
Iowa Hospice Organization

Grassroots Lobbying
Everyone can be an advocate



Prior to Session

- Get to know your legislators
 - Personal relationships build trust
 - Try to meet face to face
 - Remember that Iowa has citizen legislature
 - Make good use of time, be brief (Coffee, not lunch)
 - Try to meet legislator with a group of like supporters to maximize time spent
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Citizen Legislature

- During non-session, remember that they have other jobs as well
 - Legislators are not experts in every subject
 - Speak in layman's terms
 - Start with basics, look to legislator for cues regarding their knowledge level
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Adding the Personal touch

- Grassroots lobbying is effective because it demonstrates how the issue affect the people back home
 - Share personal stories/examples about the issue to grab legislator's attention
 - Remember that people and stories are more interesting than statistics and figures
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Advocating

- Speak clearly and concisely
 - Be direct about issues
 - Assume that you will not have much time
 - No jargon, use layman's terms
 - Always be honest
 - Explain both sides of the issue (and why you believe your stance is the correct one)
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Calming Fears

- You likely know more about your issue than the legislator
 - Don't worry if you are not an expert on the issue—do the best you can, more specific information can be provided by the 'professional lobbyist' or others
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Correspondence

- E-mail is quickest and easiest during session
 - Always remember to include your name and physical address on any correspondence
 - Legislator contact information can be found on the IHO Web site: www.iowahospice.org
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Good Luck!

- Remember that democracy does not work without citizen involvement

