

A photograph of the Utah State Capitol building, a large white neoclassical structure with a prominent dome and many columns. The building is set against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. In the foreground, a low stone wall features the words "STATE OF UTAH" in large, raised letters. The title "GUIDE TO BEING A COMMUNITY LOBBYIST" is overlaid in large, bold, dark brown text across the middle of the image.

# **GUIDE TO BEING A COMMUNITY LOBBYIST**

2017

# Community Lobbyist Training

## Agenda

- What is a Community Lobbyist?
- Understanding the Legislative Process
  - How an Idea Becomes Law
  - How to Track a Bill or Issue
- Being a Community Lobbyist and Participating in the Legislative Process
- Hot Topics in the 2017 Session

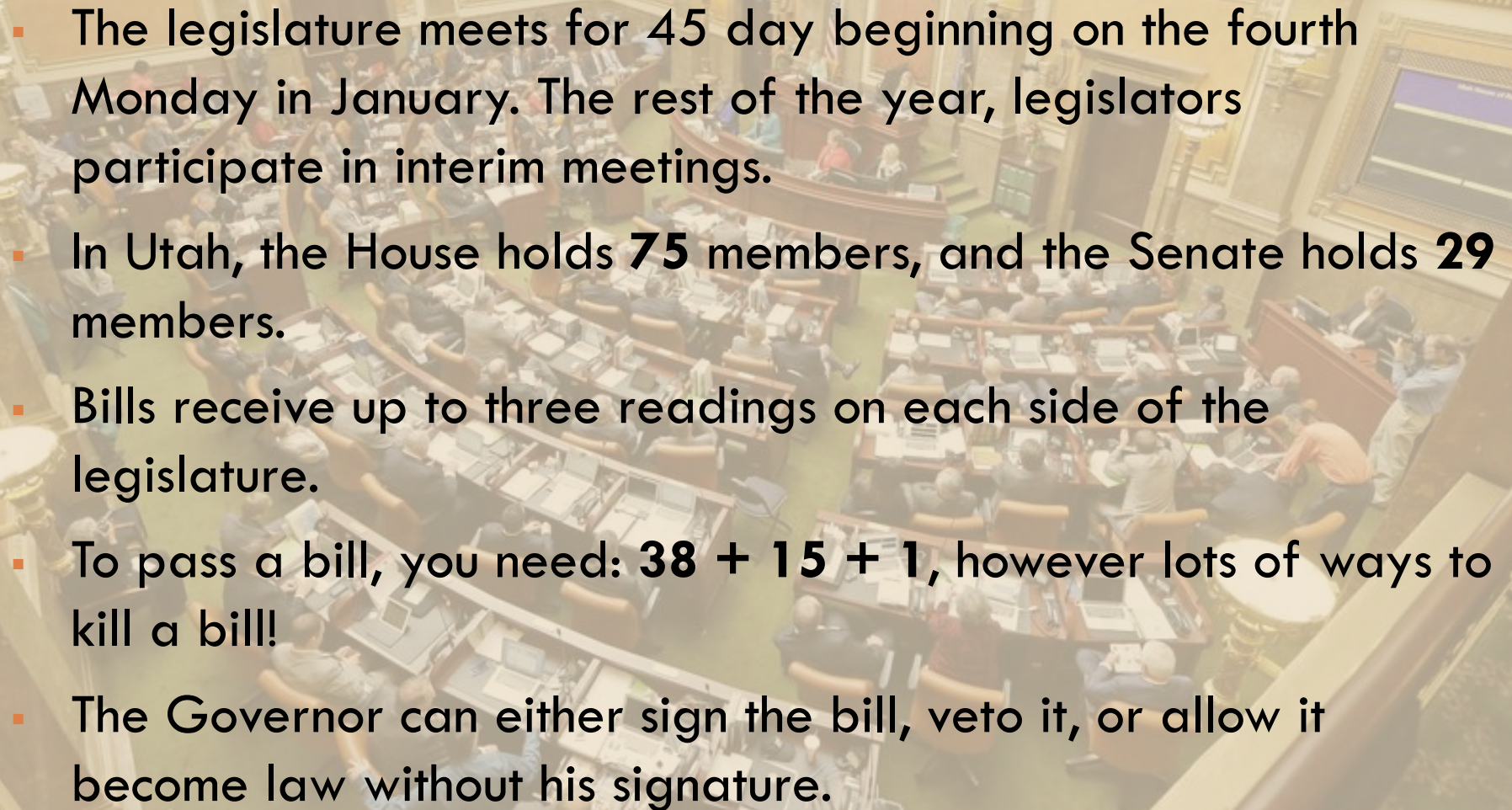
# What is a Community Lobbyist?

- Lobbying is the practice of convincing a legislator or group of legislators to support or oppose a bill or issue.
- The community lobbyist has existed nearly as long as democratic government itself. The term “lobbying” originates from the early practice of attempting to influence legislators in the lobby outside of the legislative chambers before a vote.
- A community lobbyist:
  - Advocates
  - Educates
  - Participates





# Understanding the Legislative Process

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- The legislature meets for 45 day beginning on the fourth Monday in January. The rest of the year, legislators participate in interim meetings.
  - In Utah, the House holds **75** members, and the Senate holds **29** members.
  - Bills receive up to three readings on each side of the legislature.
  - To pass a bill, you need:  **$38 + 15 + 1$** , however lots of ways to kill a bill!
  - The Governor can either sign the bill, veto it, or allow it become law without his signature.

# How an Idea Becomes Law

- An idea is developed.
- A bill is drafted.
- The bill is introduced in the House or Senate. – “First Reading”
- The bill is sent to the Rules Committee
- The bill can be assigned to a standing committee and receives a hearing.
- If passed by the committee, the committee report is read on the floor. – “Second Reading”
- The bill is debated on the floor. – “Third Reading”
- Process is repeated in other body.
- If passed, the bill is enrolled and prepared for review by the governor.
- The bill is reviewed and acted on by the governor.
- The bill can become law 60 days after the end of the legislative session.

