



Introduction

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T H E C L A Y F I R M



What is Lobbying?

- Lobbying is generally defined as any activity designed to influence public thinking toward a desired action.



What is Lobbying?

- By Mississippi law – Lobbying is defined as:
 - Influencing or attempting to influence legislative or executive action through oral or written communication;
 - Solicitation of others to influence legislative or executive action;
 - Paying or promising to pay anything of value directly or indirectly related to legislative or executive action.



Why is Lobbying Permitted – at all levels of government?

- Constitutionally Protected Freedom
 - The 1st and 14th Amendments of the United States Constitution guarantee this basic freedom.
 - In addition, Mississippi law has, since 1916, specifically authorized lobbying activities.
 - Our society has long guaranteed the **right** for all its citizens to express opinions about legislative action.



Goal of a Lobbyist

- As imperfect as we may be, we seek to furnish our clients with essential information about legislation in order that our clients will know best how to conduct their present and future lives.
- Additionally, lobbyists try to keep legislators informed as to what their constituents and others think about legislative issues, so that legislators can consider these viewpoints in voting.



Lobbying is Necessary and Useful

- The Legislature functions more effectively when a lobbyist can tell a legislator a particular group's position as opposed to having every member of the group attempting to contact the legislator.
- Representative government has long been a bedrock principal of our country's democracy. Government functions better by allowing a few to speak for the larger group, and **so it is with lobbying.**

What Does a Lobbyist Actually Do?



- Must first learn all that you can about your clients' business in order to provide legislators with relevant, timely, and well-documented information on pertinent issues.
- Must know the legislative process.
- Know the legislators, attorneys, staff.
- All about building relationships.

What Does a Lobbyist Actually Do?



- Must follow the bills affecting the clients and keep the client apprised at all times as to what is happening. This includes participating in committee meetings and hearings to be sure the client's point of view is timely considered before legislative action is taken.
- Must assist your clients in establishing a strong grassroots network. All politics are local.
- FDR: "Ok, you've convinced me. Now go out there and bring pressure on me."



Grassroots Lobbying

- Grassroots lobbying is simply citizen participation in government.
- The key to successful grassroots lobbying efforts is assembling people who share common goals and concerns. (You)!
- Grassroots communications are vital in educating legislators to the concerns of the Mississippi Health Care Association (MHCA).



Your Roll As A Grassroots Lobbyist

- The Clay Firm maintains a constant presence at the State Capitol for our Association. However, The Clay Firm will be most effective when MHCA members like you back them up at home by contacting your legislators directly.
- Legislators listen to their constituents!
- You helped put them in office!

Keys to Effective Grassroots Lobbying



- Know your legislators – This is imperative! If you do not know who your local Representative and Senator are, then go find out. You can call your local circuit clerk, and they will be happy to tell you. Well, maybe not happy, but they can provide the information you need.
- Go to this website and enter your 9 digit zip: <http://votesmart.org/officials/NA/G> -



