

**MASC** Municipal Association of South Carolina™

## Front Lines Advocacy

*Casey Fields, manager of municipal advocacy  
Scott Slatton, legislative and public policy advocate*

*Municipal Association Annual Meeting  
July 20, 2018*



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## Honest Brokers of Accurate Information

*Advocacy Handbook pages 14-19*

- Build the relationship before the ask
- Know your information
- Understand the process
- Stay on message
- Time it right



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## Build the Relationship

- Say thank you before you say please
- Find something in common (other than your constituents)
- Stay in contact through calls, email and meetings
- Visit your legislator in Columbia for no reason
- Invite your legislators to City Hall



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### Know your information

- Be ready with anecdotal information and stories that illustrate your position
- Share all sides of the story – the good, the bad and the ugly
- Back that story up with numbers, figures and percentages
- Give your opinion in a nice, respectful way



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### Understand the process

- Where do bills come from?
- Subcommittee and committee level work
- Amendments
- Staff
- Readings
- Introductions
- Sponsors



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### Stay on message

- Stay focused on the topic
- Don't veer off with other problems
- Don't be afraid to ask for a yes or no
- Always come with a positive solution rather than only a negative complaint



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### Time it right

- Schedule a face to face meeting
- Be ready to give your whole argument in three minutes or less (even if you have charts and graphs) while walking
- 10 other people need your legislator's time as bad as you do
- Be precise, to the point and kind



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### Rules, Power and Politics

*Advocacy Handbook pages 20-26*

- Legislative leadership and staff
- Legislative process
- The lobby
- Outside influences



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### Who is this guy?



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### Governor Henry McMaster

- Ascended to the position of governor when Nikki Haley was appointed United Nations Ambassador
- Running in 2018 for a full term
- Served as Lt. Governor, Attorney General
- Republican lawyer from Columbia



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### Who is this guy?



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### Speaker Jay Lucas

- Speaker of the SC House of Representatives
- Elected to the House in 1999; elected speaker pro tempore in 2010
- Republican lawyer from Hartsville
- Determines policy for the House; appoints committees
- Municipal background



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**Who is this guy?**



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**Senator Hugh Leatherman**

- President Pro Tempore of the SC Senate
- Chairman of Senate Finance Committee
- Republican from Florence
- Real estate/homebuilder
- Municipal background
- Sets policy and order for the Senate



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**Who is this guy?**



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### Representative Brian White

- Chairman of the House Ways and Means committee
  - Important to know Local Government subcommittee chairman, too (Rep. Bill Herbkersman, R - Beaufort, Jasper)
- House chief budget writer
- Controls the Local Government Fund
- Republican from Anderson



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### House and Senate staff

- Very important to get to know staff and establish a positive relationship
- Give them all the information on your issue
- Meet with them before you need something AND before you meet with the legislator
- Be accessible, reliable, accurate and timely



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### Legislative Process

- Bills originate in Legislative Council
- Sponsors
- Readings
- Subcommittee and committee work
- Floor debate
- Amendments
- House/Senate changes
- Conference committees



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### The Lobby

- Appears to be glamorous
- Very busy and loud
- Filled with lobbyists, liaisons, consultants, school children, tour guides, campaign hacks, bloggers, spies and constituents
- Outside the red rope
- Calling out legislators
- The gallery



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### Outside Influences

- Campaign donors
- Special interest groups
- Hometown/constituent needs
- Personal stories
- Pet projects
- Election year
- Partisan politics



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### Things to remember

- Changes in the House of Representatives and Senate for the 2019-2020 legislative session
- 2018 Regional Advocacy Meetings
- Advanced Advocacy and Intergovernmental Relations MEO session



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