

## Advocacy in Action: How to Influence Public Policy in Frankfort



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## Frankfort Will Happen...

- Whether you are there or not...
- And what happens in Frankfort affects YOU!
  - You can choose to be a victim of the system or YOU can choose to influence the system



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## Legislators are elected by YOU.



Therefore, legislators are elected to serve YOU!

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The Governor is elected by YOU.



The Governor and Executive Branch (Cabinets) are there to serve YOU!

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A Democracy requires that the VOICE of the PEOPLE be heard.



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Why should that voice be YOURS?

**Because YOU...**

- Care passionately about these issues – and the people they affect.
- Are able and willing to share with others (decision-makers and other citizens) what YOU know and experience...to “put a face” on the problem.
- Do your homework and work hard.



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Why should that voice be YOURS?

**Because YOU...**

- Are willing to learn the legislative process.
- Provide accurate, unbiased information.
- Have a position and can articulate it.
- Develop access to the “free” media.
- Can rally grassroots support.
- Reach out to work in coalitions with others.
- Will keep on “keeping on”.

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**YOU** are an **ADVOCATE**  
because **YOU VOTE** and  
**YOU SPEAK OUT**...and  
because **YOU** can influence  
others to vote and to speak!

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KNOW THE BASICS – HOW A  
BILL BECOMES A LAW



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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- How does an idea / issue get turned into a piece of legislation?
- Who drafts a bill? How and when does that happen?
- Does it matter how long or complicated the bill is? Does that affect the process of passing it?
- What is a BR? Why are some bills HBs and some are SBs?

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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- What does it mean that a bill is prefiled? Why are some bills filed in both the House and the Senate?
- How should the bill sponsor be chosen? What do cosponsors do and are they important to passing the bill?
- "My issue is nonpartisan. Why should I pay attention to the partisan politics in Frankfort?"

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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- How do the Committees work? Which are the most important Committees?
- Who decides which Committee will have my bill? How do I get my bill heard and then passed by the Committee?
- Can I attend the Committee meeting when my bill is being heard? Should I?
- What if there is opposition to my bill? What happens if my bill is changed or amended in Committee?

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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- My bill has been passed favorably out of Committee...can I breathe easy now?
- What can happen with the First, Second and Third Readings of my bill?
- A legislator has filed a Floor Amendment that hurts my bill...now what?
- The Rules Committee has sent my bill to another Committee...is that bad?

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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS



- What can I do to get ready for the floor vote on my bill?
- How can I work to get the bad amendment defeated so it doesn't hurt the bill?
- The bill passed the Senate – hooray! Is that all that needs to happen?

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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- You mean we now have to repeat the same process in the other chamber?
- Who will sponsor it there? Will it be assigned to the same Committee? Should I expect the politics to be the same?
- What happens if the bill gets passed in the second chamber, but it has been changed during the process?

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### MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- What does “concurrence” mean and how does it happen?
- What if both chambers do not agree on a final form of the bill?
- Should I be worried if my bill ends up in a Conference Committee to reconcile the differences between the two versions?
- Is there anything I can do about it?

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### MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- At last! My bill has finally made it to the Governor’s desk. Now what?
- Ouch! Rumor is that the Governor may veto it. What happens then?
- Good news...no veto, but the Governor is not going to sign it. Is that OK?
- Wow! He signed it. Is it law now? If not now, when?

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### MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

- When does the session start each year? When do we have the 60-day sessions and when do we have the “short” (30-day) sessions? Is there an end date for each?
- What is a Special Session? Why do we have them? When and how do they work?
- What is the Interim Session? Is that a good time to advocate for my issues?

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## KENTUCKY LAWMAKERS

2016 GA Session: January 5 – April 12, 2015

### Kentucky Senate – 2015/16 GA:

– 27 Republicans 11 Democrats (in 2014: 23/14/1)

### Kentucky House – 2015/16 GA:

– 54 Democrats 46 Republicans (in 2014: 54/46)

### KY POLICY-MAKERS – EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Election for Governor & Other Statewide Offices  
– November 3, 2015

Voter Registration – by October 20, 2015

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## MAKING KENTUCKY'S LAWS

Legislating public policy is not an altogether logical and rational process. Don't forget...Those who love sausage and the law should watch neither being made!

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## How Can YOU Best Advocate?

- Identify YOUR Senator and Representative
- Check HOME address: [www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org) or 1-888-votesmart (1-888-868-3762)
- Contact YOUR legislators at home and identify yourself as a constituent
- Contact them in Frankfort by Message Line, phone, email, letter and/or visit
- **MESSAGE LINE: 1-800-372-7181**
- Follow the action at [www.lrc.ky.gov](http://www.lrc.ky.gov)

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## How Can YOU Best Advocate?

- **Increase YOUR impact through successful coalitions and relationships**

The key to successful advocacy and policy change is built on **relationships**.

“The best time to build relationships is when you don't need them!”

--Lyndon B. Johnson

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## How Can YOU Best Advocate?

- Stay informed & connected:  
[www.AdvocacyAction.net](http://www.AdvocacyAction.net)  
[www.Kyvoicesforhealth.org](http://www.Kyvoicesforhealth.org)
- Be positive, be polite, but always be persistent
- Remember all politics are LOCAL
- Remind yourself to say “Thank You!” even if you only got a toe inside the door
- Believe that your voice can really make a difference...because it can!

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## Why Advocacy?

The anthropologist Margaret Mead said it so well: “Never forget that a small group of thoughtful people can change the world. Indeed, that’s all that ever has.”

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