Keys to Effective Grassroots Lobbying

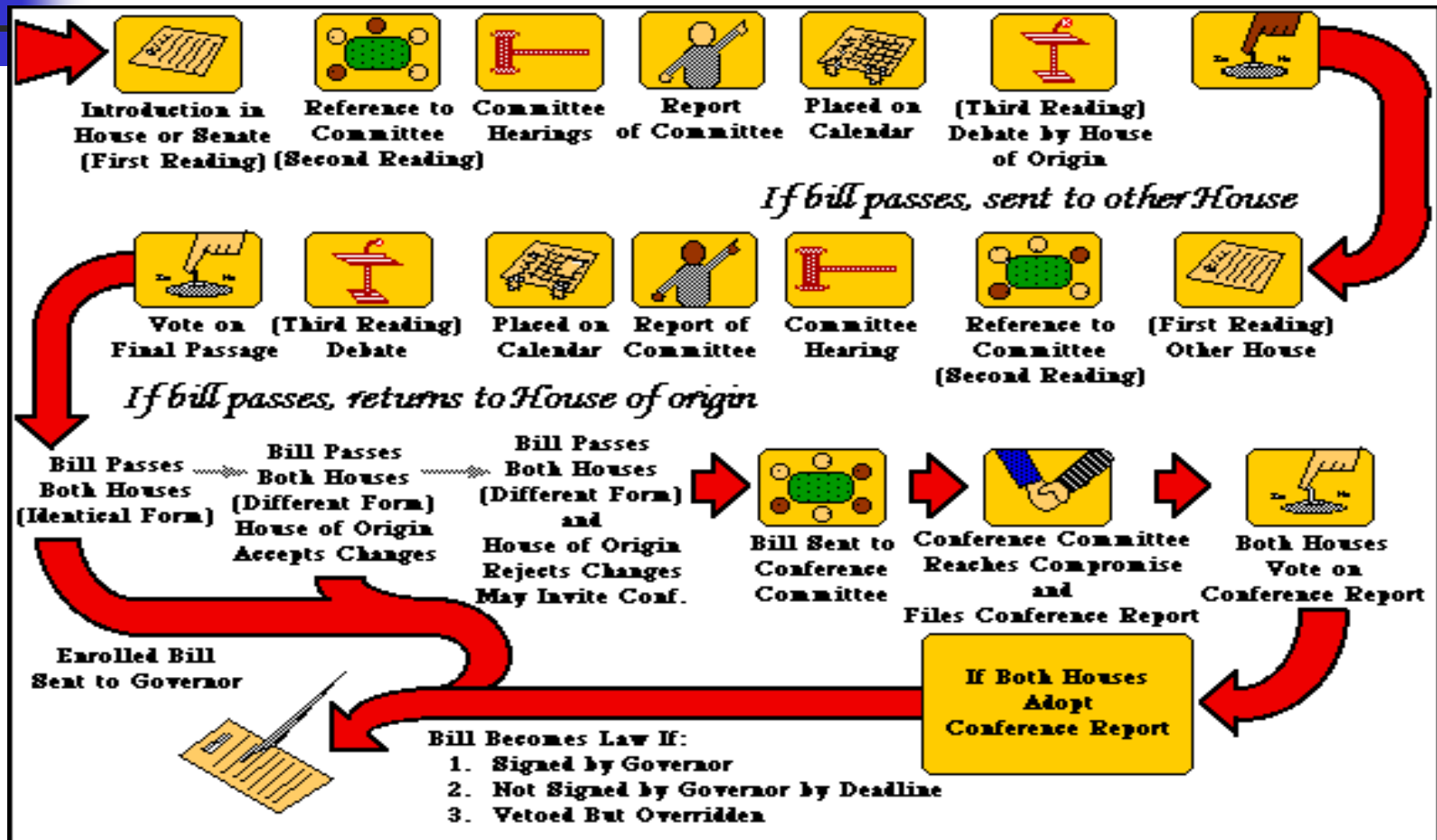
- Mississippi Electric Power Association publishes a Legislative Roster each year.
- You can download a pdf version at http://www.epaofms.com/index.php/government_relations/general_information/ -
- Invaluable tool!



Keys to Effective Grassroots Lobbying

- Know the process – Knowing how a bill becomes law and the timetable for processing legislation are a must.
- This link provides the timetable for processing legislation in 2013:
<http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2013/pdf/mainmenu.htm> -

How a Bill Becomes Law in MS





Bill Status Website

- <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2013/pdf/mainmenu.htm>



Clay Firm – Bill Status Report



T H E C L A Y F I R M


Bill Status Report

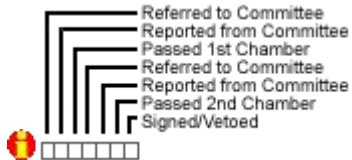
Bill Status Continued

MISSISSIPPI HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

Bill Status Report

11-29-2012 - 13:31:22

 - Indicates action since request date.



Track: MS Health Care Association

HB 82



Hines, John

Relating to requiring nursing homes to purchase and maintain a minimum amount of liability insurance.

Bill History:

02-06-12 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Insurance

02-06-12 H and also referred to committee on House Public Health and Human Services

03-06-12 H Died in committee



Bill Status Continued

HB 421



Formby, Mark

Relating to extending the repealers on various provisions of the Medicaid program.

