




**Advocacy 101: Effectively Promoting Your Cause**




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**Agenda**

- I. Overview of the Typical Legislative Process
- II. Dynamics of the 113th Congress
- III. Twelve Steps for Successful Legislative Advocacy
- IV. Advocacy Case Study

**Section I**

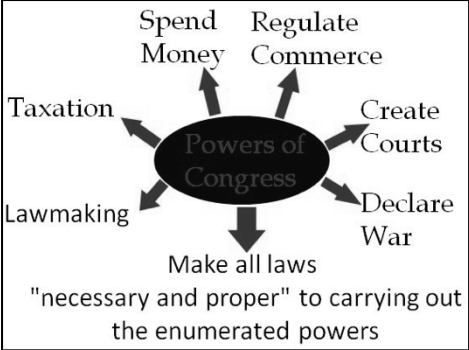
**Overview of the Typical Legislative Process**

**The Chambers of Congress**

HOUSE*	SENATE*
Members chosen from local districts	Members chosen from an entire state
Two-year term	Six-year term
Originally elected by voters	Originally (until 1913) elected by state legislatures
May impeach (indict) federal officials	May convict federal officials of impeachable offenses
Larger (435 voting members)	Smaller (100 members)
More formal rules	Fewer rules and restrictions
Debate limited	Debate extended
Less prestige and less individual notice	More prestige and more media attention
Originates bills for raising revenues	Has power to advise the president on, and to consent to, presidential appointments and treaties
Local or narrow leadership	National leadership
More partisan	Less party loyalty

\*Some of these differences, such as the term of office, are provided for in the Constitution. Others, such as debate rules, are not.

**Powers of the U.S. Congress**

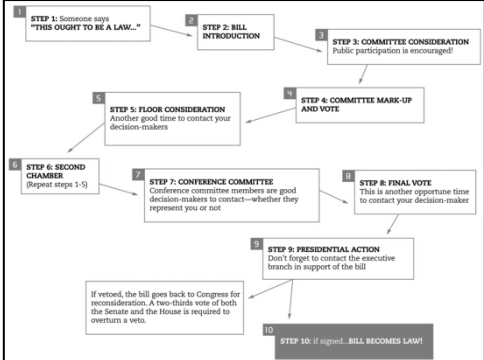


**Powers of Congress**

- Spend Money
- Regulate Commerce
- Create Courts
- Declare War
- Make all laws
- Lawmaking
- Taxation

"necessary and proper" to carrying out the enumerated powers

**The Legislative Process in Congress**



1. STEP 1: Someone says "THIS OUGHT TO BE A LAW..."
2. STEP 2: BILL INTRODUCTION
3. STEP 3: COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION (public participation is encouraged!)
4. STEP 4: COMMITTEE MARK UP AND VOTE
5. STEP 5: FLOOR CONSIDERATION (Another good time to contact your decision-makers)
6. STEP 6: SECOND CHAMBER (Repeat steps 1-5)
7. STEP 7: CONFERENCE COMMITTEE (Conference committee members are good decision-makers to contact—whether they represent you or not.)
8. STEP 8: FINAL VOTE (This is another opportune time to contact your decision-maker)
9. STEP 9: PRESIDENTIAL ACTION (Don't forget to contact the executive branch in support of the bill)
10. STEP 10: If signed... BILL BECOMES LAW!

If vetoed, the bill goes back to Congress for reconsideration. A two-thirds vote of both the Senate and the House is required to overturn a veto.

### Lawmaking by the U.S. Congress

- Only a member of the House or Senate may introduce a bill but anyone can write a bill.
- Over 9,000 bills are proposed and fewer than 5 to 10% are enacted.
- Most bills originate in the executive branch.
- A bill must survive three stages to become a law: committees, the floor, and the conference committee. A bill can die at any stage.

### Committees of the U.S. Congress

Thousands of bills are introduced in every session of Congress. The committee system ("little legislatures") is a way to provide for specialization, or a division of legislative labor.

Chairpersons wield much power over the committee's agenda.

- Standing committees: (most important) permanent bodies that are established by the rules of each chamber of Congress and continue from session to session.
  - There are many Subcommittees.
- Select committees: Created for a limited time for a specific purpose. They disband after they report.
- Joint committees: Formed by the concurrent action of both chambers of Congress and consists of members of both chambers. May be permanent or temporary.
- Conference committees: Formed for the purpose of achieving agreement on the exact wording of a bill when the two chambers pass legislative proposals in different forms ("third house of Congress"). They have much power over changes in the bill.

