

**HOW TO BE AN  
EFFECTIVE LOCAL  
LEGISLATIVE  
REPRESENTATIVE**



## **An Effective Local Legislative Representative.....**

Now that you are an Officer of your Local and a member of the UTU Legislative Team, here are a few thoughts for you to consider.

### **Leadership**

You are considered a leader by the members of your local. You are part of the elected Union structure that communicates with, supports, and represents all the members of your local. The definition of a leader is a person selected to serve; it is an honor, and a responsibility that has been entrusted to you. We are very proud of the people we represent and their great contribution to the operation of our transportation systems in our country. We are glad to have you on our team and look forward to your service on behalf of your local members.

The legislative department of UTU protects the members' rights and safety through our interaction with government agencies, State Legislatures, and the U. S. Congress. The grievance department of our union protects the members' rights and safety through interaction directly with the employer, whether it is a railroad, bus, or airline company.

Your leadership and communication skills should be used to encourage your members to participate as voters, as active union members, and as good citizens.

### **Communication**

You will have the opportunity to receive information from many sources concerning issues that affect your members' safety, their job security, their health care, and their pensions. As a local legislative representative you will spend a majority of your time working on safety. You will find your own technique to share the information with your members that you receive from your State Director, from the UTU offices in Washington and Cleveland, and from other sources located in your state.

### **Support your State Director**

You can offer support for the operation of your State Directors' office by keeping the State Director informed on the issues in your local, your local contacts with elected officials, and other issues that are focused on your community. When you send a complaint or a specific concern to your State Director, make sure you include all the relevant information: dates, times, places, numbers of the bus, rail, or airline equipment involved, the names of the people involved, and the type of action to be investigated. Your State Director will process the complaint and write to the proper agency to request an investigation (FRA, FTA, FAA, OSHA, etc.)

## **Know the Operating Rules**

As a local legislative representative, it is to your advantage to have a good working knowledge of the operating rules of the company that govern your members actions. Federal Regulations are only minimum standards and most operating rules have a base in Federal Regulations. Many operating rules use the same language as the corresponding Federal Regulation, and also many operating rules require a more stringent application than the corresponding Federal Regulation. Always remember that our members are held accountable by their employer for compliance with the operating rules of the company, not the Federal Regulations. The company is required to conform their operating rules to the requirements of the Regulations. Your State Director can share needed information about the Federal Regulations, or you can find them on the internet.

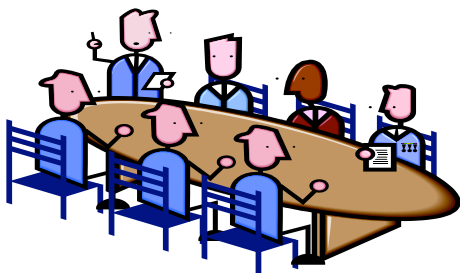
## **Relationships**

Former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill stated: "All Politics is local." Every union officer in the country knows the importance of relationships with elected officials at the local level. It is not an oversimplification to say that your job description is to develop positive relationships with everyone in your community that can help with the safety, the job security, and the benefits of your locals members. Your relationships and contacts will also help you become more effective in communicating your positive message.

Your relationship with the local company safety officer is also an important part of your communication strategy. Your relationships with the other union legislative representatives on your property are also an important part of your strategy of delivering a positive message. Get to know the people that can help you provide support for your members, and maintain an accurate contact list. Ask your State Director for guidance with your contact list.

## **Summary**

You are in the relationship business on behalf of the members of your local and their families. Remember the important contribution to society that our members make each day with their work. Support your State Director, your General Chairpersons, and your Union. Ask questions, accumulate information, and share information with your members. Good Communications resolve many concerns.



## **Duties of a United Transportation Union Legislative Representative**

According to Article 66 of the Constitution of the United Transportation Union, the duties of a local Legislative Representative are described as follows:

(a) Local Legislative Representatives in the United States shall attend all meetings of their State or District Legislative Board. They shall report to their locals regarding the handling of all alleged unsafe or unsanitary working conditions found to exist, or reported to them, within their jurisdiction. They shall undertake to correct such conditions through appropriate measures consistent with the local and national policies of the United Transportation Union. If they are unable to correct the alleged unsafe or unsanitary working conditions, they will so report to the International President and the National Legislative Director regarding Federal matters and to the State or District Legislative Director regarding State or District matters. They shall urge all members of the United Transportation Union to qualify and vote in all elections. When called upon, they shall give all possible assistance to the International President, National Legislative Director, State or District Legislative Director, and the officers of the State or District Legislative Boards, subject to the supervision of the local.

## **Duties of a United Transportation Union State or District Legislative Boards**

According to Article 95 of the Constitution of the United Transportation Union, the duties of a local duties of state or district legislative boards are described as follows:

The Executive Committee of each State or District Legislative Board may be convened by the Director at least forty-five (45) days, where possible, prior to each primary and general election, for the purpose of endorsing candidates for State offices and to make recommendations for candidates for the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives and to transact such other business as may be necessary.

State Legislative Directors will promptly advise the International President and the National Legislative Director of all endorsements of State Candidates and recommendations for Members of Congress made by the Executive Committee.

