

How to Lobby

Before You Lobby:

- Know the issues
 - Have general knowledge about the issues
 - Be able to access someone who has specific knowledge about the issues (Faye and Diane or Paula and Jenni)
- Know the legislator
 - Republican or Democrat?
 - Moderate or Extreme?
 - New or Experienced?
 - Past voting record (not necessary but a bonus)
 - newspaper articles or town gossip
- Identify key community players
 - Try to find people who are key in the legislator's party or have a personal connection
 - These people may be AAUW members or may just support a certain issue
 - A person can attend a meeting or just send a letter of support for your issue
 - You may need to lobby some community people on the issue first.
 - ex. If the president of the local bank is a close friend of the legislator, it might be a good idea to find out where she stands on the issue. You can then know if she can help you lobby the legislator, or if you think she would be with you if you had a conversation, or if you need to stay away from her.

Let's Go Lobby:

- Try to set up a meeting during an “off” time
 - If lobbying about a specific bill during session – take advantage of the time they will be in their district offices. - Be respectful of their schedule.
 - It is good to meet with legislators when they are out of session – even if there is not a specific agenda that you interested in.
 - You can set up a meeting (5 min or so) just to say hi. Ask them where they stand on issues that you care about, talk about the neighborhood, find out info about them, etc. - “By the way I'm an AAUW member...”(only do this if they are out of session!!!!)
- Build a connection
- Have a ONE PAGE fact sheet about the issue(s)
- Don't waste time
- Try to help the legislator – you are their friend/help
 - Explain your issue in terms of how they can get more votes.
 - Legislators are NOT necessarily smarter than you – they are just human
 - They do not know everything
 - They may need to be educated on issues that are important to you
 - They do not walk on water
- Be FRIENDLY
 - The basis for lobbying is building relationships with everyone (good, bad, and ugly).

Follow Up:

- Always follow up
 - If you promise them more information – get more information – use your specific knowledge source
 - Send a letter or phone call thanking them for meeting with you - ALWAYS!!!!
 - If on a specific bill, see how they vote and thank them or scold them
 - Ask for another meeting or go to a fund raiser – continue to be seen.
 - Let the legislator recognize you as a key community player.

The Basics:

- Relationships and Connections
- Knowledge about issues
- Consistent contact
- Good working relationship
- Helping good legislators stay in power