# How to Track a Bill or Issue

- **Find an organization** that is following or working on the issue that you are interested in and join their email or action alert list:
  - Action Utah, ACLU of Utah, Equality Utah, Utah Health Policy Project, Voices for Utah Children, Planned Parenthood, Salt Lake Republican Party, League of Women Voters of Utah, SUWA, etc.
- **Become familiar** with the Utah legislature **website** and **YOUR legislators**: <http://le.utah.gov/>
- **Use** the Utah legislative **tracking service** <http://le.utah.gov/asp/billtrack/track.asp>
- **Listen and watch** proceedings online

# Being a Community Lobbyist

- Know your legislator
  - <http://le.utah.gov/GIS/findDistrict.jsp>
- Know how to contact the governor to request a veto:
  - <http://www.utah.gov/governor>
  - 801-538-1000
- Take action when alerted by organizations or take action on your own.
- Call or meet with your legislator.
- Write letters and emails to your legislator and committee members.
- Testify at committee hearings
- Write letters to the editor, blog, send emails or talk to your friends and family.
- Use social media to follow legislative action (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)

# Things To Remember When Communicating With Elected Officials

- Be polite.
- Your elected officials are citizens of Utah, just like you.
- There is no wrong way to lobby if you stay on message.
- Do your research: know about your ask.
- Do your research: find out about your legislator and find things in common.
- Practice what you want to say with family and friends first.
- Be confident. Your voice matters and you have the tools, talents, and capabilities to address your concerns and expectations with your elected officials.
- No longer are you a spectator but a key player in the democratic process!



# The Phone Call – Good Method

## **Legislators pay attention to phone calls that are for or against an issue**

- Phone calls are most useful when a vote has been scheduled and there is not time for a letter or visit.
- Phone calls will usually be answered by an intern, unless you have a legislator's cell number (most legislators cell numbers are published online):  
<http://le.utah.gov/asp/roster/roster.asp>
- Give your name and address.
- Cover one topic per call.
- Keep your phone call short and simple:
- “I support (bill name and number) because (list 2 – 3 points) and I urge (legislators name) to vote (for or against) this bill)

# Writing Emails & Text Messages – Better Method

## **Legislators count the emails and texts for or against an issue**

- State your name, **that you are a constituent**, your position and exactly what you want the legislator to do in the first paragraph.
- Cover one subject per email. Write more than one email if you have multiple issues.
- If the issue can be identified by a bill name & number, include it (and do so in the subject line of your email).
- Describe the legislation and how it affects you. Talk about your own experience if you can.
- Request a reply if you want one.
- Continue to write your legislator as your bill moves through the legislative process.
- Always thank a legislator if they vote as you requested and thank them for their time in responding to you.

# Participate in Committee Hearings

- Committee meetings are open to the public and can be a forum for citizens to express their views.
- Public testimony can sometimes influence the committee's action but does become part of the permanent record.
- Agendas are posted 24 hours in advance of a meeting and can be found at <http://le.utah.gov/asp/interim/glance.html>
- Be familiar with the committee process.
- Know the committee members and the issues to be addressed.
- Prepare your testimony in writing and rehearse your speech so that it is only 2 – 3 minutes.
- Be prepared to answer questions.

<http://le.utah.gov/documents/aboutthelegislature/TestifyingbeforeaLegislativeCommittee.htm>

# Lobby legislators at the Capitol

- Send in a **green** (House) or **blue** (Senate) note to ask a legislator to come out to speak with you
- Notes must be stamped and delivered by the sergeant at arms (**green** coats in the House, **gray** coats in the Senate).



# Other Ways to Lobby

- Letters to the editor – daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, etc.
  - Keep it short and on one subject. Usually 500 words or less. Use same tips as writing a letter to an elected official.
  - Include your contact information.
- Blogs and social networking sites.
- Talking with family and friends.



# Planned Parenthood – Issues to Follow

- Reproductive Health Education and Services – HB 215
- Telehealth Amendments – HB 154
- Public Education Curriculum Requirements – HB 137
- Unborn Child Protection Amendments – HB 141
- Reproductive Health and Medicaid Amendments – HB 57

# ACLU – Issues to Follow

- ❑ Abolish the Death Penalty
- ❑ Expand Women's Equality in the Workplace
- ❑ Remove Barriers to Abortion Access
- ❑ Protect Private Property from Government Seizure
- ❑ Expand Election Day Registration Across Utah
- ❑ Reform Juvenile Justice System
- ❑ Make Comprehensive Sex Ed Available to Utah Children
- ❑ Make Community Re-Entry More Accessible for People with Criminal Records
- ❑ Expand Access to End-of-Life Options
- ❑ Allow Seriously Ill Utahns to Use Medical Marijuana

# Utah Women's Coalition



- Family and Medical Leave Amendments – HB 242
- Judicial Nominating Process Amendments – HB 93

# Equality Utah – Issues to Follow

- Ensure LGBTQ Utahns Have Equal Access to Health Care
- Protect LGBTQ Youth in Schools
- Fight Back Against Anti-LGBTQ Legislation

# Let's Stay in Touch!

- Sign up for our email alerts and Twitter feeds!
  - [www.acluutah.org](http://www.acluutah.org) - @acluutah
  - [www.equalityutah.org](http://www.equalityutah.org) - @equalityutah
  - [www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-utah](http://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-utah) - @ppacutah
  - [www.utahwomenscoalition.org](http://www.utahwomenscoalition.org) - @utah\_women



Planned Parenthood Association of Utah

