
How to Win Friends and Influence People: A Successful Guide to State and Federal Advocacy

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Federal Advocacy

1. **There are several avenues to change or promote a public policy:**
 - **Legislation**
 - **Regulation**
 - **Judicial system**
 - **Public attention and opinion**

Focus on Federal Legislative Advocacy

Not all bills are equal

- **Congress must pass annual spending (appropriation) bills.**
- **Example: The Labor-HHS-Edu appropriations bill, which contains funding for LIHEAP**

Other bills or amendments usually have a very difficult time going anywhere, but still have value as a vehicle for a message or platform.

- **Example: LIHEAP reauthorization will depend on vehicles, timing and politics.**

Difference between authorization and appropriation

Authorization sets out the parameters for a program and the funding levels.

- **Example: The authorizing legislation for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) sets the parameters for the program and the authorized spending levels.**

The annual appropriations process sets out the amount of federal funds for the fiscal year.

- **Example: For FY 2010, LIHEAP received an annual appropriation of \$4.51 billion for the regular LIHEAP program and \$590 million for LIHEAP emergency contingency funding.**

The Appropriations Process

- The federal fiscal year runs from October 1st to September 30th of the next year.
- The appropriations cycle begins well before the start of the fiscal year. Below is an outline of the usual steps towards the appropriations bills.
- The President submits a budget request to Congress, usually around the first week in February.
- The House and Senate Budget Committees draft budget resolutions with spending targets for the spending bills. Congress does not always pass a budget resolution.

Appropriations process continued

- There are 12 House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees
- Each subcommittee has their spending parameters from the budget resolution.
- Here is the usual pathway for a spending bill
 - The H & S subcommittees hold hearings on the programs in their jurisdiction. LIHEAP is in the Labor, HHS, Edu appropriations subcommittee
 - The subcommittees draft a spending bill for the programs under their jurisdiction; marks up the bill and votes on it.
 - The House and Senate full committees mark up the bill.
 - The bill is sent to the floor of the relevant chamber(s) for a vote.
 - If there are differences in the H & S bills, it goes to conference and is voted on again by the chambers.
 - The bill is sent to the President and becomes law or is vetoed.

What happens if time runs out?

- If any or all of the spending bills are not passed by October 1 (the start of the new FY), the programs covered by the spending bills have no funding (a government shutdown).
- To avoid a shutdown, Congress can and does pass Continuing Resolutions (CRs) which continue funding for a set period of time. These resolutions can last weeks or months or the rest of the new fiscal year. There can be several CRs in a row.
- If the clock runs on several individual spending bills, Congress often passes an omnibus spending bill.

Tips for Advocacy

- Contact from frontline groups in the member's district is critical – *these members of Congress represent you and your clients.*
- Take advantage of new found interest in your POV during election years, but cultivate a relationship with your members offices now.
- Consider reaching out to a diverse array of stakeholders who hold similar views on LIHEAP for group visits or group letters. That attracts attention.

Tips for Advocacy continued

- Meet with Congressional staff and where it is possible, with your Senators and Representatives.
- Prepare brief (one to two pages) materials that explain how LIHEAP is important to your clients and the member's district.
- Put a face on LIHEAP for your member.

Tips continued

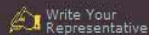
- It's best to call, email or fax your representatives as snail mail is delayed due to security measures.
- Finding contact information:
- The Capitol Switchboard can connect you to the Senator or Representative's DC office: 202-224-3121.
- The House website: www.house.gov and the Senate website: www.senate.gov have links to committee and member web pages.

Find Your Representative

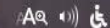
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Write Your Representative



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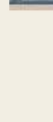
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Thank You.

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