



WACD: Advocacy & Legislative Outreach

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Legislative Primer

- ▶ **Two Chambers: House & Senate.** The Senate and House of Representatives meet in session each year to create new laws, change existing laws, and enact budgets for the State
- ▶ **49 Legislative Districts.** Each District has one Senator and two Representatives. In even years, every member of the House is up for re-election (two-year terms) and the half the Senate (4-year terms)
- ▶ **Legislative cycle** is two years (Biennium): Even years are “long” (105 days) & odd years are “short” (60 days)
- ▶ **Long sessions (2021)** begin biennium and are used to pass policy and enact the state’s biennial budgets: Operating, Capital and Transportation.
- ▶ **Short sessions** were traditionally used to correct and respond to emergent matters, but that has changed significantly over the past 15 years.

LOBBYIST



In 2020, the WA State Legislature considered **2,233** bill introductions.

Only **389** became law.

WA State Budgets

- **Operating**- Pays for day to day operational expenses of state. Revenue sources include tax revenues, dedicated tax and fee revenues, federal funds and miscellaneous (earned interest and lottery receipts)
- **Capital**- pays for major building, renovation and land acquisition projects. Primarily funded by general obligation bonds.
- **Transportation**- Pays for transportation operating and capital costs, such as maintaining, preserving, and improving the highway system; operating ferries; motor vehicle registration; and enforcing traffic laws on the state highway system. Primary sources of are gas taxes; federal funds; vehicle license, permits, and fees; bonds; ferry & toll revenue; balances from previous biennium and other sources.

2021-23 Operating Budget Landscape-

3 Rs: **Reductions-Reserves-Revenue**

- ▶ 2019-21 Op Supp. Budget: \$53.4B (approx. 14% more than 2017-19)
- ▶ Governor vetoed 147 items, \$235M reduction for 2020 and \$210M in 21-23
- ▶ OFM directed state agencies to prepare 15% reductions for the remaining 2020 fiscal year and continue to plan for budget savings in preparation of the 2021-23 decision packages.
- ▶ Governor freezes pay raises and requires state employee furloughs
- ▶ Projected shortfall is approximately \$4B through 2023

2021-23 Budget Landscape-

3 Rs: Reductions-Reserves-Revenue

- ▶ Reserves/Reversions
 - ▶ Budget Stabilization Account \$2B
 - ▶ Reversions: caseloads, other savings \$570M (vs.\$187M)
- ▶ Revenue is less than February 2020 but not as low as June 2020 (\$380M)
- ▶ Federal support was \$4.2B in unanticipated receipts (CARES, FEMA)
- ▶ Unknown factors: additional federal support, future economic forecasts, state emergency funding needs, policy level investments, other resources (new revenue ideas, fund transfers)

2021-23 Transportation and Capital Budget Landscape

TRANSPORTATION

- ▶ Will be a challenge
- ▶ Can't maintain existing assets
- ▶ I-976 and multi-modal account
- ▶ Culvert injunction
- ▶ Without new money, projects will be delayed, cut or stopped

CAPITAL

- ▶ Invest in shovel ready projects (jobs) statewide
- ▶ 2019-21 authorized \$3.2 B in projects
- ▶ 2021-23 estimated bond capacity is \$3.3B
- ▶ Bond capacity related to operating budget
- ▶ Proposal to adjust bond capacity for capital investments

2020-21 Political Landscape



- ▶ Elections
- ▶ Budgets
- ▶ Address response to COVID-19?
- ▶ Advance Economic Recovery?
- ▶ Advance Racial Equity?
- ▶ Address the global Climate crisis?

Advocacy Types

Education vs Lobbying

- ▶ **Education** describes your program's success and would include an overview, goals, budgets, people served, grants/awards. Highlight important policies and funding sources/
- ▶ **Lobbying** includes education and influences legislation by communicating a specific position or request a specific action on legislation.

Direct & Grassroots

- ▶ **Direct lobbying** involves a person telling her views to someone directly involved with developing legislation.
- ▶ **Grassroots lobbying** communicates a particular view regarding a specific legislative proposal to the general public and persuades citizens to relay this view to their local legislators.

