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**MFOCTA/BLOA
Joint Academy**


*Municipal Advocacy and
Intergovernmental Relations*

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**Honest Brokers of Accurate
Information**

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



Build Relationships

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



Know your information

- Be ready with anecdotal information and stories that illustrate your position
- Back that story up with numbers, figures and percentages
- Give your opinion in a nice, respectful way



Understand the process

- Where do bills come from?
- Subcommittee and committee level work
 - 15 Senate committees; 13 House committees
- Amendments
- Staff
- Readings
- Introductions
- Sponsors



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



Time it right

- Schedule a face to face meeting
- Be ready to give your whole argument in 3 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



Rules, Power and Politics

- South Carolina General Assembly
- Legislative leadership and staff
- Legislative process
- The lobby
- Outside influences



SC General Assembly

- 124* House members (88 – R, 36 – D)
- 46* Senate members (30 – R, 13 – D, 1 – I, 2 vacancies)
- Begins on the second Tuesday in January and adjourns the second Thursday in May.
- Single member districts
- Rules govern each chamber's daily business



Legislative Leadership

- Speaker of the House
- President of the Senate
- Committee chairmen/chairwomen
- Subcommittee chairmen/chairwomen
- Majority and Minority leaders



Senate

- President Thomas Alexander
- Majority Leader Shane Massey
- Minority Leader Brad Hutto
- Finance Chairman Harvey Peeler
- Judiciary Chairman Luke Rankin



House of Representatives

- Speaker Murrell Smith
- Speaker Pro Tempore Tommy Pope
- Majority Leader Davey Hiott
- Minority Leader Todd Rutherford
- Ways and Means Chairman Bruce Bannister
- Judiciary Chairman Weston Newton



House and Senate staff

- Very important to get to know staff
- Give them all the information on your issue
- Meet with them before you need something
- Be accessible, reliable and accurate



Legislative Process

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



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



Outside Influences

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



2024 – What to expect?

- Second year of a two-year session
 - Bills from 2023 are still active
 - Expect party issues to still influence debate
- Election year
 - Filing opens on March 16 and ends on March 30
 - Primary elections in June will be important
- House and Senate members up for re-election
 - Newly drawn districts



Questions or Comments?