

Advocacy Toolkit



Indiana Statehouse



United States Capitol



City-County Building, Indianapolis

Investing in youth today,
improving conditions tomorrow



LEGISLATIVE

The legislative branch is “the voice of the people” and writes the laws that we must follow. The legislature has two chambers, the House of Representatives and the State Senate. Indiana’s General Assembly is a part-time legislature, meaning its members are only in session for a few months each year. However, the members of the General Assembly and their staff work for constituents year-round.

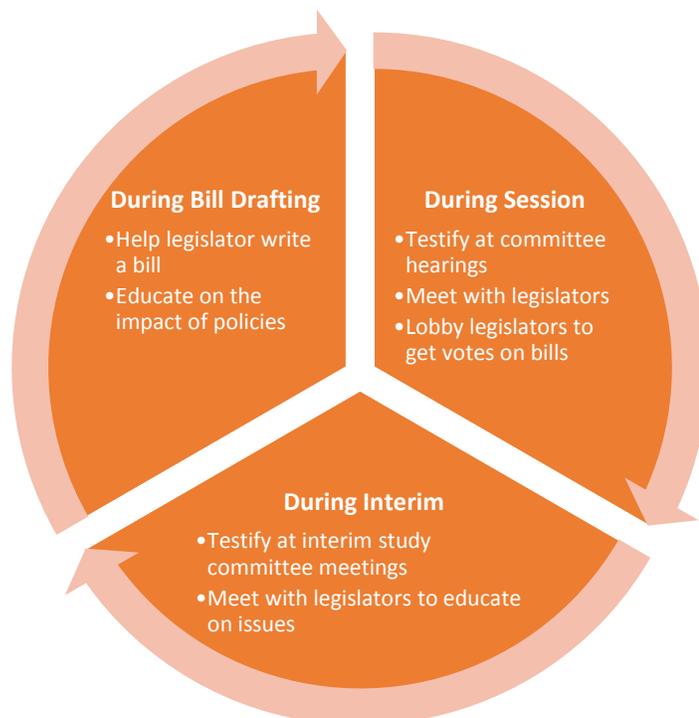
House of Representatives

- 100 state representatives representing approximately 60,000 Hoosiers each and elected for 2-year terms
- Speaker of the House presides over the members when in session

State Senate

- 50 state senators representing approximately 120,000 Hoosiers each and elected for 4-year terms
- Lieutenant Governor presides over the Senate and may cast tie-breaking votes

KEY TIMES TO INFLUENCE LEGISLATION



Influencing the Process

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW



STRATEGIES



FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE

Questions to Consider When Preparing your Message:

- What is the issue?
- Are there any bills regarding this issue, if so what is the bill number?
 - Are they effective?
- What are some key facts of statistics regarding the issue?
- Who is your audience (which people, what values?)
- What information and what format works best for your audience?
 - Written or verbal?
 - Social media or print media?
- What is your goal?
 - Increase awareness?
 - Generate support?
 - Motivate action?
- What do you want to see happen?
- How does this issue impact you personally?
- What would the opposite view be regarding the issue?
 - How would you respond?

Useful Advocacy Tips

WHEN MEETING WITH A LEGISLATOR

- Keep it short and simple
- Have your facts straight
- Be on time, polite, and patient
- Make the issue personal
- Be a resource
- Before you leave, say thank you again
- Continue the relationship with the legislator (e.g. send thank you letter)

PROVIDING TESTIMONY

- Address the committee chair and members and introduce yourself:
 - Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill _____. My name is _____ and I am (job title) at (your employer).
- Share why this is an important issue for you.
 - Personal story either about yourself or someone you know.
 - Add data or other information that helps make your case.
- Discuss why you feel this bill would help (or hurt) the issue and why you feel legislators should vote in support or opposition.
- Close by saying: “thank you for considering this important issue and I hope that you will vote in support (or opposition) of this bill. Thank you.”
- Committee chair will ask committee members if they have any questions. Wait for questions – if there are none you can go back to your seat.



Governor Mike Pence signing HEA1423 Anti-Bullying into law

WHEN WRITING TO A LEGISLATOR

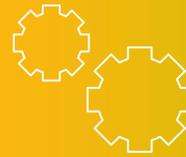
- Use correct address and salutation
- Type or write your letter clearly
- Use your own words
- Keep message brief and focused
- Be specific about how issue affects you
- Know your facts
- Find out how your legislator voted on this issue or similar issues in the past
- Be persistent
- Say thank you
- Don't use a negative, condescending, threatening, or intimidating tone

WHEN CALLING A LEGISLATOR

- Start your call by saying, "My name is _____, and I am from _____." End your call by saying "thank you." (Some offices may ask for your full name and mailing address so they can follow up with you on the issue)
- "Please let the Senator/Representative know that I support/oppose* (bill number and title)." For your information, you may want to ask what the legislator's opinion is on the issue.
- "I would like to urge him/her to vote for/against this provision because (give one or two reasons)."
- If you would like to discuss a bill in greater detail with your legislator, ask the staff person taking your opinion to relay your name and telephone number to your policy maker or a legislative staff and ask that your call be returned.

