

LEGISLATIVE LOBBYING: PURPOSE AND TIMETABLE FOR 2010

TO: Local League Presidents/Action Chairs
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Each year League members normally lobby their state legislators after the state budget is done, giving local League members and legislators an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss the League's Legislative Agenda for the session. ***This year is different!*** Given the deplorable state of affairs in Albany this year, and momentum building in the Legislature to take some reform measures at the very start of next year, we are breaking our lobbying efforts in two parts.

This is Part I of the Legislative Packet focusing on immediate and comprehensive ethics and campaign finance enforcement reform. ***If you have not done so already, call immediately and set up an appointment to see your state representatives for as early as possible in January.*** Information on how to set up an appointment and how to lobby is at the end of this packet. More buttons (at a cost of \$1 each) and Legislative Agenda brochures (for the cost of shipping) can be ordered by contacting Stephanie Lopez at 518-465-4162 or stephanie@lwvny.org. Please use the 2010 Legislative Agenda brochures in your advocacy efforts and leave a copy (or several) with your legislator(s). It also contains a membership application. Keep several handy at all times – they are a great PR and membership tool.

Part II will be sent out following the League's forum on Redistricting Reform on February 9th 2010, and will focus on that issue and remaining items on the 2010 Legislative Agenda. Legislative lobbying on Part II should be scheduled for March, April and May in the district office. This will be a good time to acquaint (or re-visit) your legislator to discuss our 2010 Legislative Agenda

These meetings will give legislators an opportunity to learn about League positions and share their ideas and agenda. ***This exchange of information benefits the state League in its efforts to develop strategies that promote our legislative agenda. Our influence in Albany depends on your contact with your state senator and assemblyperson(s). They know you elect them!***

This Packet is available on the state League homepage, www.lwvny.org, and additional information on positions is available at www.lwvny.org/advocacy.html. Please return the attached yellow sheet to the League office following your meeting on Part I or e-mail me a report on your meeting.

SEPARATELY ATTACHED ITEMS

2010 Legislative Agenda Brochures
FIX ALBANY NOW! Buttons

TALKING POINTS FOR COMPREHENSIVE ETHICS REFORM/IMPROVED CAMPAIGN FINANCE ENFORCEMENT

Attention is finally focused on the lack of effective ethics laws and campaign finance enforcement in Albany. Despite continued pressure from the League and other good government groups, 2009 ended with a failure to reform these laws. We believe there is momentum to pass new ethics laws early in 2010.

What we are asking for in any ethics bill:

- An appointment process to the oversight bodies that fosters independence.
- Safeguards barring lobbyists, former officials and other interested parties from serving on ethics oversight bodies.
- Reasonable, reliable, informative, and transparent financial disclosures of all business relationships.
- Significant investigatory, subpoena and enforcement powers, including a strong independent campaign finance enforcement unit in the Board of Elections.. New York State's Board of Elections is underfunded and limited by law in its ability to punish election law scofflaws.

New Yorkers deserve a new ethics law that includes independent oversight, effective administration, strong campaign finance enforcement, and transparent auditing.

As we saw in the transcript of the trial of Senator Joe Bruno, even behavior by public officials that is prohibited by existing criminal laws is at the same time invited by weak ethics laws and by the absence of meaningful and independent enforcement mechanisms.

2010 TIPS FOR LOBBY VISITS

PREPARATION

1. **Making the appointment:** Contact the legislator's district office. Ask for an hour's time, but accept less if necessary, and do not overstay your welcome. Notify the legislator of the number in your group as well as their names, if possible. Send a letter or e-mail confirming the appointment, mentioning the issues you will discuss. Note: if you cannot meet with the legislator, ask to meet with senior staff.

Try to arrange for three to five League members to attend. If your League meets with several assembly members or senators, be sure to have a League member who is a constituent present. At least one person should be experienced in League. League members well versed on the issues to be lobbied should be included when possible. A new member can be included in this exciting action if accompanied by experienced League members. When more than one local League is involved, try to have representatives from as many of the constituent Leagues as possible.

2. **Assigning roles:** Each member of the lobby team should be assigned a specific role. The following are possible assignments:
 - Researching the legislator. Someone should be prepared to brief the other members of the lobby team on the legislator's relationship with the League and his/her voting record (if the legislator is a re-elected incumbent). What are his/her committee assignments and/or leadership positions in the legislature? Is this legislator a member of the League? If this legislator sponsored bills that League supported, you may want to take a moment to express League's appreciation.
 - Moderator/leader. This person should be certain that each League member introduces himself/herself. The leader must also watch the clock. Knowing ahead how much time the legislator has agreed to spend with you, the leader must allot an appropriate amount of time for each issue. It is the leader's responsibility to "pace" the visit and tactfully keep everyone (including the legislator) on the subject. **Remember, opinions expressed should be those of the League, not of individuals.**
 - Researching the issue or issues to be discussed. Look to the Legislative Packet and LWVNYS *Impact on Issues*.
 - Recording and reporting the legislator's response. The leader should not be the recorder.

NOTE: If you anticipate printing any part of the interview in a League bulletin or newspaper, the recorder is obligated to get the legislator's permission and specific conditions under which you may print.

Write a follow-up thank you after the visit. This is not only a gesture of politeness, but it also allows you to underscore some points made during the visit, answer any questions you were not sure about, or send a League publication to which you may have referred during the course of the visit.

***CLICK THE FOLLOWING LINK TO
GO TO THE INTERACTIVE
2010 LWVNYS LOBBY REPORT FORM***

***WITH THIS FORM, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TYPE DIRECTLY INTO THE FORM AND
SUBMIT IT DIRECTLY TO LWVNY BY CLICKING ONE BUTTON.***

THANK YOU!