

ADVOCACY ACTION PLANNING  
Legislative Advocacy Day  
February 23, 2011

Advocacy is personal...you believe in something and are willing to exert personal effort to realize that condition or improvement. Your interest is usually related to your personal experience, someone you know is associated with the effort or end result, or your organization has interested you in the work of advocacy on behalf of a group or condition you value. No matter how you have become involved as an advocate.....it's personal. The work of legislative advocacy is also personal – and it's built on your relationship with legislators and their staff.

***Individual:*** You initiate and encourage a relationship over time

Know your Senator or Representative and make sure they know you.

\*Initiate a way to meet one or more of the elected delegation where you live – and vote. If you know a family friend, relative, or class mate of a legislator have them introduce you.

\*Attend an event when at least one of the local delegation is present.

\*If you attend church or belong to an organization with a legislator make sure they know you and tell them about your views, positions, and/or values.

\* Initiate contact at a meeting/event, set up an appointment; and then follow through with focus for your advocacy efforts with phone calls, notes, and position papers exhibiting a personal willingness to be a resource.

***Group:*** Organization organizes through members to build relationship

\*An organization member knows or knows someone who knows, is related to or friends with a member of the delegation from your area. Follow same process as individual, remembering the individual also represents the league, branch, SIC or church....identify, make contact as individual, then group.

\*Individual who knows or is acquainted with legislator invites them to an event, meeting, or forum....get to them in context of your organization.

\*Explain what the organization stands for, advocates for, how large the organization is and how broad the membership in his/her voting area.

\*Stay in touch....thank you notes after meeting; position paper, follow up emails, post cards, letters outlining position and desired action requested.

\*Monitor legislator's actions/votes and comment from your organization.

An individual or committee keeps track of his/her votes, committee hearings, bills sponsored and let legislator know you are tracking their actions.

\*Make regular reports about the legislators' actions to your organization; request action by the members to support legislator actions, advocate for future actions, appreciation.

\*Between meetings, communicate with members: hotline, alert, action note – what action is needed by members with information to accomplish action such as address, position reminder.

***Sustain advocacy actions:*** Stay in touch regularly at home and in Columbia

\* Meet with legislator(s) regularly before and after session to establish in their minds – and yours – the importance of their work, your advocacy position on several issues, and the resource your organization can be to them when making decisions...what the impact of a piece of legislation will have locally will be invaluable to legislator and to advocacy effectiveness.

\* Know the staff member for the legislator(s) you are working with and make a point of being helpful – they will pass on your phone call messages, get information for you, and remind legislator of group's interest when outlining positions on pending bills.

\*Contact the legislator regularly as individual and as organization to sustain relationship and continue exchange of ideas, information, and positions.

*Face to face:* initial introduction, meeting, get to know you.

*Phone call:* follow up to meeting or setting up initial meeting; position reminder, providing information on upcoming bill; setting up appointments

*Email:* follow up to meeting or position reminder; quick reference for impact about upcoming bill; appreciation note following action, express gratitude.

*Letter:* outline position of organization (or individual) on an issue; describe the impact of legislation or proposed bill on local conditions (voters); petition for action by organization.

*Note:* thank you (Southern style) for actions taken, support for position, gratitude for efforts.