

# LOBBYISTS 'R' US, AND YOU TOO!!

## So you want to be a lobbyist... well, here's how!

**You may have undiscovered, untapped and unfathomable lobbying talents and NOT EVEN KNOW IT!!! We'll have you lobbying like a sleazy insider in no time!**

**WHY BOTHER?** What's the problem, What's the long-range need?  
One state or larger issue? What states are represented here today?

You may well start as a plain old reactionary: Maintenance of the status quo, the invisible present, requires constant motion and eternal vigilance . . .

- Reactionary - putting out fires or saving the house from foreclosure
- Stopping bills is easier than initiating, follow action and react
- Progressive – most initiatives from outside legislature
- Draft bills, find authors, recruit allies, introduce in committee & testify, timing -Float bills as trial balloons, modify until it gains acceptance
- You cannot effectively be a Lone Ranger, networking & team work . . . essential
- If we're progressive and pro-active, we have less work to do overall, but at the heart of things most lobbying is still working on a problem, either defensively or by offering an alternative view

**Lobbying is SELLING & ADVOCACY - persuading others on their terms.**  
It's not just witnessing your position or belief . . .

**BASIC SKILLS & NECESSITIES** - Skills are learned, you can find necessities

- **FIRST . . . CHECK ON LOBBYIST REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS** in the jurisdiction
- **Information** - you must be credible & present reliable information. Your success depends on it. Lawyers, experts (technical, science) and librarians are asset
- **Speaking and persuasion** - Audacity and Toastmasters . . .
- You need to get in there and make your case, sell it to those with power to buy time - to organize, research, lobby for the duration. Long term process requires long term commitment. Not a single issue game because it takes time to build credibility and there's no instant success.
- Play well with others - coalitions and network -- lose your ego, it's not about you
- Forget partisan politics - your enemies are your friends and your friends are your enemies and it's just the opposite next year! Really! everyone in for the long haul becomes pragmatic on the steps to the end . . . remember battles & wars

**HOW TO FIND THE BATHROOM (& coffee) - what's going on?**

How does it work?? Three branches, Legislative, Executive, and Judicial-

### **Legislative setups**

Members of Legislature – get to know them -- state website has specifics in your state

- Who's representing you? Who/what committees have power over your issue?
- Committees - everything starts in committees - check agendas often
- Flows from committee to committee, then to floor of House & Senate and to governor  
How can you track the action? Nowadays, much can be done from home!

- Web pages - official state legislature sites: [www.leg.state.mn.us](http://www.leg.state.mn.us)

Law libraries: [www.courts.state.mn.us](http://www.courts.state.mn.us) private websites – interest categories

· **Executive setups**

- State Agencies have lobbyists -- lobby them and agency generally  
Find out what issues need legislative help
- Governor has VETO power, it's binary. Some states have line item veto

**Judicial setups** -- Do we have to sue to make the point?

The courts are technically separate, but a good suit can influence or initiate legislation  
(just ask your tailor)

**LEGISLATION CASE STUDIES AND OTHER PAINFUL EXAMPLES OF REALITY**

**PROGRESSIVE** - As good as it gets. Have authors supporting effort, handshakes and backslapping, more eyes watching than reactive efforts

**Corporate farming ban** - MN & SD

MN - good but loopholes that will require modification

SD - good but legally flawed, Referendum repair failed . . . this time!

**HALF- ASS PROGRESSIVE** - Industry/agency/legislative/advocacy group & individuals

**2001 Energy Bill - MN** - Increased state regulatory authority over transmission lines by lowering thresholds, provided for utility choice of local jurisdiction as regulator, initiated state transmission planning process and state energy plan, Reliability Administrator for technical assistance. Greenwashing? (money for capitulation, reticence). "Enviros know best" paternalism-- who are groups representing?

**REACTIONARY** - legislation in hasty response to other legislation or policy or lawsuit

**"Right to Farm" - IA - MN**

IA - Limits nuisance suits against ag polluters - judiciary finds unconstitutional

How do you get the legislature to follow judiciary?

MN - yearly efforts to broaden exemptions . . . legal challenges in the future?

**"Buy the Farm" - MN** - Legislature tried to take away right of landowners to require a utility condemn entire parcel rather than easement only for a transmission line, which allows landowners to move away if they choose rather than suffer health effects and property value diminution. Response to 2001 Energy Bill and utilities facing landowners in two transmission cases.

· **JUDICIAL - LEGISLATION INFLUENCED BY CASE LAW**

**MRR** - Environmental Review of Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trails

Became issue in the legislature after lawsuit and 3 page spread in paper created extensive interest, legislation divided friends, greenwashing - divisive bottom line

How to deal with danger - response: "let's go study"

**IT'S LAW, DUH! WE ARE MAKING LAW WHEN WE LOBBY . . .  
REAL CHANGE (policy shifting) IS LONG TERM - PLAN ON 10 YEARS**

**YOU CAN WIN, IF YOU DON'T QUIT!**

**Motivational speaker cliché is true: WHOEVER KEEPS SHOWING UP WINS**

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