How to get through the Legislative Maze

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Quick Review

- PSE is a bipartisan union.
- Relationships are key when dealing with Legislators.
Caucuses

- The four caucuses select their own leaders.
How a Bill Becomes a Law

- Each bill begins with an idea.
- The idea can come from a legislator or a private citizen.
- Governor or a state agency may request a bill.
Sponsorship of a Bill

- To become a bill, it must be sponsored by one or more legislators from the same house.
- Exact legislation introduced in the opposite house is called a “companion bill.”
- After signatures are gathered, the bill and the sponsor sheet are dropped in the “hopper” in the Code Reviser’s office.
Code Reviser’s Office

- Drafts the bill in proper legal language
- Then assigns the bill an S for Senate, H for House, or Z for agency.
- The bill is given a title.
Number is assigned

- In the House it goes to the Chief Clerk’s office
- In the Senate it goes to the Secretary of the Senate
Introduction of the Bill

- The bill is introduced by a member of either the Senate or House of Representatives.
Committees

- Who decides whether to give a bill a public hearing?
- At public hearings testimony is taken, both pro and con testimonies are given.
Executive Session

- Amendments may be added or a substitute bill adopted in Executive Session of the committee.
- The committee chair has the power to either send a bill to Executive Session for a vote or keep it from a vote.
Reports

- The committee report on the passed bill is read in open session of the House or Senate, and the bill is referred to the Rules Committee.
Rules Committee

- If the bill passes out of committee, it is sent to Rules or to a budget committee if money is attached.
What’s a pull?

- **The Rules Committee** members can pull a bill to the floor calendar or leave it in Rules.
- If it stays in Rules, no further action will be taken on the bill.
- If it goes to the floor, it will receive a vote if it is brought up prior to the cutoff date.
... and the process continues

- There is a second reading.
- It is subject to debate and amendment before the entire body before being placed on the third reading calendar for final passage.
- After passage in one house, the bill goes through the same procedure in the other house.
Amendments

The first house must approve the amendments are made in the other house.
When the bill is accepted in both houses, it is signed by the respective leaders and sent to the governor.
Final step

- The governor signs the bill into law or may veto all or part of it. If the governor fails to act on the bill, it may become law without a signature.
Know your B’s

- Be informed ... know the issues before talking to legislators.
Be practical ... have a well thought out program of action you can recommend.
Be friendly ... keep in touch all year, not just when you want something.
Be a worthy opponent … fight issues – not persons.
Be brief ... legislators are busy, session is hectic.
Be constructive ... you don’t like to be preached to – neither do legislators.
Be understanding ... know your legislators’ positions.
Be reasonable … recognize that there are differences of opinion.
Be realistic … legislation yields compromise.
Be thoughtful commend the right things done.
Send handwritten Thank You cards.
Be charitable ... evaluate your lack of success by looking at yourself first. Did you do a good job of informing them on the issues?
Be fair ... legislators are people, too.
Be discreet ... respect confidences.
Thank You!

- We appreciate your dedication and commitment to PSE and our issues.
Questions?