agencies within which Licensed Athletic Trainers interact. These agencies either regulate or pass rules that impact LATs.



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

- Oversight of hospitals
  - Compliant on PT/Supervision
- Infectious Disease MRSA

IPLA

- The umbrella agency for all licensure matters
- Indiana Athletic Trainer Board
  - Rulemaking

RULE PROMULAGATION

- These boards have the authority to write and approve rules that, upon completion of the process, have the full force and effect of law.
- Check out rules being proposed by reading the "Indiana Register". You can find this at: www.in.gov/legislative/register/irtoc.htm

WHAT IS COMING IN 2009?

- The IATA is seeking legislation

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSAL

- Simply requires insurance providers to reimburse LATs for services they are permitted to do by Indiana Law that are covered under the Insurance Policy.

The Indiana General Assembly is a part-time citizen legislature comprised of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Fifty (50) members of the Senate and one hundred (100) members of the House of Representatives are chosen by popular election from legislative districts.

Senators

- Must be 25 years old
- Elected for four (4) year term
- Represent approximately 110,000 people

Representatives

- Must be 21 years old
- Elected for two (2) year term
- Represent approximately 55,000 people

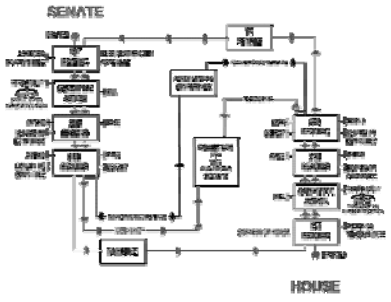
Long Session

- Held in odd-numbered years
- Must be finished before April 30
- The biggest issue is the state budget

2010
Short Session

- Organization Day in November
  - Bill filing begins
- Reconvene in January

There Ought To Be A Law!



How A Bill Becomes A Law

- Legislator has an idea and has a bill drafted.
- The legislator is considered the author of the bill.
- The bill is filed.

2010 Short Session

- Representatives limited to 5 bills
- Senators limited to 10 bills

First Reading

•After the bill is filed it is read for the first time in the Chamber (House or Senate) of the author.

Committee Assignment

- Bill is assigned to a Committee by the Speaker of the House or the President Pro Tem.
- If Committee Chair DECIDES to hear the bill in Committee there is "public" testimony.
  - Bill may be amended by any of the Committee members, with the approval of the rest of the Committee.

2010 Short Session

- Only 3 Committee hearings likely for non-financial Committees. (Ways and Means, Appropriations, and Tax.)

Second Reading

- If the bill is voted out of the Committee, it is read on the Floor of the Chamber (House or Senate) where it started (called the second reading)
- Bill can now be amended by any of the members of that Chamber with the approval of the rest of the Chamber.

Third Reading

- The bill (amended or not) is then ready for the third reading or a vote by the members of that Chamber.
- If the bill is passed, it is then sent to the other Chamber where the process starts over. The bill must have a legislator in the 2nd Chamber to be the sponsor of the proposal.

Is It A Law Yet?

NO!

- IF the bill is passed, it is sent to the other Chamber where the process starts over.
- The bill must have a legislator in the 2nd Chamber to sponsor the proposal.

Second Chamber

- Committee hearing
  - Likely two
- Second reading
- Third reading

•If the bill is amended in the 2nd Chamber, the author of the bill can agree with the changes and concur or disagree and dissent.

•If the author concurs, the bill goes to the Governor for his action.

Dissent

- If the author dissents, the bill is assigned to a Conference Committee
- Conference Committees are made up of 2 Representatives and 2 Senators - who try to come to a consensus

•If a consensus is reached by the Conference Committee, both Chambers get an opportunity to vote on the re-worked bill.

•If a consensus is not reached by the Conference Committee, the bill is dead!

•After a vote on the re-worked bill, if accepted, the bill goes to the Governor for action.

If the Governor signs the bill:

We have a new law!

QUESTIONS?