### Decision-making by Members of Congress

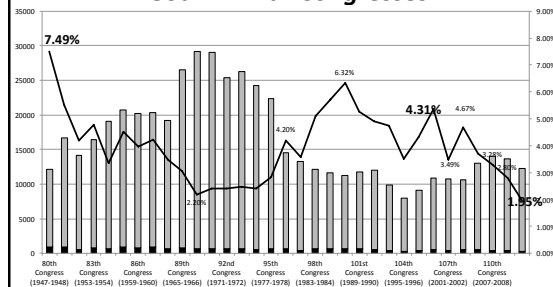
- It is rare for a legislator to disregard strong wishes of constituents, particularly on hot button issues or those contentious issues that get a lot of media attention.
- Deciding how the voters feel is not possible.
- The perceptions of the representative are important since he/she cannot really know how all the constituents feel about an issue.
- If constituents have little knowledge or interest in an issue, the legislator often makes an autonomous decision.

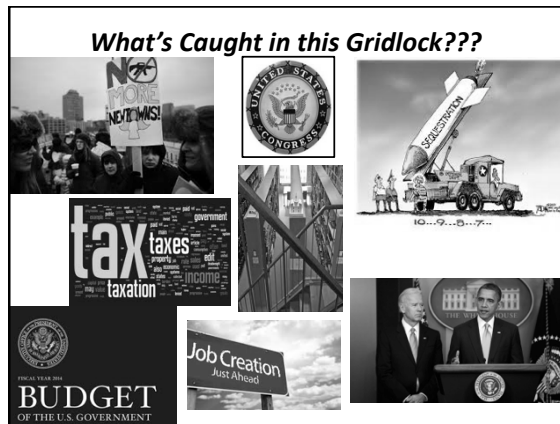
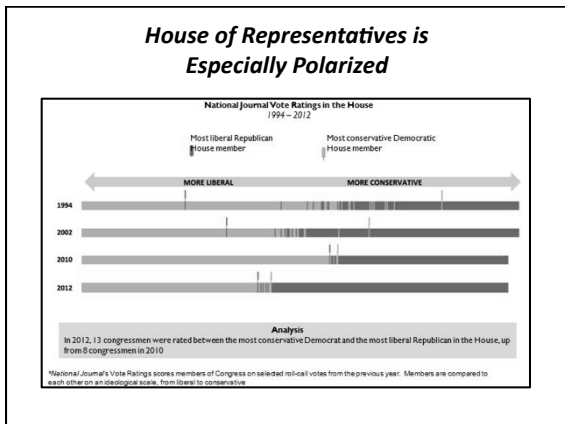
### Section II


## Dynamics of the 113th Congress



### Congressional Gridlock: Legislation Enacted As a Percentage of Legislation Introduced 80th - 112th Congresses







### Section III

## Twelve Steps for Successful Legislative Advocacy



- ### Advocating to Elected Legislators
1. Feel good about what you are doing ... outreach visits to key decision-makers are one of the backbones of our democratic process.
  2. Be on time. Identify yourself and the organization you represent. If you are visiting an elected official (and live in the legislator's district), say so.
  3. Be friendly and respectful. Try to create a personal bond right from the start.
  4. Once greetings are completed, explain why you are there. Present a clear message and get your point across in the fewest words possible.



***Advocating to Elected Legislators***

5. Ask your decision-maker to do something specific. Say exactly what you want the policy-maker to do, using your own words or the language prepared by your advocacy organization. If your issue involves legislation, cite the specific bill's name or number.
6. Don't overstate your case ... use hard facts to support your viewpoint. Leave supporting documentation whenever possible.
7. Don't be afraid to express an informed opinion about an issue, even if you're not an expert. Also, don't be afraid to explain your technical credentials if you are, in fact, an expert on a particular issue.

***Advocating to Elected Legislators***



***Advocating to Elected Legislators***

8. Be prepared for questions, even challenges. If a question throws you off balance because you don't know the answer, don't be afraid to say "I don't know." Better to commit to research the matter and report back, than to give an incorrect response. Maintaining your credibility is essential!!!

***Advocating to Elected Legislators***



***Advocating to Elected Legislators***

9. Be a good listener. Give the decision-maker or staff member a chance to express his or her point of view. Also, listen for an actual commitment of support, not something that may sound like one, but really isn't.
10. Be gracious ... remember to say thank you. Give special recognition to individuals who are known to be on your side. Ask them for advice and help in reaching out to other decision-makers and suggestions for ways to communicate issues to their colleagues.

