

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY: How To Advocate For NCFF With Policy Makers

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Objectives

- Know how – Learn the basics of policy maker interaction
- Support - Contacts and tools to stay engaged and aligned with NCFF's strategic public policy efforts
- Expansion - Leverage your expertise to make NCFF's positions more compelling to policy makers



Getting the Lay of the Land

Have you met
before with
government
policy makers?



If so, have
these meetings
included public
policy issues?



Who Advocates For NCFF?

- **WE** do
- Successful public policy advocacy = Subject Matter Experts + Public Policy Process Experts
- **You**: the impact an issue will have on the community
- **Public Policy team**: how and when to influence the legislative/regulatory process
- **We need you to complete the picture!**



Politics 101: 5 Big Rules in influencing Policy Makers

1. Be credible and be prepared
2. Process can be as important as people
3. Relationships matter
4. Adapt your agenda and messages to the audience
5. Don't be discouraged



Rule 1: Be Credible & Be Prepared

- Tell it like it is, don't make stuff up, integrity is key, NCFF needs to be seen as a trusted advisor and community resource
- Know the issue. Know your request. Be ready to “make the sale”
- Use third party validators to endorse public policy issues to provide more credibility.



Rule 2: Process can be as Important as People

- Public officials' staff really do set policy; don't minimize their importance
- Understand the politics of the issue
- Protocol matters: don't unintentionally offend by ignoring local culture
- Avoid partisanship



Rule 3: Relationships Matter

- Don't expect to “parachute in” for a day and get the win
- Don't burn your bridges: today's opponent can be tomorrow's champion on another issue
- Listen
- Don't overcommit
- Follow through on commitments you make



Rule 4: Adapt your Agenda and Messages to the Audience

- Understand your audience's priorities, pain points and needs... and reflect that in your message
- Be aware of the knowledge level of your audience, and don't talk up/down to them
- Don't assume knowledge of our jargon, abbreviations, and other buzz words
- Stay on message--stay focused--make your ask something they can do



Rule 5: Don't Be Discouraged

- Someone who agrees with you isn't always your friend;
- Someone who argues with you isn't always your enemy
- Take advantage of opposition to hone and make your points
– it's easier to make your points when you know where the other side stands
- Policy wins take time