Bill History:

02-13-12 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Medicaid
03-05-12 H Do pass as substituted from committee House Medicaid
03-13-12 H Set on the House Calendar
03-13-12 H Brought Up on Floor for Discussion
03-13-12 H Read the third time
03-14-12 H Set on the House Calendar
03-14-12 H Brought Up on Floor for Discussion
03-14-12 H Committee substitute adopted
03-14-12 H 1 Floor amendment(s) adopted
03-14-12 H Passed (Vote: Y:116/N: 0)
03-14-12 H Motion to reconsider entered
03-16-12 H Set on the House Calendar
03-16-12 H Motion to reconsider tabled
03-21-12 S Received in the Senate - Not referred
03-26-12 S Referred to Senate Committee on Senate Public Health and Welfare
03-26-12 S and also referred to committee on Senate Appropriations
03-28-12 S Do pass as amended from committee Senate Public Health and Welfare
03-29-12 S Do pass as amended from committee Senate Appropriations
04-09-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar
04-09-12 S Brought Up on Floor for Discussion
04-09-12 S 1 Committee amendment(s) adopted
04-09-12 S Passed (Vote: Y: 52/N: 0)
04-10-12 S Returned for concurrence
04-13-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-13-12 H House declined to concur/Invite Conference
04-20-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-20-12 H Conferees Named - Howell,Barker,Zuber
04-23-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar
04-23-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-24-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar
04-24-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-24-12 S Conferees Named - Kirby,Bryan,Burton
04-25-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-26-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar
04-26-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-27-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar
04-28-12 H Set on the House Calendar
04-28-12 S Set on the Senate Calendar
04-27-12 H Conference committee report filed in House
04-27-12 S Conference committee report filed in Senate
04-28-12 S Brought Up on Floor for Discussion
04-28-12 H House adopted conference report (Vote: Y:115/N: 2)
04-28-12 H Brought Up on Floor for Discussion
04-28-12 S Senate adopted conference report (Vote: Y: 52/N: 0)
05-03-12 H Signed by the Speaker
05-03-12 S Signed by the President
05-22-12 G Governor's Response Deadline
05-17-12 G Signed by the Governor



Bill Status Continued

- HB 421
Formby Relating to extending the repealers on various provisions of the Medicaid program. *Bill History*: 04-28-12 S Senate adopted conference report (Vote: Y: 52/N: 0)
05-03-12 H Signed by the Speaker
05-03-12 S Signed by the President
05-22-12 G Governor's Response Deadline
05-17-12 G Signed by the Governor



Keys to Effective Grassroots Lobbying

- Know your issue – i.e., bill numbers, why this legislation is needed. You don't have to know every minute detail, but you should be able to discuss the issues in a reasonably detailed fashion. Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, but I'll get back to you with an answer."



Keys to Effective Grassroots Lobbying

- Be Courteous – When asking legislators to support MHCA issues, show them courtesy and respect. Do not be argumentative, even if you disagree with their opinions.
- Be Concise – Do not attempt to explain the entire MHCA legislative agenda in one contact. A good rule of thumb is one issue per contact. Be friendly, but brief.
- Be Consistent – MHCA has to speak with one voice. We can only be successful if we all work together.



Methods of Contact – in order of effectiveness

- Personal Contact/Visits – Generally, this is the most effective method of contact. However, sometimes this can be tough to accomplish.
- Phone Calls/Text Messages – When leaving a message, be sure to say who you are, including your name and contact information. Let them know that you are a concerned constituent.
- MHCA Action Alert
- E-Mail – this method may be higher with the younger legislator. However, some still do not use e-mail.
- Mailed Personal Letters – Form letters, however, are not very effective
- Faxed Letters



Lobbying Tips

- Know the Process.
- Honesty.
- Know your subject.
- Know all the sides of the issue.
- Know the Legislator.
- Know the Staff.
- Make Appointments.



Lobbying Tips

- If there is credit, it goes to legislators; if there is blame, you assume it.
- Don't take opposition from legislators or other lobbyists personally. (Tough one – I still need work on this).
- Ask for what you want but be willing to compromise.
- Lobbying is not a 9-5 job.



Conclusion

- Grassroots support is invaluable. A legislator is responsible to his/her constituents and should be very responsive to their needs and wishes.
- Remember to say “thank you” and offer to help the legislator if you can.