

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS



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Lobbying: Making or Breaking Policy

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What is Lobbying?



Definition of LOBBY

lobbied; lobbying

intransitive verb

: to conduct activities aimed at influencing public officials and especially members of a legislative body on legislation

transitive verb

1: to promote (something, such as a project) or secure the passage of (legislation) by influencing public officials *lobby* a bill through Congress

2: to attempt to influence or sway (someone, such as a public official) toward a desired action *lobbying* senators for tax reform



What is Lobbying?

Why Lobby?

Virtually every aspect of a fire fighter's job – from equipment and staffing to bargaining rights and pensions – is shaped by elected officials.

Lobbying is a proven effective way to help meet your goals, or defeat your rivals.



Step One: Building Relationships

**The best way to achieve lobbying success is to develop productive, long-term relationships with elected officials.
(and staff!)**

- Legislators want and need knowledgeable people they can trust on selected issues

Honest
Knows Real World Impact

Accurate
Helpful Ally



Step One: Building Relationships

Challenges

Takes Time and Effort

- Get to know your elected official and their issues
- Be Visible

Accept that you won't always agree

- Easier said than done!



Step One: Building Relationships

Don't Wait until you have an “ask”

- Station Visits
- Ride Alongs
- Grant Checks
- FIREOPS 101



Step Two: Gathering Information

Clear Goal: What are you looking to Achieve?

Questions to ask Yourself and be prepared to support:

- Why is this important
- How can I demonstrate this problem / issue

Gathering Information

- Data – from your local, the IAFF, City Council, NFPA, other reputable sources
- Anecdotes



Step Three: Persuasion

- Face to Face Meeting
- Grassroots and Grasstops Activists
- Coalition Building
- Social Media
- Other Incentives



The Face-to-Face Visit

Before the Meeting

- Know the Issue and Status
- Know the Legislator's Position
- Be able to Articulate Arguments in Favor and Against



The Face-to-Face Visit

During the Meeting

- Start with a Brief Description of the Issue
- Give Arguments in Favor
- Explain impact with Personal Story
- Listen and Respond
- Try to Get a firm Commitment (don't push too hard!)
- Write Down any Questions or Concerns
- Reiterate Commitment or Next Steps
- Leave Behind Written Materials



The Face-to-Face Visit

After the Meeting

- Debrief: Did you deliver your message? What feedback did you receive?
- Send a written thank you
 - Email is acceptable
 - Include answers to questions or additional information
- Schedule a follow up meeting if necessary



The Face-to-Face Visit

A Video Example!

[Lobbying: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly](#)



Grassroots and Grasstops

Advocates in your Local to Help you

- Identify Potential Advocates
- Assess Relationship Strength
- Evaluate Willingness to Leverage Relationship
- Determine Level of Interest in Issue
- Determine Preferred Engagement Activities



Coalition Building

Advocates outside of your Local to Help you

- Other Impacted Organizations
- Concerned Citizens

Why a Coalition?

- Goals are similar and compatible,
- Working together will enhance both groups' abilities to reach their goals, and
- Benefits of coalescing will be greater than the costs.

Can be temporary

Keep in mind the Disadvantages of Coalitions



Social Media

Social Media to:

- Educate
- Empower
- Persuade

Download Timmins Presentation:

“The Online Lobbyist, Using Social Media to Advocate for your
Issues”



Other Incentives

Be Helpful to their Priorities

Be Helpful Politically

Attend Rallies

Gold and Black Branding

Attend Fundraisers

- Keep Ethics Rules and Regulations in Mind
- This goes without saying, so I'm going to say it: Don't break the Law.



Tactics

- Be an Ally

Let me help you!

- Be a Persuader

I need you to help me!

- Be a Disrupter – USE EXCEEDINGLY SPARINGLY

Do this or else!



Keep in Mind

- Keep Messaging Consistent
 - Bad messaging = wrong outcome
- Know the Rules of the Road
 - The Legislative Process is an Assembly Line
 - Where could things get tied up or fall apart



Good Lobbying

Case Study 1: AFG / SAFER Funding



Bad Lobbying

Case Study 2: Ward Diesel



Let's Lobby!

Scenario: Public Pension “Reform”

The State House is considering legislation “reform” public pensions by cutting benefits and increasing employee contributions




Questions and Discussion



Win an iPad Mini!

Submit your workshop and overall evaluations to be automatically entered in two drawings for a new iPad mini!

Complete your evaluations using the IAFF Frontline App

1. Open the Frontline App and click on the “” symbol in the top left corner by the logo
2. Select “sign in” and login with your iaff.org username
3. Click the “Events” icon and select ALTS
4. Select “Sessions” and click on the workshop you attended
5. Click “Session Evaluation”
6. Complete the evaluation
7. Click “Submit”

For the overall evaluation, follow steps 1, 2, and 3 then click “Overall Event Evaluation”

Winners will be announced February 16, 2018

