

Welcome to
Virginia



The 2005 Northeast CZM Partners Workshop

- ◆ Maintaining Momentum towards change
- ◆ It's easier than you think
- ◆ Legislators are human (usually) and most want to do a good job
- ◆ Lobbying is not a bad four letter word!

Where do we start?

- ◆ What's your home base?
- ◆ How many states are represented?
- ◆ What's your Legislative makeup?
- ◆ Do you know your districts?

Just for Fun

- ◆ In the NE CZM Partners area how many Democrat Governors? Republican?
- ◆ What about your state? What's the make up of the legislature?

Just for Fun

An interesting breakdown:

- o Three states have the Governor and the majority of the legislature from the same party.
- o Six states have the Governor from one party and the legislature controlled by the other party.
- o One state has a Republican Governor and the Republicans control the Senate while the Democrats control the House.
- o One state has a Democrat Governor and a Democrat controlled Senate but the Republicans control the House.

Consensus Building

- ◆ Takes work
- ◆ Participation –if possible—in the elective process
- ◆ Who do elected officials listen to?

The Decision Makers

- ◆ After the elections
- ◆ The administration
- ◆ The senior members of the legislature

A Game of Numbers

- ◆ Know your colleagues
- ◆ Know who knows who
- ◆ Take your message to the legislators, but
- ◆ Know the do's and don'ts

Tips on Making Contacts

Some Do's & Don'ts of Communicating with Your Legislator



Communicating With Your Legislator

Who is MY Legislator?

- ◆ <http://convview.state.va.us/whosmy/constinput.asp>
- ◆ <http://legis.state.va.us/Senate/Senators.htm>
- ◆ <http://legis.state.va.us/House/Delegates.htm>

Communicating With Your Legislator

- ◆ It is important to keep our legislators informed of how we feel about legislation that affects our lives and interests, and the facts on which our thinking and conclusions are based.

Communicating With Your Legislator

DOs

- ◆ Make personal contact with your legislators via personal visits especially in the “off-season”, letters, telephone, faxes or e-mails.
- ◆ When legislation of particular interest is scheduled for consideration respond quickly but this is not the best time to be introducing yourself.

Communicating With Your Legislator

DOs

- ◆ Use plain or personal stationery.
- ◆ If you are writing as the representative of a group, use the organization's letterhead or clearly identify the organization in your email.
- ◆ Be sure your name, best way to contact you and your physical address are included (especially when contacting your representative).

Communicating With Your Legislator

DO s

◆ ALWAYS

◆ ALWAYS

– ALWAYS.....

Be courteous and reasonable.

The golden rule applies – remember how you would want someone to speak to you.

Communicating With Your Legislator

DOs

- ◆ Cite the correct name, number and contents of the bill.
- ◆ Write when you are asked or receive a Legislative Bulletin.
- ◆ When the Legislature is in session time is of the essence in written correspondence.

Communicating With Your Legislator

DOs

- ◆ Try to know your legislator personally.
- ◆ Get to know their legislative assistants
- ◆ Encourage your co-workers, colleagues, and friends to contact their legislators on issues of interest to the promotion of land conservation, pollution abatement, coastal management issues

Communicating With Your Legislator

DOs

- ◆ Familiarize yourself with the workings of your General Assembly
- ◆ Do you know the associations in your state who can answer questions and provide you with legislative information? Use them!

DON'Ts

- ◆ **DON'T** guess at facts or base your letters on rumors.
- ◆ **DON'T** use mimeographed letters, printed post cards or form letters under any circumstances.

DON'Ts

- ◆ DON'T use generalities or be wordy.
- ◆ DON'T use threats or promises ... ever.
- ◆ DON'T inject party politics or criticize legislators or other organizations.

Communicating With Your Legislator

DON'Ts

DON'T apologize for writing, sending e-mails, or taking their time. If you are succinct, know your subject and give them good information, they are glad to give you a hearing.

How To Lobby Your General Assembly

Whether professional or citizen lobbyist, guidelines can be helpful. Bernie Henderson, a former director of the Health Regulatory Boards, and a successful participant in the legislative process passed along his "10 Commandments" several years ago.

The First Commandment

Politics is both the art of compromise and the science of accomplishing the practical. To go to the legislature with the attitude that your way is the only way to address an issue is a virtual guarantee for disappointment and defeat.

The Second Commandment

It is almost always better to gratefully accept half a loaf than no loaf at all. Take as much as you can get and wait until another time to try for the rest. If your position is right, it will stand the test of time - if time proves you are not right - chalk it up to the wisdom of the legislature.

The Third Commandment

Don't fight the inevitable; instead try to use it to your greatest advantage or to at least minimize the damage.

The Fourth Commandment

There is a new day with every dawning and your strongest adversary today may be your closest ally tomorrow, so when opposing someone's position, be sure you don't oppose the person. Don't write off anyone, regardless of how wrong you believe they may be.

The Fifth Commandment

Intelligence is not only knowing the correct information, it is realizing what you do not know and having enough sense to admit when you don't have the answer to a question. There is no advantage in risking being considered unreliable, foolish, or untruthful. There is no substitute for honesty and candor, even if it means putting your proposal in jeopardy.

The Sixth Commandment

Pick your battles carefully. There is no need to waste everyone's time or consume your own influence on matters that have no chance or that are being sufficiently and fully considered without your involvement. Know when to keep quiet and when to sit down.

The Seventh Commandment

Never ask a legislator to take a position that you know will get him in trouble with his constituents.

The Eighth Commandment

Take time to say a sincere "thank you" even when a person has done no more than listen.

The Ninth Commandment

Be careful to give your word only after you are sure you can keep whatever commitment you make - and then never go back on it.

The Tenth Commandment

Success is not measured by getting everything you want - it is measured by doing the best you can and by being sure that no one could have done a better job under the same circumstances.

Finally:

The Bonus Commandment

◆ Be very careful what you ask for...

you may get something very different and not at all what you were after. When the session is done you don't want to be wishing you had never asked.

Some Helpful Websites

- ◆ Your state's General Assembly has a website.
- ◆ Learn how to use it (may be a problem for some of the rest of you who also come from my “paper generation”!)
- ◆ Now go out and increase the **MONEMTUM TOWARDS CHANGE**.
- ◆ Thank you for your service !