

“Informed citizens can still make a difference in Frankfort.”

—Tom FitzGerald,
Kentucky Resources Council

We heartily encourage you to exercise your political muscle by lobbying elected and appointed officials.

Kentucky needs your voice to help restore and protect our land, water and air. Your health and every living thing depend on it.

This brochure offers you tips for confident, effective advocacy — whether you speak from years of professional experience or recently became concerned after learning about an issue.

Consider signing up for a “lobby day” sponsored by one or more of our groups. Feel free to tell us if you would prefer to accompany a more experienced citizen lobbyist until you feel confident enough to meet with officials on your own.

Thank you for your advocacy.

USEFUL RESOURCES

How bills become law:

http://www.lrc.ky.gov/kidspages/Road_to_Passage.pdf

Identify legislators:

<http://lrc.ky.gov/Legislators.htm>

Read and Print Bills:

<http://lrc.ky.gov/legislation.htm>

Subscribe to updates on specific bills of your choice:

<http://kentucky.gov/services/pages/billwatch.aspx>

Lack time to go to Frankfort?

Call 1-800-372-7181 to leave toll-free messages for legislators.

Send e-mail via

<http://www.lrc.ky.gov/whoswho/email.htm>

During legislative sessions, The Kentucky Conservation Committee (KCC) and Kentucky Resources Council (KRC) publish periodic summaries of activity on key bills and specific appeals for citizen calls to the above message hotline. Subscribe via their web sites, below.

Written by Sarah Lynn Cunningham

For more information, contact:

Ky Conservation Committee: KyConservation.org

Ky Waterways Alliance: kwalliance.org

Ky Resources Council: kyrc.org

Louisville Climate Action Network: louisvillecan.org



A Guide to Effective Citizen Lobbying

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Citizen Lobbying: Because it's your right to be heard

PREPARATION

- 1. Sign up for e-notifications** of which bills most need your attention. See "Useful Resources."
- 2. Identify your legislators**, using this tool: <https://cdcbp.ky.gov/VICWeb/index.jsp>.
- 3. Invite friends to come along**, since there's strength in numbers. To lobby a legislator not your own, such as a member of a key committee, strive to recruit friends who live in the legislator's district to join you. Role-play, if you want to build your confidence.
- 4. Schedule an appointment**, by phone (1-502-564-8100) or e-mail (for addresses, see <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/whoswho/email.htm>).
- 5. Realize that the official you will visit is very busy** and may not have had time to understand fully the legislation that concerns you. You don't need to be an expert, but should prepare this basic information:
 - The bill number (and name, if it has one).
 - A bit about the official's district, if not your own, and committee assignments: <http://lrc.ky.gov/Legislators.htm>.
 - Succinct reasons why the outcome of the legislation matters to you, if not your community and/or your organization, too. See "Useful Resources."
- 6. Look for compelling win-win responses** to common counter-arguments, such as the false "jobs or the environment" thinking.
- 7. Pack your notebook, pen and water bottle.** Plan enough time to get through security. If you usually carry a penknife, leave it behind.
- 8. Consider wearing a suit** or perhaps clothing that reflects your line of work.

AT THE CAPITOL

- 1. Arrive early.** Sign in. Locate the official's office or committee conference room. Find a seat, and imagine a rewarding conversation.
- 2. When introducing yourself**, smile, shake hands and state your name and any group affiliation. If you live in his or her district, say so.
- 3. Respect his/her position**, even if his or her previous votes were disappointing.
- 4. Say, "I know you're busy and will be brief."** Explain why the legislation matters to you. If its outcome could impact your family or land, briefly present a photo. Pause for a sip of water if you become nervous.
- 5. Ask, "Where do you stand on this bill?"** Listen carefully and open mindedly, and take notes.
 - If undecided, ask, "Are you interested in more information that I [or we] might provide?"
 - If taking the urged position, express your appreciation and ask, "How can I [or we] support you?"
 - If taking another position, ask, "Would you share with me the concerns that lead you to take your position, please?" If you can, affirm any common ground, then address those concerns.
- 6. If presented concerns or questions that you can't address, don't guess.** Say so, and promise to take them to your group.
- 7. Thank the official for meeting with you.**

FOLLOW - UP

- 1. Forward any outstanding questions** or concerns posed by the official to your group.
- 2. Send a short follow-up note**, since influence comes from building relationships. Thank the official for his or her time. If he or she agreed to vote as urged, express your appreciation and support. Otherwise, restate common ground and your main concerns, share subsequent thoughts for bridging gaps with win-win solutions and request further consideration.
- 3. Share your experience** on your group's Facebook page. Encourage your family and friends to follow your example, and to join you next time.

"Hearing about issues first-hand is essential for building effective solutions."

—Lane Boldman,
Kentucky Conservation Committee

