



Lobbying, Advocacy:

Why It's Critical to Getting Things Done...

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Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
January 28, 2010



What does "Advocacy" mean?

- 1 : the profession or work of an advocate
- 2 : the action of advocating, pleading for, or supporting a cause or proposal – **educate**
- 3: legislative and policy advocacy - attempt to create changes in systems and policies that impact many people



What does "Lobbying" mean?

- **Lobbying** is the practice of influencing decisions made by government. It includes all attempts to influence legislators and officials, whether by other legislators, constituents or organized groups
- A **lobbyist** is a person who tries to influence legislation on behalf of a special interest or a member of a lobby. Governments often define and regulate organized group lobbying.



Advocacy v. Lobbying

- Lobbying: activities that ask legislators to take a specific position on a specific piece of legislation, or urge others to do the same (IRS definition for non-profits)
- Advocacy: any activity that a person or organization undertakes to influence policy - includes educating, providing information, arguing a cause



Who do we Advocate to?

- National level advocacy
- State level advocacy
- Local level advocacy
- Internally, within our own organization....Boards, Campuses



Why Does Advocacy Matter?

- **First Question, prior to today...does your Representative or either Senator know who you are? State paper, ie. Denver Post?**
- U.S. Government must address the needs of:
 - Millions of Americans
 - Infinite number of issues
- Limitations:
 - Time
 - Money
 - Manpower
- If you want your issue recognized, you have to educate, advocate, and/or lobby!



Why does Advocacy Matter, cont.

- Members of Congress and their staffs can not be aware of all issues nor are they experts in all areas –
 - Advocacy is an effective and proven way to inform policy makers about issues important to or organizations that you care about
 - Additionally, the more **you** are in contact with your Members of Congress, the more recognition they have for you and your organization.



National Politics/Advocacy

- Lobbying/advocating with Congressional members
- The “beltway” -outside of DC? Do they ever get out of DC?
- National “lobbying” and “advocacy” organizations, DC?



Finding Your Members of Congress

- Everyone is represented by 1 Member of the House and 2 Senators
- House of Representatives (District)
 - www.house.gov (ZIP Code)
 - www.usps.com (ZIP Code + 4)
- Senate (Senator(s) Bennett & Udall)
 - www.senate.gov
 - Click on “Senators”
- Visit their website (s)



The Basics

- | <u>House of Representatives</u> | <u>Senate</u> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 435 seats – elected by district • Each district contains approximately 650,000 people • More populous states have larger delegations • Reapportioned every 10 years by state • 2-year term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 seats – elected by state • 2 Senators per state • 6-year term |



Division of Power

- | <u>House of Representatives</u> | <u>Senate</u> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 256 Democrats • 178 Republicans • 1 Vacancies • Democrats control agenda • Historically narrow margin • Simple majority, 218 • 290 votes needed to override a veto | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 58 Democrats • 40 Republicans • 2 Independents (Caucus w/ Democrats) • Democrats control agenda - need 60 votes, filibuster-proof, 67 to override a veto • Historically narrow margin |

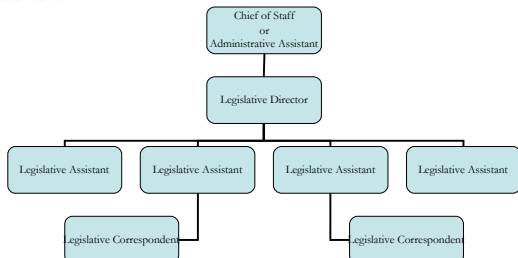


Congressional Office / Staff Organization

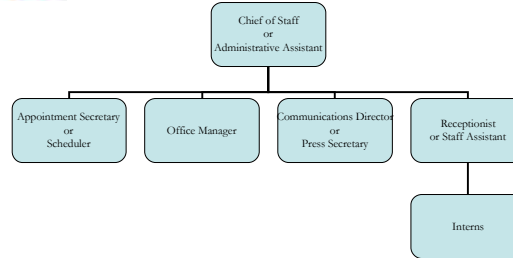
- Washington, D.C. Office
 - Policy
- State / District Offices
 - Casework



