

www.georgiamusicpartners.org



Helpful Hints/ Do's and Don't's of Lobbying

- 1. BE CANDID. Lay it on the line in frank communication with your elected official. He recognizes your self-interest. You need not apologize for it.
- 2. BE HONEST. State your own view and bias. If you choose, relate to the public interest. He is interested in what you have to say, and he wants your honest appraisal of the situation.
- 3. BE BRIEF. Your contact will have greater impact if it is kept reasonably brief. Elected officials have an enormous volume of reading material.
- 4. BE INFORMATIVE. Make sure your elected official understands the problem. Lobbyists often make the mistake of over-estimating the legislators knowledge and understand of the issue. Remember we have over 20,000 bills before the Congress this year. You must be prepared to deal with the elected official on several levels of comprehension. He/she may have detailed knowledge of the subject matter, in which case you had better be prepared to respond in detail. On the other hand, he/she may not have heard of the bill. Your response must be gauged to his level of knowledge.
- 5. DON'T DEMAND that the elected official take a public stand on a specific bill before he has all the facts. He is well aware that you are presenting one side.
- 6. THANK YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL when he does something right. Elected officials are like anyone else. They like to be thanked for their efforts.

FIRST AND FOREMOST

- DO Communicate with legislators before votes, preferably early in bill process
- DO Know the facts about each proposal
- DO Be concise and to the point.
- DO Use bill number and title when applicable
- DO Mention the number of people you represent if you are a leader in your organization
- DO Meet with the legislators, especially new legislators, prior to legislative session
- DO Aim for friendly interchanges that make the most of the short time available
- DO Find out as much about the personal background of the legislator as possible prior to contacting him/her
- DON'T Try to solve all your problems in one visit. Present only those issues (no more than two) of greatest concern to you and about which your legislator can do something.
- DON'T Overstay your welcome on a visit. Make your presentation brief. If your legislator wishes to prolong the conversation you will sense it.
- DON'T Be disappointed if your legislator is late or must send someone else to see you, such as a legislative assistant. You will be able to accomplish just as much under these circumstances.
- DON'T Be late to a meeting with your legislator