

Being a An Advocate: Influencing Public Policy

No Disclosures

- Overview of the legislative process – How decisions are made
- Why it's important to get involved
- How you can make a difference

The Legislative Funnel

Members of the Legislature

Committees

Ways & Means Committee

Leadership Team

**Governor, Speaker &
Senate President**

How A Bill Becomes A Law

How A Program Gets Funding and Support

- Voters
- Constituency Groups
- The Media

The Legislative Funnel

**Voters, Constituency Groups,
Concerned Citizens, the Media, etc. (i.e.
YOU)**



Members of the Legislature

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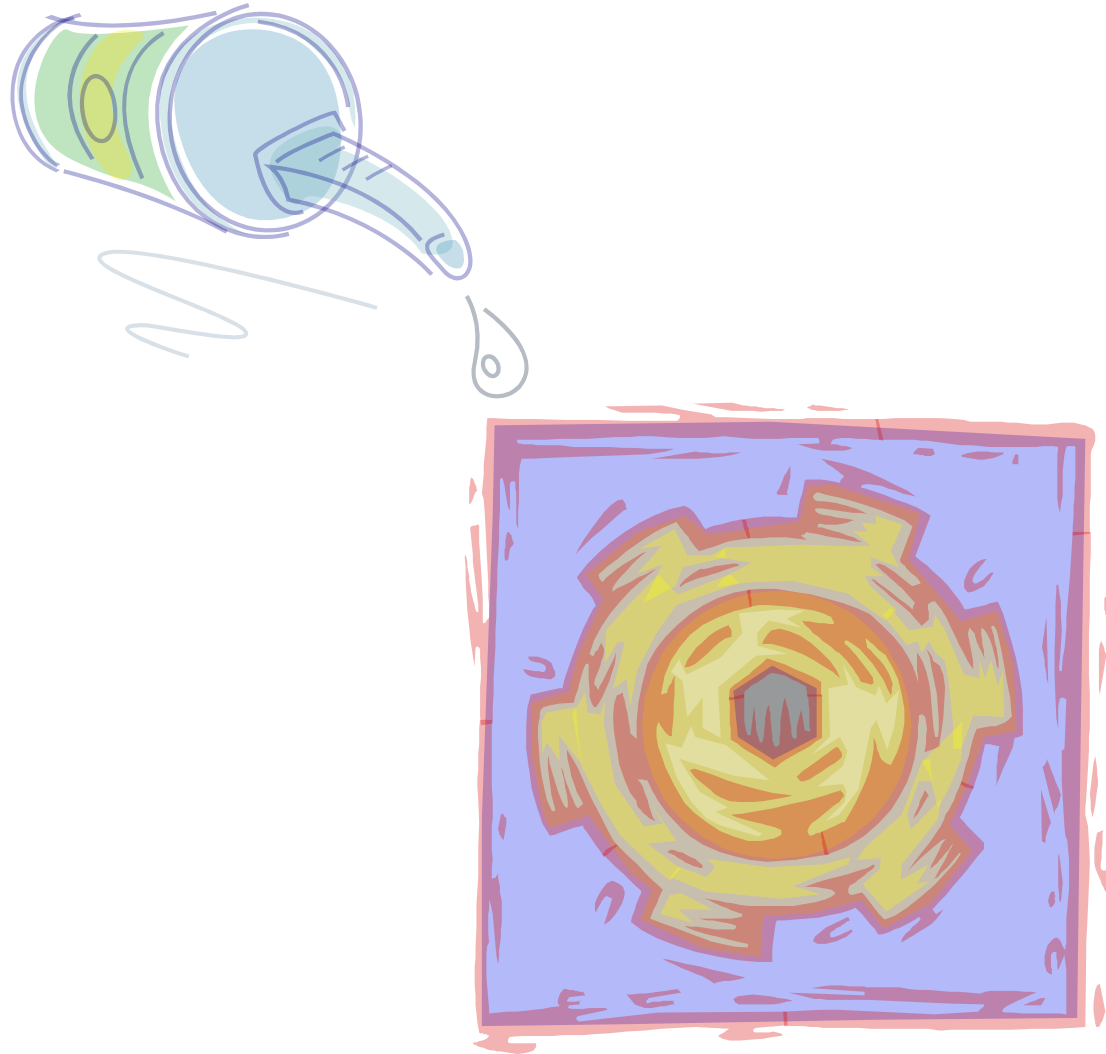
**Governor, Speaker &
Senate President**

Why Get Involved???

