

Government Advocacy in a Nutshell

How to Get Started

Keep up with the issues

- Sources:
 - Washington Affairs Office Spectrum column
 - Advocacy listserv
 - Policy statements on WAO web site:
www.ll.georgetown.edu/aallwash/
 - Programming at AALL and chapter conferences

Preliminary preparations

- Do you know your legislator?
- Develop contacts in advance
- Attend local meetings with your legislator
- Offer your services
 - Library tour
- Write letters inquiring about issues on a steady basis

How to make contact with legislative staff

- Best if already have a relationship
- Before you call, be prepared, be succinct:
- Don't waste the staffer's time
- Fax the letter

Presenting your ideas to staff

- Make an appointment
- Know your issue - including the opposing view
- Stay on point
- Be enthusiastic but not aggressive
- Leave a written position statement with the staffer
- Leave contact information

Keeping the issue on the legislator's radar

- Write a thank you note expressing appreciation for the staffer's time and attention
- Telephone a few weeks later as a follow up to the visit
- Keep the staffer informed of new developments

Showing appreciation

- After the dust settles, write a letter to the legislator expressing appreciation for support
- Take every opportunity to express your appreciation to the legislator in person

Vigilance is Key

- Circumstances can change over night - Keep an eye on the issue to the very end
- Ask colleagues to help you stay informed
- If appropriate, keep the Washington Affairs Office informed