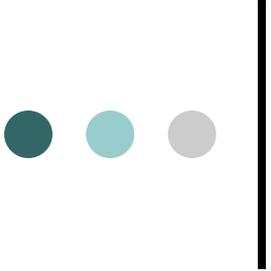
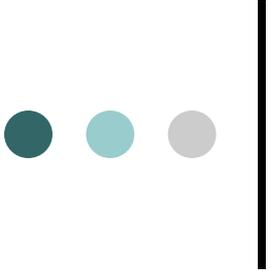


Legislative Advocacy



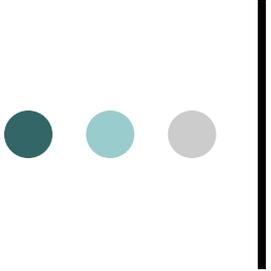
Deciding on Legislative Advocacy

- Can you accomplish your goals through executive action? (only one target=shorter path to victory)
- Is the problem shared by the entire (or most of) locality, state, or nation? (asking a legislative body to address a very localized concern=exercise in frustration)
- Do you have (or can you mobilize) sufficient power to influence the legislative process?



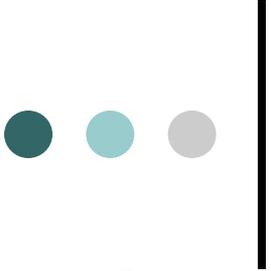
Building Leadership through Legislative Advocacy

- Not all legislative advocacy strategies build power for constituents and organizations
 - “Vote trading”
 - Power-brokering/Arm twisting
 - Vote ‘buying’ (with candidate contributions, etc...)
- For maximum impact, constituent leaders/clients should play key roles in:
 - Charting legislative strategy
 - Assessing legislators’ leanings and doing individual visits/pressuring legislators
 - Conducting research and developing advocacy materials
 - Crafting and delivering testimony
 - Engaging the media



Developing Proposals

- Policy proposals should include the following components:
 - Articulation of the problem (how much, how do you know, why is it bad?)
 - Connection to self-interest (of the policymakers, their constituents, the unit of government)
 - Statement of proposed solution (why is it the best, what else did you consider?)
 - Estimation of costs (or preparation to produce these) and implementation considerations



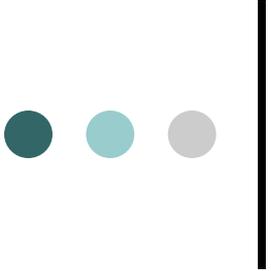
Developing Proposals, cont.

- Questions to consider in developing proposals:
 - Do we want to aim for our ideal and settle on a fallback position, or ask for only what we think we can get?
 - Should legislators be involved in developing the proposal, or do we want to deliver it developed?
 - What role should allies play in shaping proposal specifics?
 - Beyond your core leaders, what input will other constituents have, and how will you control messages about the proposal?
 - What's our 'bottom line' for negotiations?



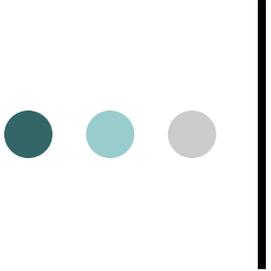
Policy Research

- Where to find the policy research you need:
 - thomas.loc.gov (for Congress)
 - www.kslegislature.org
 - Federal and state agencies for implementation reports
 - Think tanks and quasi-governmental groups have best practices analyses and bill tracking
 - Media coverage for bill passage information, legislative history (www.cjonline.com; www.ljworld.com)
 - Committee secretaries=your best friends
- Translating your research into action:
 - Policy briefs
 - Briefing presentations
 - Talking points (not usually to share with policymakers)
 - Proposals (more fleshed-out briefs)
 - Testimony (persuasion more than information)



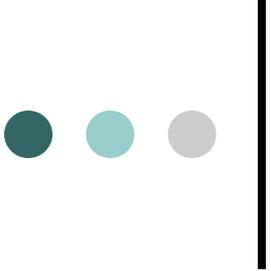
Building Coalitions

- Winning legislative approval for your policies beyond the local level almost always requires collaboration with other organizations/interests
- To identify likely allies:
 - Contact partners with whom you have worked on other initiatives to discuss your proposal
 - Look for media accounts of other organizations concerned about the social problem
 - Contact those whose issues you have supported (quid pro quo)
 - Work with friendly legislators to identify contacts in their districts
 - Ask each coalition partner to identify at least 2 new allied organizations
 - Hold public events in different communities and use media to attract allies (letters to the editor, public event announcements, paid advertising)
 - Use petitions, postcards, and other grassroots strategies to demonstrate support (especially if have few organizations)
 - Identify your opponents and *their* opponents (may be your friends)



Working with Legislative Advocacy Coalitions

- Issues to be managed:
 - Logistics of communication and information flow
 - Possibilities of conflicts of interest (with policymakers, other proposals)
 - Chain of decision-making (especially in negotiations)
 - “Credit” for victories
 - Message, message, message!
 - Process
 - What means are off the table? Who will have what roles?



