

The Art of Lobbying

Political vs Partisan

- Our work has always been political but has never been partisan.
- Values influence our work
- Political work can be characterized by shared values, working toward a common goal, and an end result that is best for the community as a whole.
- Put simply, being political is a way to influence legislation and regulation through government or public affairs.
- Partisan activities have a firm adherence to a party, faction, or person.
- <https://www.aauw.org/resource/political-vs-partisan-guide/>

Three Ways to Lobby

- Phone calls are appropriate when a vote is scheduled, and you are asking the legislator to vote a certain way.
- Email can also be used when a vote is scheduled or you are asking for their support of a particular bill.
- In person is the most effective way to influence your legislator whether it is in their local office or in the capitol. 94% of congressional staff say constituent visits to the legislator's office have influence on undecided legislators more than any other strategy.

Have an "Ask"

- You can ask a legislator for his or her co-sponsorship of a bill, which is helpful early in the process.
- You can ask a legislator to vote yes or no on a bill when it's coming to a vote in committee or on floor
- You can ask a legislator to champion an issue – whether by authoring and introducing a bill,
- You can also conduct an educational visit or a resource delivery where the ask will simply be “have you seen this new research” or “how can AAUW members be a resource to your office?” This is a great way to build relationships – which are helpful to have even before you have a concrete ask to make.

Successful Advocacy = Successful Relationships

- Do some homework about your legislator's background, such as their education, profession, where they live, their special interests.

- Are they a member or chair of a committee where a bill has been referred, in leadership, sponsor of similar bills?
- Do they have family members who might be affected by the legislation?
- Are there connections you have to them In the community? Personal connections can go a long way toward building a relationship.
- Do their priorities link in any way to your “ask”?
- You might be meeting with legislative or committee staff instead of the legislators themselves, but these relationships can also be invaluable – the staff are often the ones that makes things happen.

Know Your Topic

- To educate elected officials about the policy positions of AAUW, it’s important that you understand the issues and our positions. Get familiar with the topic you will be addressing. You do not have to be an expert.
- If you need a refresher on a topic – AAUW Quick Facts are a great place to start. You can use these one-pagers to help develop talking points. Words do matter and simply using a term like “earned leave” instead of “paid sick time” can help broaden an issue’s appeal.
- Personal stories are extremely effective and can help them understand an issue better.
- Make sure the legislator or staff know that you represent the broader AAUW community. AAUW-PA has 36 branches, 50 CU partners and 6 student orgs for a total of 7,599 members and supporters. You can specify those is your district. You are speaking on behalf of many constituents. You also understand your community.

The 3H Approach to Lobbying

- Head – This is information you provide about the issue you want to discuss that is fact based on research or reports. AAUW has lots of information on their web site, and you can also find information on various issues on the AAUW-PA web site under Public Policy.
- Heart – This is your opportunity to tell a story about someone who has been affected by the issue.
- Hand – This is a few sheets of information about the issue you have raised, the AAUW-PA public policy post card or the AAUW Public Policy brochure. You can attach a business card to this material to remind them of who left the information.

Follow Up, Follow Up, Follow Up

- Your work doesn’t end when your meeting does! Be sure to follow up on any questions.

- If a legislator made a commitment to cosponsor a bill or responded to your ask favorably, you can thank them for their support in the thank you note you send after your meeting.
- If you couldn't answer a question or you referenced a resource, this is another opportunity to follow up and connect again with the legislator. Continue to build that relationship. It also shows that AAUW is a resource for your legislator.
- Last, but not least, complete a lobbying report and send to your state public policy co-chairs. [Lobby Report](#)