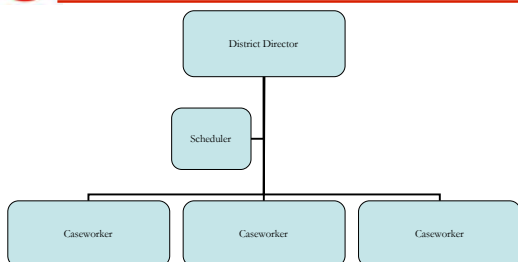
Washington Office Organization: Legislative Staff



Washington Office Staff: Non-Legislative Staff



State / District Office Staff



Where do I begin? Methods of Advocacy

ACTIVE

- Meet with your Members of Congress (locally and nationally)
- Call your Members of Congress (locally and nationally)
- Issue an Advocacy Alert
 - Highlight the identified issue via email, in center handouts, on signs, as part of a newsletter or as a direct mail piece to identified stakeholders
 - Make sure the alert includes WHAT specific message you wish your stakeholders to send and HOW they can do it
- TIP: though many people may be comfortable writing or calling their Member of Congress, others may need a script and steps to follow
- Have "sign on" campaign to gather signatures from constituents asking for specific action



Methods of Advocacy

PASSIVE

- Post information about legislation in the lobby
- Provide hand out information to all visitors
- Include updates in newsletters



Establishing Relationships: Meetings

- Face-to-Face meetings are ideal for beginning a relationship
- Variety of possible locations:
 - Local offices
 - National office
 - Program sites: school, shelter, non-profit office
 - Events



Meetings: Who?

- Legislator: if you develop a positive relationship with the legislator himself or herself, the legislator will direct staff to make the issue a priority (important because of staff turnover)
- U.S. Representatives often easier to reach than Senators, except in small states
- Legislators can be hard to reach; they don't "do" details, nor do they have much time
- Staff are critical; they have tremendous influence. Good relations with staff are essential.



Meetings: How?

- Call in advance
- Ask to speak with scheduler (to meet with legislator) or person responsible for elementary and secondary education (staff, usually "legislative assistant")
- Tell them your topic, group size, and participants ("I'd like to share information about what our district/community is doing to help homeless children succeed in school, and where we need your help")
- Follow up with a letter, phone call or email



Prepare for the Meeting

- Schedule a Meeting for all Attendees to Prepare
- Learn the Issues
- Develop Talking Points
- Prepare Background Materials - Limit Volume
- Identify the Lead Speaker
- Identify Order of Other Speakers
- Assign a Note Taker
- Assign an Individual to Write Follow-Up Letter (s)



Meetings: When?

- **Now!** Before a crisis, bill, or vote; background education is essential for relationship-building
- At the beginning of a new Congressional season - new staff, new priorities
- As specific legislation develops, it is important weigh in to help shape it
- In response to impending votes or actions



Meetings: Content and Flow

- Ask if they are familiar with the topic, ie. SCHIP
- Usually, they will say no, or "a little" - then provide a nutshell summary
- If they say "yes," respond with "That's great" and find ways to include some of the basics as you speak
- Think of the meeting as a conversation, not a presentation: watch for body language cues, pick up on their interests, encourage questions, ask questions



Meetings, Continued

- Don't be intimidated - you are the expert! They work for you.
- If you don't know an answer, tell them you'll get back to them; don't be thrown by jargon
- Present broad statements, supported by specifics ("accomplishments and challenges")
- Research the Member's priorities - frame the issue accordingly
- Provide real case studies and stories; provide a face to the issue, **visuals are meaningful!**



Meeting: Wrapping Up

- Provide only a few concise written materials (bullets and white space!)
- Conclude with your “ask.” prioritize your requests and state the specific commitments you are seeking, i.e. “We’re wondering if you’d cosponsor SB 625?” What might an appropriate timeline be for me to get back to you to determine cosponsorship?”



After the Meeting:

- Follow up with a thank you letter that summarizes the meeting and the commitment you are seeking
- Offer yourself as a resource to them
- Keep in touch - find ways to maintain the relationship separate from the “ask” (i.e. newsletter, news stories, invitations, accomplishments)



Tips for Correspondence with Congress



Tips for Correspondence with Congress

- Top Ten List for Correspondence:

- 1. Always Be Polite
- 2. Be Clear as to Whom You Are and Why You Are Writing
- 3. Be Concise and Informed
- 4. Personalize Your Message
- 5. Be Honest and Accurate
- 6. Be Modest in Your Request
- 7. Be of Assistance and Serve as a Resource
- 8. Express Appreciation
- 9. Ask for a Response
- 10. Be Sure to Follow Up



Tips for Phoning Congress



- Find the Member’s phone number for their Washington, D.C. and district / state office(s) on their website - call any office.
- Or, contact the Capitol Switchboard in Washington, D.C. (202-224-3121) and ask to be connected to the Member’s DC office.
- You will very likely speak to a junior staff person or intern – it is their job to answer the phones and interact with constituents.
- Do not ask to speak to the Member unless you know him or her personally.
- If you know or have previously met a legislative staff person in the office, you may ask to speak to him or her directly.