Influencing Policymakers

- **RELATIONSHIPS!**

- Appeal to interests

- Requires getting to know what they care about, getting affected individuals in front of them, and meeting in person whenever possible

- Present accurate, compelling information

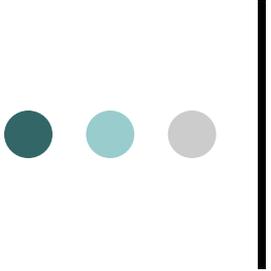
- In accessible format, that makes them look informed

- Make an electoral case

- How it will affect them in direct votes or overall electability

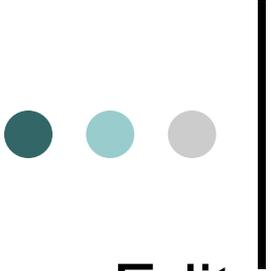
- Use media and public pressure

- Minimize controversy by controlling the debate



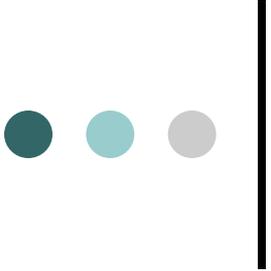
What Doesn't Work

- Emails or other mass communication from those outside of their districts
- Threats related to their elections
- Solely emotional appeals (or solely intellectual ones)—will only firm up your existing support
- Relying on allies to carry your message for you (especially paid lobbyists, who have connections but not your passion)
- Using the exact same message/strategy for all policymakers
- Ignoring the staff to focus only on lawmakers



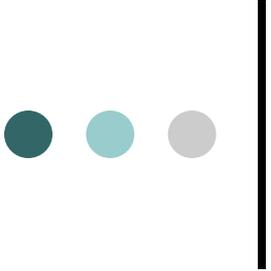
Using the Media

- Editorials
 - Meetings with editorial boards, prepare materials specific to their communities, have a hook
- Letters to the editor
 - Draft letters to be submitted by allies
- Earned media
 - Press advisories, relationships with reporters who cover statehouse/Congress/local government, organization of events to generate coverage, prepare multiple responses as contingencies for votes/actions
- Paid advertising (only buy what you can't get otherwise)
- Collecting information from reporters
- Sharing media coverage with policymakers
 - In packets, for visits, with staff



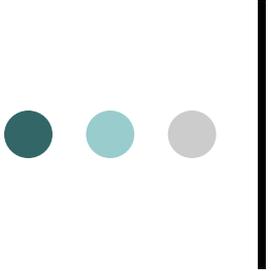
Working through the Process

- How will you negotiate as the process moves, particularly when things move quickly and you have to be accountable to a large constituency?
- Who will be responsible for tracking (must be done multiple times a day during peaks)?
- Who has authority to negotiate and make decisions?
- What role will your legislative sponsors play?
- How will you connect this legislative advocacy to your larger strategy for change?
- What resources do you/other partners bring to the process?



Ensuring Implementation

- Develop your proposal with an eye towards successful implementation
- Get buy-in of your legislative sponsors to support your implementation efforts
- Plan for implementation monitoring as a part of your legislative work
- Stay connected with your media contacts so that you'll have coverage if there's a need for pressure around implementation
- Organize activities to ensure that your constituency continues to take the lead:
 - Meetings with executive agencies and your leaders
 - Coalition public comments
 - Accountability actions if meeting resistance



Considerations of Diversity

- Logistics

- Transportation, childcare, paid time off work

- Access

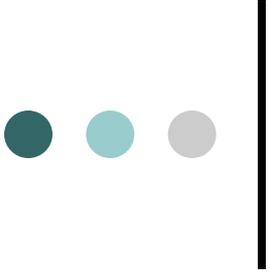
- Language, dress, protocol, security measures

- Power differentials (especially in coalitions)

- Pay attention to spokespeople, different views of the issue, minority representation

- Style/culture

- Comfort confronting authority, experience with negotiation, divulging to media



Questions/Discussion?

- Reading Discussion Questions
- Experiences with legislative advocacy
- Strategies for implementing legislative advocacy into your work
 - Brainstorm 2-4 legislative priorities for your organization (at any level of government)
 - For each issue, list 3 facts you'll need to know, 3 allies who would be helpful, and 3 potential proposals for change
- Questions about the day in Topeka