***Advocating to Elected Legislators***



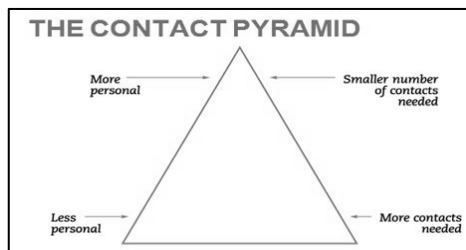
### **Advocating to Elected Legislators**

11. Get to know staff members of the decision-maker ... they often have great influence and can be extremely helpful as follow-up contacts.
12. Follow up your visit with a thank you note or letter. Restate your case briefly and provide information you may have promised during your meeting.

### **Influencing Elected Officials**

1. Decision-makers are influenced by personal contact and communication.
2. There are many different ways to influence a decision-maker to act on behalf of a preservation-related issue.
3. When choosing how you want to contact elected officials, keep in mind that the more personal you can make your communication, the better.

### **Influencing Elected Officials**



When choosing how you will contact your decision-maker consider:

- The degree to which the activity is personal.
- The number of people you have to engage in the activity.

### **Calling Elected Officials**


1. Plan: Before you make the call, plan what you are going to say. Your phone call will be very brief, so keep your message simple and to the point.
2. Message: Be sure to tell your story succinctly, why you care about historic preservation, and why you need their support. Think about the key point and how your story underscores your point of view.
3. Call: Make the call! Tell the decision-maker that you are a preservation supporter and a constituent of their legislative district and/or community.
4. Staff or Message: If you are calling a decision-maker, you may not be able to reach them directly. Be prepared to talk to staff or to leave a succinct message instead.

### **Writing to Elected Officials**

1. State that you are a preservation supporter and a constituent: This matters because leaders are most interested in the opinions of people who live in their area.
2. Personalize your letter: Research shows that personal letters have the most impact on decision-makers. If you are basing your letter on a form letter, rewrite it and consider using your personal stationery. This also gives you the chance to include your story, which is what will have the most impact.
3. Local, local, local: Make a strong connection between preservation and what you and the decision-maker see in your home community.
4. Show restraint: Keep your letter brief—1 to 1 ½ pages at most.

### **E-Mailing Elected Officials**

1. In the subject line of the message, state that you are a preservation supporter and member of their community: This strategy will increase the likelihood that your message is read. (e.g., Subject: Message from a constituent and supporter of historic preservation.)
2. If the e-mail is mass-produced, modify it: It doesn't take much time to insert your personal story and perspective, and it makes a big difference in making your e-mail credible rather than "canned."
3. Follow up: Because e-mail is a more casual and often a mass-produced mode of communication, be sure that you are using other methods to persuade decision-makers. Follow your e-mail with a phone call, personal letter, or visit.



**Section IV**

**Advocacy  
Case  
Study**

**Advocacy Case Study**

1. Identify a project or policy change that can be achieved through successful legislative advocacy.
2. Research and collect pertinent data for how your project or policy change will positively impact the general public.
3. Enlist a legislative champion(s) who will share in the excitement for your campaign's ultimate objective.

**Advocacy Case Study**

4. Identify the key decision-makers who need to view your project or policy change favorably; develop a coordinated plan for direct advocacy to these individuals.
5. Develop a strategy for building public support for your project or policy change (e.g. marketing tools, outreach strategy, publicity and media, etc.)

**Advocacy Case Study**

6. Prepare for and effectively deliver any direct written or oral testimony that can be used to support your cause.
7. Closely monitor the mechanics of the legislative process, and how this process might impact the prospects for your project or policy change.

**Storyville at Rosedale**



**Dollars for Storyville!!!**



**Storyville at Woodlawn**



**Storyville at Rosedale – 5th Anniversary**



**Final Thoughts**

1. Remember ... you don't need to be an expert in all of the technicalities of your bill(s) or advocacy issue(s).
2. You only need to be an expert in your story—how the problem affects you and your community and how the solution can bring about meaningful and direct change.
3. Communicating with a decision-maker is not much different from the communication you use every day.
4. Follow-up and repeated contact makes a difference. Send your decision-maker supporting information or work with your chapter to get them what they need.

**Useful Resources**

- National Trust for Historic Preservation Advocacy Center  
<http://www.preservationnation.org/take-action/advocacy-center/>
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions – Advocacy Review  
<http://napc.uga.edu/advocacy/>
- Historic Charleston (SC) – Preservation Advocacy  
<https://www.historiccharleston.org/Preservation/How/Preservation-Advocacy.aspx>
- American Library Association – Advocacy, Legislation & Issues  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/>
- American Library Association – Advocating in a Tough Economy Toolkit  
<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/advocacyuniversity/toolkit>

**Questions????**