Tips for Phoning Congress

Tips on What to Say

- Identify yourself as a constituent and briefly explain your purpose for calling in no more than 30 seconds.
- Make certain to highlight your “ask” (i.e., “please cosponsor the FDA legislation to regulate tobacco”).
- All phone calls are “tallied” by the staff. You may request a written response.

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Tips for In-Person Meetings

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Tips for In-Person Meetings

- Be Prompt, Patient, and Polite
 - You have to be on time for the meeting; they do not.
 - Anger is not an effective advocacy tool, so focus on the positive.
- Be Prepared and Concise
 - You probably have no more than 15 minutes.
 - Make sure to have your facts straight - prepare "talking points".
- Be Responsive
 - Answer any questions to the best of your abilities.
 - If you do not know the answer to something, say so and offer to get back to them.
 - Provide "Leave-Behind" materials (e.g., a "one-pager").
 - Offer yourself as a resource to the Member and his/her staff.

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How Else Can I Get Involved Politically?

- Politicians Want Your Support!
- Take Advantage – attend a political event and tell your story
 - Federal Elections Take Place Every 2 Years
 - The Politicking Never Ends!
- Invite Local Politicians to a local event
 - Politicians Appreciate Good Press Coverage

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How Else Can I Get Involved Politically?

- Know Your State Legislators – **make sure that they know you!**
- Know Your Local Leaders – **make sure that they know you!**
- Remember to Vote!

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State Politics/Advocacy

- **First Question, prior to today...does your Representative, Senator, or the Governor know who you are? Does your local paper, ie. Loveland Reporter-Herald?**
- Lobbying/advocating with State Representatives, State Senators, the Governor
- State efforts provide the foundation for national legislation, **critical!**
- Who are your partners at the state level?

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National/State Advocacy

- State legislators have minimal, if any staff, often have interns
- Typically more sensitive to media, constituent contact as they are "on the ground"
- Partners may be the same, or, may be different



Finding Your State Rep./Senator

- Everyone is represented by 1 State Representative of the House and 1 Senator based on your district
- House of Representatives
 - www.votesmart.org (ZIP Code + 4)
- Senate
 - www.votesmart.org (ZIP Code + 4)



The Basics, CO/MT

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p><u>House of Representatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 seats – elected by individual districts • Each district contains approximately 71,000 people • 2-year terms, term limited to 4 terms • 100 seats • 8-year terms | <p><u>Senate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35 seats – elected by individual districts • Each district has a population of approximately 123,000 based on 2000 census data • 4-year term, term limited to 2 terms • 50 Seats • 8-year terms |
|---|--|



Division of Power, CO/MT

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p><u>House of Representatives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 Democrats • 25 Republicans • 50 Republicans • 49 Democrats • 1 Constitution | <p><u>Senate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Democrats • 15 Republicans • 24 Republicans • 26 Democrats • Democrats control agenda • Historically narrow margin |
|---|---|



Advocacy Efforts

- Know your legislator, know what works
- Grasstops vs. Grassroots
- Method of Advocacy, level of urgency
- Build the momentum...most work happens before the bill is introduced, or assigned to a committee



What's New? Current?

- **Mount Hood Community College bans smoking**
OregonLive.com - [Bill Graves](#) - 17 hours ago
http://www.oregonlive.com/education/index.ssf/2010/01/mount_hood_community_college_b.html

Mount Hood Community College this week became the third Oregon community college to **ban smoking** on campus. Mount Hood Community College this week became the ...

