

- County Supervisor
The Honorable Joe/Jo Doe
Supervisor, —County
County Seat
City, State and Zip Code

Dear Sir/Madam:
or Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs./Miss Doe:

Guidelines for District Visits

The following guidelines may be helpful when you make district visits:

- Members of the state Legislature rely heavily on their staffs for a major portion of their responsibilities, i.e., scheduling, advice on specific legislation, constituent problems, etc. This is why it is important to maintain some familiarity with the district office staff. However, you do want to become acquainted and develop a working relationship directly with the legislators in your district.
- Generally, the legislative schedule permits each legislator to visit the district office on Fridays and holidays.
- Always call in advance for an appointment and briefly explain the purpose of the meeting. As a business person, you are an important constituent and the politician and his aides are eager to get acquainted.
- If the meeting with the senator or Assembly member is for the

purpose of discussing specific legislation, review the background information and position statements available from your association and use the bill numbers when possible.

- Ask the legislator for his/her position on issues and how he/she will vote.

We encourage you to consider other activities as ways of effectively maintaining liaison with your district legislators:

- Invite other members of your profession to join you and your legislator for lunch.
- Invite your legislator to visit your company before opening. You may want to have a short meeting between your employees and the legislator. The legislator could make brief remarks, followed by a question-and-answer period.
- Offer to help organize an information business advisory group to meet regularly with your legislators to discuss business and key industry issues.

Telephone Procedures

- When the Legislature is in session, call the Capitol office; during recess and on Fridays, call the district office.
- Ask to speak directly to the legislator. If he/she is not available, ask to speak to the administrative

assistant or legislative aide.

- When the legislator or his/her assistant is on the line, identify yourself and mention the name of your company and the fact that you are from the legislator's district.
- State the reason for the call. Use bill numbers whenever possible.
- Explain how the proposed legislation affects *your* business and why you support or oppose it.
- Discuss only one issue per telephone call.
- Ask the legislator's position.
 - ✓ If the legislator's position is the same as yours, express agreement and thanks.
 - ✓ If your position differs from the legislator's, politely express disappointment and offer some factual information supporting your views.
- Don't attempt to give "expert" opinions. Tell how legislation would affect *your* business, based on *your* experience and knowledge.
- Request that your legislator take a specific action by telling him/her what you desire. State the facts as you see them. Avoid emotional arguments. If you use dollar figures, be realistic.
- Keep all communication friendly and respectful.
- Thank the legislator or aide for his/her time and for considering your views.

The Legislative Process

- **Senate:** 40 members
- **Assembly:** 80 members
- **Regular Session:** Convenes on the first Monday in December of each even-numbered year and continues until November 30 of the next even-numbered year.
- **Special Session:** May be called by the Governor and is limited to a specific subject. Length is not limited and may be held concurrently with the regular session.
- **Effective Date of Laws:** January 1 of the year after enactment.

Procedure

- **Introduction:** The bill is introduced by a member of the Senate or Assembly, read for the first time, then assigned to a committee by either the Senate Rules Committee or the Assembly Speaker.

- **Committee:** Hearing(s) are held in committee and testimony is taken from proponents and opponents. Generally, the committee will then amend, pass or fail to pass the bill.
- **Second Reading:** Bills that are passed by committee are read a second time and sent to the full floor for debate.
- **Floor Debate (in house of origin):** The bill is read a third time, debated and voted on. Most bills need a majority to pass (21 for the Senate, 41 for the Assembly). Bills with urgency clauses, appropriation measures and some tax-related bills need a two-thirds majority (27 for the Senate, 54 for the Assembly). If the bill is passed, it is sent to the second house.
- **Second House:** Procedures for a bill to pass the second house are similar to consideration and

passage in the house of origin.

- **Amendments:** If the second house passes a bill with amendments, then the bill must be passed a second time by the house of origin for concurrence. If the amendments are rejected, a conference committee is formed to iron out the differences between the two houses.
- **Governor:** The Governor must act on (sign or veto) any bill that passes the Legislature within 12 days during the legislative session. However, the Governor has 30 days in which to act at the end of each year of the legislative session. Bills not acted on by the Governor automatically become law. A two-thirds vote of the Legislature is required to override a Governor's veto.