1. Virtually every issues that effects the provision of health care is impacted by the decisions made by your elected officials.
2. Legislators make different decisions when watched by affected constituents.

3. There are hundreds of issues, thousands of bills and funding proposals filed each session. No legislator or staff has the time to know all of them or be an expert on them.
4. Competition for dollars.

... The Squeaky Wheel Gets the Grease



The Wheel of Influence

What Makes Legislators Act?

Voters

Media

Governor



Leadership

Lobbyists

Interested Groups

Other Government Officials

Where Legislators Get Information From to Make a Decision



What YOU Can Do

How YOU Can
Have An Impact

Developing An Advocacy Campaign

- Data and research to support your position
- Key, concise message points and talking points
- Earned media
 - Op-eds
 - Letters to the Editor
 - Professional publications

Developing An Advocacy Campaign

- Grassroots lobbying
- Public hearing
- Types of advocates
 - Experts in the field
 - ‘Celebrity’ (ie Tedy Bruschi)
 - Survivors
 - Grassroots
- Election

Developing An Advocacy Campaign

- Finding a legislative champion
 - Health care leader
 - Impacted by family issue
 - Health care background
 - Local issue happened in their district (ie defib issue)
- Be sure legislators get credit for good work

Developing An Advocacy Campaign

- Using the Administration and State Agencies
- Creating events
- Using studies and research
 - Ie Cessation program with MassHealth members

Rules of Grassroots Lobbying

1. ABC

- Accurate
- Brief
- Concise

2. The more personal, the more impact

3. The squeaky wheel gets the grease

Using Grassroots Lobbying

As a health care expert you have tremendous power to influence public policy.

As a grassroots advocate your goal is to **build an ongoing relationship with your elected officials that represent you and have them be your advocates on Beacon Hill.**

The Toolbox of Constituent Lobbying



Personal contact is the most effective way to impact an elected officials stand on an issue

Write Your Legislators

Writing to your legislator is an effective way of expressing your concerns about an issue.

- Letters provide much of the fuel that powers the legislative process.
- A stack of mail relating to a particular issue, especially if the letter is personal and handwritten, is very influential with a policy maker.

Email Your Legislators

- A quick and effective tool
- Useful in a time-sensitive situation
- It's 2010 – they use email to hear from constituents

Postcard Drives

- A quick and effective tool
- Creates larger numbers of contact

Phone Your Legislators

Calling legislators is a quick and effective way to express your concern over an issue of extreme importance to you.

It also allows you to connect more with the office staff, who are key allies when working with elected officials.

Visit With Your Legislators

Visiting a legislator is the most personal contact a constituent can make to discuss a policy issue or specific legislation.

Making it real

THE most effective and influential thing you can do is have your State Legislators visit a related site.

- Have a small group of leaders give a tour and describe the program and how it makes a difference.
- Have different people describe different aspects of the program.
- After the tour, have a brief meeting with the legislators, emphasizing the key messaging about the importance of your issue.

Write a Letter-to-the Editor

As a health care
expert/professional you are an
incredibly credible and effective
messenger

Elections

- Make health care part of the campaign debate and encourage candidates to talk about your issues in their campaign platform.
- Connecting with candidates for public office and participating in elections – by getting involved in your party's precinct caucus, attending candidate events and voting – are all important ways of influencing policy decisions.
- If your state legislator serves you well help them during re-election time.

We need **You** involved.

You are powerful
advocates - make your
voice heard.

Case Study – Defibrillators in schools

- Use health care data and research to drive behavior
- Use legislation to drive behavior
- Use real people – Newburyport, Mass high school student saves man's life

Case Study – Tobacco Prevention and control

- Data and research – link to health care costs - \$4 billion+ in Massachusetts
- Workplace ban – community by community forced state legislative action

Case Study – Primary Stroke Services

- Argument – getting people quick attention saves lives and money
- Key legislative champions (parent issues)