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Los Angeles Times In Colorado, lobbying to keep smoking onstage January 18, 2010</p> | <p>Lawrence Journal World Chancellor says banning cigarette sales on campus in line with KU values January 21, 2010</p> |
| <p>Herald-Journal (Spartanburg) USC Upstate enforces no-smoking policy January 17, 2010</p> | <p>American Cancer Society Heart disease admissions down 24 percent since Smokefree Air Act passage January 14, 2010</p> |
| <p>INDYSTAR.COM Our Opinion: Don't kill off anti-smoking agency January 21, 2010</p> | <p>savannahnow.com Barton: Tax tobacco, not teachers January 24, 2010</p> |
| <p>Chronicle Muskegon Community College to ban smoking on campus December 23, 2009</p> | |

USC Upstate enforces no-smoking policy
Students debate clampdown

Spartanburg Herald Journal
Published: Sunday, January 17, 2010 at 3:15 a.m.

The University of South Carolina Upstate says it is stamping out leniency when it comes to its campuswide ban on smoking.

"Up until the last two or three months, we had an aggressive enforcement policy," said [Chancellor John Stockwell]. "It has been more than a year since that's changed, and we have definitely stepped back."

It has been more than a year since that's changed, and we have definitely stepped back. It is a hot one after a law in North Carolina that took effect last month.

On Monday, Brooke Stromdahl, Anniston, Ala., a month from the Mary Black School of Nursing, said the polarizing nature of the debate.

Stromdahl, a former smoker, believes it's an infringement on an individual's rights to ban all areas for lighting up. She suggests USC Upstate erect gazebo-type structures on campus similar to the ones she used as a smoker when she was a student at Trident Technical College in North Charleston.

As a nonsmoker, Williams said she has no problem with that, as long as she doesn't have to breathe in the smoke of others. Price, however, isn't willing to concede such measures just yet.

"For them to set up gazebos and maintain any kind of place for people to kill themselves, it's costing all of us smokers; it's costing all the taxpayers more money," Price said.

The trio did agree on one thing: During their time at the university, the policy did little, if anything, to deter smoking.

"There are these green signs everywhere saying this is a smoke-free campus," Williams said, "but you walk out any building ... finals week, you'll see [cigarette butts] everywhere."

"I've heard some students say, 'Well, I pay tuition here, and if I want to smoke, I ought to be able to smoke.'" Peterson said. "The other side of the coin is everybody knows the health hazards, risks associated with smoking, and I think [Chancellor John Stockwell] has done the right thing making a statement."

Muskegon Community College to ban smoking on campus

By Federico Martinez | Muskegon Chronicle
December 23, 2009, 5:36AM

Muskegon Community College plans to start a campuswide smoking ban that has raised the ire of some smokers.

"I think it's ridiculous," Lester said. "I think it will make for a cleaner and healthier campus."

"It's going to be a big pain in the neck for smokers," Lester said. "I think it goes hand-in-hand with what the state is doing."

The MCC Board of Trustees unanimously approved the smoking ban in May. Previously, smoking was prohibited in campus buildings, but allowed in outdoor areas.

Baker College of Muskegon currently has a smoking ban on campus. Baker's vice president of student services, Jennifer Granholm, said she is planning on quitting anyway, so this should help.

The new law exempts cigar bars, tobacco specialty shops and the gaming floors of downtown casinos.

"I think it goes hand-in-hand with what the state is doing," Lester said. "I think it will make for a cleaner and healthier campus."

School officials are counting on the ban being voluntary followed by campus visitors, including students and college employees. There are no current plans to issue tickets or fine those who disregard the new rule, said Lester.

In Colorado, lobbying to keep smoking onstage

Actors can't smoke - even tobacco-free cigarettes - during a play, no matter how crucial smoking is to the script, the state's high court rules. Two theater groups will continue to battle the ban.

Los Angeles Times
January 18, 2010
Reporting from Denver

The Paragon Theatre's artistic director, Warren Sherrill, thought about staging "Agnes of God" for a while.

Problem is, one of the key characters is a psychiatrist who smokes. And in Colorado - one of 25 states with indoor smoking bans - actors can't light up on stage.

The state Supreme Court last month found the 2006 smoking ban unconstitutional, rejecting theater companies' argument that it infringed on their freedom of speech and stifled artistic expression.

For Sherrill, the decision means he'll keep passing up development; he refuses to employ methods he considers unethical.

Miming is silly, he said. Talcum cigarettes are ridiculous. "Than blows out, they've just swallowed a bunch of talcum," he said. "And it's going to look incredibly fake."