CDs CAN:

- **Educate** on various issues and their impact.
- **Meet with a non-legislative group**, such as a school board, the state board of health, a chamber of commerce, a civic club, police chief, a trade association, etc.
- **Host or attend** appreciation luncheons, breakfasts, legislative wrap-up sessions and the like.
- **Sponsor a candidates' forum**, as long as you do not endorse a candidate or take a position on an issue to be voted on, such as a referendum or constitutional amendment.
- **Inform legislators** about the results of nonpartisan analysis, study or research.
- Inform collaborative members about legislation.
- **Write a letter** that provides general education on an issue, but does not include a call to action on specific legislation.
- **Answer** fully and directly if asked about a specific bill by an elected representative or their staff.

CDs CANNOT:

- **Participate or intervene in, directly or indirectly, any political campaign** on behalf of any candidate for public office. This includes both partisan and non-partisan races.
- **Support, oppose or endorse, in any way, any candidate** who is running for a public office.
- **Ask a legislator to vote** for or against a particular bill.
- Ask a collaborative member to contact their legislator and **ask them to vote for or against** a particular bill.
- Send a letter to the Governor and **ask them to veto a bill.**

Legislative Outreach

Get to know your legislators and other stakeholders-

Seek opportunities outside of Olympia to engage with policy makers (includes LAs) and build coalitions

Know the process-

<http://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/ComingToTheLegislature.aspx>

Be the expert-

Know your audience, know who the issue impacts and their position, the influence on other efforts, share a personal story

COVID considerations:

Does it cost money?

- ✓ Save money or increase the efficacy of appropriations within the upcoming biennium?
- ✓ Help Washington access federal funding?
- ✓ Help other levels of government do their job to respond to the pandemic or advance economic recovery?

Has it been vetted?

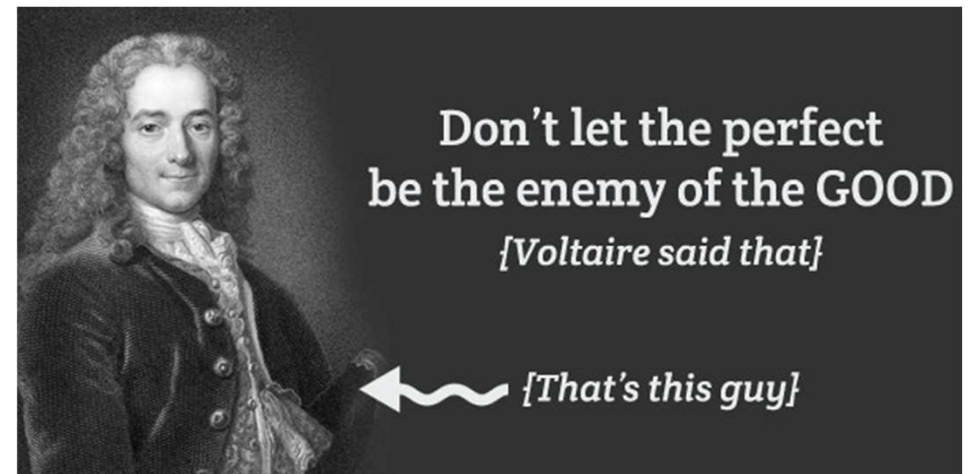
- ✓ Has this policy been thoroughly vetted with stakeholders?
- ✓ If it is likely to cost money, have you discussed its viability with the fiscal chair given budget challenges?
- ✓ Is the other chamber aware and if so, is the bill likely to also advance in the there?
- ✓ Is it likely to generate substantial opposition in committee and/or on the floor?

Finally, avoid...

- ✓ Omnibus bills
- ✓ Companion bills
- ✓ "intro" bills
- ✓ Taskforce bills

Successful Coalition Strategies

- ▶ Well defined & limited priorities
- ▶ Consistent messaging
- ▶ Personal stories
- ▶ Community and Environmental benefits
- ▶ Dollars leveraged/matched
- ▶ Multiple Benefits (in projects impacts, but also multiple organizations benefit, the economy benefits,



Questions / Discussion



Legislative Policy (Bills)

Proactive vs. Reactive Lawmaking

Where do policy ideas come from?

- ▶ Lawmakers
- ▶ State and Local agencies
- ▶ Events/News stories
- ▶ Constituent requests
- ▶ Workgroup recommendations
- ▶ Lawsuits
- ▶ Interest groups

