



How to Lobby a Legislator

Build a relationship with your legislator BEFORE you ask for something:

- ~Find out if the legislator is a member of the symphony/museum/etc. Learn about their background/beliefs before/ did they sponsor bills to support the arts or artists (such as tax relief for artists-Care Act? Artist deduction bill)
- ~Introduce yourself and tell what you do- introduce self as PAEA board member
- ~Invite them to something
- ~Invite their STAFF too!!
- ~Would legislator like to put something in our school newspaper
- ~Offer to write an article for their newsletter –include information on how we help increase test scores and what is going on in our community
- ~Ask them ways we can help them- do they need any kind of art research? Grant information related to the arts
- ~Can we hang art in their office?
- ~Introduce student artists to them if they win awards, etc. (good opportunity for them to get photos)
- ~Go to senate and house websites Senate.gov or House.gov or legis.state.pa.us search for artist deduction bill, shows how they voted, citizens for the arts website citizensforhearstinpa.org
- ~Always tell the truth, be clear/concise/be persuasive but never threaten (like I am getting people to not vote), don't come in saying that you are a taxpayer – they know that, be persistent, always say thank you
- ~Include economic impacts of non-profit arts groups
- ~Know your legislators' positions on topics and their personal interests

After building the relationship:

- ~Ask them to speak on the house floor for the arts
- ~State it as "I want you to support"then say "Will you support it?" and then be able to support why it benefits the school/community/students, tell how you used past moneys and how it helped, test scores, self-esteem,
- ~THANK them for their time – and follow up, even if they didn't support it say thank you for listening, and I'm sorry you didn't support it.
- ~If they get 10 people they listen, if 50 they consider it very important
- ~There is nothing as good as a hand-written note
- ~Prefer to send it to the DC or Harrisburg office rather than their local office
- ~Sometimes the aide knows more than the legislator about certain issues and will get back to the senator or legislator

When writing a policymaker

- ~Be brief and concise, state your reason for writing
- ~Introduce yourself and your organization
- ~Indicate why you are writing and how it will benefit the community

When calling a policymaker

- ~Prepare your message prior to making the phone call—define your goal, develop questions and anticipate questions you may be asked
- ~If you don't know the answer to a question, let them know you'll research the question and get back to them
- ~If the legislator is unavailable, ask to speak with the aide that handles arts issues

When making a personal visit

- ~Make an appointment and be punctual
- ~Be brief and concise but speak from experience
- ~Ask the legislator what his/her position is and if he/she will support you
- ~Leave the legislator with a issue-briefing paper as well as your business card
- ~Offer to be a resource for the legislator
- ~Follow up with a thank you in which you briefly restate your position