Altering the stage direction so that the character doesn't light up is equally distasteful, Sherrill said. "To me, that's sacrificing the writer's integrity."

Instead, the Paragon, along with Denver's Curious Theatre, will pursue a legal case, hoping to win an audience with the U.S. Supreme Court.

Of the states that prohibit smoking in public venues such as restaurants and bars, at least six - including California - provide a theatrical exemption, according to the group Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights.

"They aren't allowed to use real guns. There's no reason they should be allowed to use cigarettes, because there's no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke."

American Cancer Society: Heart disease admissions down 24 percent since Smokefree Air Act passage

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Date: January 14, 2010
Contact: Lee Konfrst, 515-554-1052

American Cancer Society welcomes legislative victory in Iowa

DES MOINES, IA - The American Cancer Society Legislative Breakfast today at the Capitol with the Iowa Department of Health, celebrating improvements in Iowans' cardiovascular health since the Smokefree Air Act was passed in 2008.

The study examined data submitted to the Iowa Department of Public Health summarizing the number of monthly hospitalizations between July 2005 and June 2009 for cardiovascular diseases caused or made worse by smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke.

"We found a 24 percent reduction in hospital admissions due to coronary heart disease in the year after the Smokefree Air Act was passed compared with the previous three years," said Dr. Christopher Squier of the Department of Oral Pathology at the College of Dentistry, University of Iowa. "This represents 2,324 fewer Iowans dealing with this condition, a result that no one can ignore. In less than two years, we are already seeing the public health benefits of this landmark piece of legislation, and for that our legislators and the governor should be commended."

Barton: Tax tobacco, not teachers

Savannah Morning News
Posted: January 24, 2010 - 12:15am
By Tom Barton

Georgia's public schools are facing a budget gap that other state leaders are trying to solve in different ways.

There are two reasons why raising the cigarette tax is a better option than cutting education funding.

More than half of Georgia's state revenue comes from the sales tax. Raising the cigarette tax would generate an additional \$400 million that would go to the state treasury.

Giving teachers the equivalent of a 3 percent raise would cost the state an extra \$1.37 billion. That's not going to fly in the DMV offices to turn into waiting lines.

The second reason that teachers' salaries are a bad idea is that the target is medical. Lawmakers lack backbone to raise the cigarette tax.

Georgia could plug about a fifth of its budget gap by raising the tax on cigarettes from 37 cents per pack to \$1.37. The additional \$400 million that would be generated would go to the state treasury.

As a side benefit, it would indirectly reduce Medicaid costs, too.

People who puff away and pack would be more inclined to quit.

Sadly, most lawmakers can't see through the smoke or one inch past the next election.

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Of course, collecting \$400 million from smokers who suck it in would eliminate the need for more teacher furloughs. Sadly, Georgia's lawmakers would rather tax teachers, not tobacco. That choice blows.

INDYSTAR.COM

Our Opinion: Don't kill off anti-smoking agency
January 21, 2010

As Gov. Mitch Daniels exhorts government to do more with less, the folks at Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation can justifiably hold themselves up as a model.

Lean in staffing, heavily relying on volunteers, the agency has managed to do more over this decade while seeing a significant decrease in tobacco use.

Among other achievements, the agency has helped more than 100,000 Hoosiers quit smoking.

Even the ITPC's original budget was cut by more than \$150 million a year for purposes other than getting the agency off its feet.

Now, say the health-community advocates, the agency's very existence is threatened by its program's very success.

A provision buried in Senate Bill 550, a catchall measure dealing primarily with pensions, would abolish the ITPC commission and transfer its funding and functions to the State Department of Health.

Authorized by Sen. Luke Kenley, R-Noblesville, the bill was approved by the Appropriations Committee and could reach a full Senate vote this week.

Would it save money? Only at the risk of trying to do the ITPC's work without adding health department staff, and letting what's left of the anti-tobacco trust fund get swallowed up by some other budget. The latter, the ITPC believes, is exactly what the tobacco lobby wants.

If saving money is indeed the goal, then saving lives is the way to accomplish that. Cigarettes kill an estimated 10,000 Hoosiers a year and cost the state an estimated \$3.5 billion in medical care, lost work time and other damage. On the flip side, studies show that every dollar spent helping people quit or avoid starting returns between \$3 and \$10 to the economy. Abolishing an agency that pursues this kind of math doesn't add up.