*If you are a paid employee of a 501(c)(3) organization and calling on behalf of your role in that organization, asking a legislator or their staff to support or oppose a particular bill is considered lobbying and should be carefully evaluated according to the rules of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Be Part of the Solution



THINGS TO CONSIDER

EDUCATE POLICY MAKERS

Use data

Give possible solutions

Show the impact to them and their constituents

Share personal stories

EDUCATE THE COMMUNITY

Encourage them to share their stories

Show them how they are affected



ADVOCATE!

Provide testimony at a legislative hearing

Speak to community groups and organizations about issues affecting youth

Help plan a youth advocacy day at the Statehouse



Resources

GOVERNMENT GLOSSARY

Amendment-A change to one of the bills the House or Senate is considering

Author-The representative or senator who introduces the bill

Bill-The actual proposal legislators introduce

Chamber-One of the two legislative bodies in our state; either the Senate or the House

Committee-A group of lawmakers chosen to study bills about a specific subject. For example: the House Education Committee looks at all bills addressing Indiana schools

Democrat-One of the two main political parties in Indiana. This party's symbol is the donkey

Districts-The area a lawmaker represents. Indiana has 100 House districts and 50 Senate districts

Governor-The chief executive of Indiana

House of Representatives-Also known as the House. One of the two bodies of the General Assembly. The House has 100 members

Interim-The time between sessions of the General Assembly

Laws-Rules we live by

Legislature-Also referred to as the General Assembly. The is made up of the House and the Senate

Lieutenant Governor-The second-in-command to the governor. Also the first in command of the Senate

President Pro Tempore-The second in line of the Senate. This person presides over the Senate

Quorum-The minimum number of members required to be present for the House or Senate to conduct business

Recess-A break in the daily legislative business

Representative-One of the 100 members elected to a two-year term in the House of Representatives

Republican-One of the two main political parties. The symbol of this party is the elephant

Senate-Refers to one of the two bodies making up the state legislature. There are 50 members in the Senate

Senator-One of the 50 members elected to a four-year term in the Senate

Session-The two-year term for each General Assembly. In odd-numbered years, session (known as a long session) must end by April 29th and in even-numbered years, the short session, must end by March 14th.

Speaker-He or she presides over the House. The Speaker is always from the party in control of the House.

Sponsor-The is the person in the House who signs on to Senate bills and the senator who signs on to House bills to make sure they get through the other chamber.

Veto-When the governor refuses to allow a bill to become law

Vote-How bills are approved

FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE CHART

Your Name (Tell where you are from)	
Issue (Include current bills if there are any)	
What do you want to see happen?	
Facts or Statistics	
Personal Story	
Restate what you want to see happen	

WEBSITES

Indiana General Assembly – www.iga.in.gov

Legislator Look-up - <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2014/legislators/>

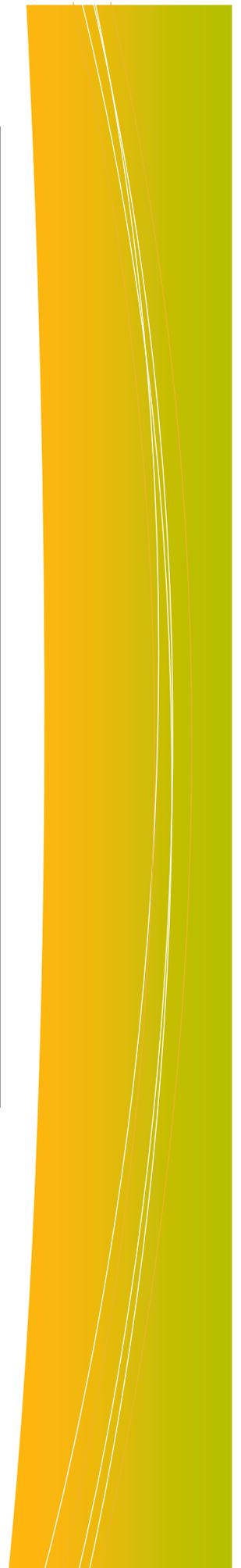
State of Indiana – www.in.gov

ICivics – www.icivics.org

The Center on Congress at Indiana University – congress.indiana.edu

Alliance for Justice – www.afj.org

Independent Sector – www.independentsector.org/charity_lobbying



About MCCOY

MCCOY Inc. is an independent non-profit organization that champions the positive development of youth through leadership on key issues and support of the youth worker community. MCCOY works toward the **goal of ensuring that every young person in central Indiana has opportunities to thrive, learn, engage, and contribute**. MCCOY serves as an **advocate** on behalf of youth, a **capacity builder** that prepares youth-serving organizations to support youth, a **convener** that brings the community together to address youth issues, and a **resource** that provides tools and information to young people.

For More Information:

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Many thanks to the Indiana House of Representatives
Republicans for some of the content of this book, which can be
found on their website -
http://www.in.gov/legislative/house_republicans/publications/kids/Caucus.pdf



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