Tailor OpEds, Reports, Studies, share information

- Get on listservs with national orgs
- Share information with legislators, tailor specific to your state, make it relevant
- Pass it on to colleagues/partner agencies
- One-pagers

"We are immersed in the "tobacco world" – they are not.



Letters

- Important advocacy method as legislation develops
- Always personalize and localize letters
- Fax
- Emails are least effective; but if you send one, be sure to add your mailing address
- Be specific, and request the favor of a response
- Numbers matter! Circulate widely and "gently" remind others to follow through
- Get letters from diverse community groups (businesses, others beyond the "usual" suspects)



Phone Calls

- Before key votes or decisions
- State that you are a constituent
- State specific request: "Vote yes on the Clean Indoor Air Act that makes Colorado smokefree statewide!" as well as a talking point to support the request.
- Urge others to make calls



Tips for Having an Effective Meeting

- Be on Time!
- Keep introductions brief
- Thank Member for Past Support
- Overview of Issues
- Personalize the Issues and Make it Local
- Note taker should complete the Meeting Report
- Answer Questions - Don't Guess and Listen Carefully
- Make the "Ask"
- Offer to Help
- Identify Contact for Follow-Up
- Thank the Member or Staff



Don't forget to say "thank you"

- If a member takes an action to support the issue - whether a vote, a letter, or a bill sponsorship - don't forget to say thank you
- Let them know the specific benefits of their actions
- Give awards and recognition where appropriate



There's Strength in Numbers

- Ask other groups to take up the issue - get it on their agenda:
 - American Cancer Society
 - American Heart Association
 - American Lung Association
 - Voters, bring constituents
 - Key donors
- Gather email addresses of friends, colleagues to distribute materials. Build a database.



Shine a Spotlight: Media Attention

- Local press articles get legislators attention
- Invite reporters to visit program (check with press offices, releases, etc.)
- Forward good articles to your legislators
- Invite legislators to participate in press events
- Write op-eds that praise or ask for leadership
- Write letters to the editor
- Ed Board visits, engage the media



Local Politics/Advocacy

- *First Question, prior to today...does your City Council member (s) know who you are? The Mayor? County Commissioners? Your local paper?*
- Council members generally do not have staff, reliance upon city boards/commissions, recommendations
- Often responsive to constituents, local media, petition gathering, signature collection
- Time is not nearly as limited, can often get a meeting with the member, in person



State/Local Advocacy

- Local efforts most critical
- Local efforts provide the foundation for all state and national legislation
- Database of supporters
- Provides the groundswell often needed to move legislation



Finding your local legislator

- City Council, Loveland, <http://www.ci.loveland.co.us/>
- City Council, Fort Collins, <http://www.ci.fort-collins.co.us/>
- County Commissioners, Larimer, <http://www.co.larimer.co.us/>
- May be a town board, ie. Estes Park, Berthoud




Know your council/town board

- How many?
- How do they typically vote?
- What are “their” issues?
- What are “your” issues?
- How are decisions made?



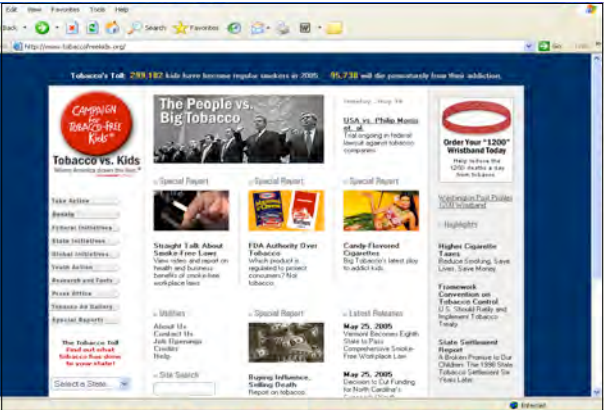
Determine action

- Grasstops vs. Grassroots
- Legislative action vs. Citizen initiative
- How does this action fit into a “bigger” picture, where does the proposed ordinance take you?



Why Should I Care?

- If you don't care, why should they?
- If they don't care, it's our responsibility as voters and constituents to convince them why they should*
- Get involved, stay involved...it's your community.*
- When we elect good people, we get good results.*



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