The State or District Legislative Directors may remain in the capitol during sessions of the Legislature, when so authorized by the Legislative Board, and shall devote all of his/her time to securing the enactment of such laws, or the repeal or modification of such other laws as directed by the Legislative Board. He/she shall organize opposition to and appear before appropriate agencies to oppose discontinuance of trains and buses. He/she shall urge compliance with all laws which protect the welfare of members of the United Transportation Union and shall promptly report violations of State laws and regulations to the proper State enforcement agency. Violations of all Federal laws and regulations shall be reported to the National Legislative Director or proper Federal agency.

An additional Director or Directors may remain at the capitol to assist in legislative matters, when recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the International President. He/she shall perform such duties as may be assigned by the International President.

The Secretary of the State or District Legislative Board shall keep a record and make a report of the proceedings of all meetings of the Legislative Board and the Executive Committee and shall furnish the Legislative Representative and Secretary of each local, under the jurisdiction of the Board, and the International President with a copy of the report. Full-time Legislative Directors shall make a quarterly report of their activities to Secretaries and Legislative Representatives of all locals under their jurisdiction and use such other means as necessary to keep the membership well informed. They shall attach to the report an itemized statement of receipts and disbursements of the Board which shall be furnished them by the General Secretary and Treasurer. A copy of this report shall be furnished the International President.

Part-time State or District Legislative Directors or Assistant Directors may, when recommended by the Executive Committee and approved by the International President, visit locals and appear before commissions or other agencies in the United Transportation Union's behalf. They shall be authorized to cooperate with other organizations to this end. They shall perform such other duties as may be required by their Legislative Board by-laws and this Constitution.

All proposed legislation shall be submitted to the International President for approval and copies of all bills introduced which may be detrimental to labor shall be forwarded by Legislative Directors to the International President.

Questions of jurisdiction involving Legislative Boards and General Committees pertaining to laws, abandonments, and/or borderline matters shall be referred to the International President for decision.

Any member using his/her influence in the name of the United Transportation Union to defeat any action taken by the National Legislative Director or a State or District Legislative Board shall, upon conviction thereof, be expelled.

Officers and members of State and District Legislative Boards shall be under the direction of, and cooperate with, the National Legislative Director on all National Legislative policies and proposed Federal legislation established by the International or the Board of Directors. They shall cooperate with the Auxiliary and other groups on matters of mutual interest consistent with the legislative policies of the United Transportation Union.

On any legislative issue which involves the discontinuance of engine-service positions on railroads, the Executive Committee will authorize an engine-service officer of the Legislative Boards to handle such issues under the supervision of the Executive Committee.



The United Transportation Union's Political Action Committee (UTU PAC) is "An Investment in the Future."

UTU members, active and retired, need and deserve good government and sympathetic legislators. That's because, compared with others, their jobs, pensions and futures are more directly affected by the actions of state and national lawmakers.

We in the UTU must work for and help those people who we feel are capable, knowledgeable and who recognize the problems that affect railroad, bus and transit workers.

The best way to help elect representatives that understand the concerns of UTU members is by contributing to **UTU PAC**.

The best way to have a voice, a say, in matters that affect your finances and your family, is by contributing to **UTU PAC**.

You joined your fellow workers for the fraternal benefits of UTU membership, so why not join them to help elect compassionate state and national lawmakers?

- **UTU PAC** contributions can be started or increased anytime, and they are deducted automatically from your paycheck.
- **UTU PAC** contributes to qualified state and national political candidates, regardless of party affiliation.
- **UTU PAC** protects the interests of active and retired members and safeguards laws, working conditions and pension rights.
- **UTU PAC** has well-organized advisory committees in 47 states, and an office in Washington, D.C.
- **UTU PAC** contributions can be made on a one-time basis by check, anytime, by active members, retirees, and all individuals who seek a more responsive government.
- **UTU PAC** has more than 28,000 members across the country. They welcome your support and investment in the future of our great nation.

**Platinum Club**

Individuals who contribute \$1200 or more per year

**Double Diamond Club**

Individuals who contribute \$600 or more per year

**Diamond Plus Club**

Individuals who contribute \$400 or more per year

**Dollar-a-Day Club**

Individuals who contribute \$365 or more per year

**Diamond Club**

Individuals who contribute \$300 or more per year

**Gold Club**

Individuals who contribute \$100 or more per year

## **Why you need UTU PAC, and why it needs you...**

### **What is UTU PAC:**

The United Transportation Union formed the Transportation Political Education League (TPEL) (now the UTU PAC) because Federal law prohibits unions from using membership dues or assessments for political activities. As we all know, legislation on the state and national levels drastically affects us and our jobs. Therefore, we must work for and help those people who we feel are capable, knowledgeable and who recognize the problems that affect railroad, bus and transit workers.

Political campaigns and publicity programs cost money, and they are one of the few ways that candidates can let the public know of their record and their desire for election or re-election to public office. Candidates running for office must have assistance in advising UTU members and other voters of their opinions and positions on legislation and other matters of interest. Voluntary contributions to UTU PAC provide these funds.

### **How does UTU PAC operate?**

The UTU PAC is governed through by-laws established for its operation in conformance with state and Federal laws and in the best interest of the UTU membership. UTU PAC by-laws control composition, leadership, operation, financing and general disbursement of funds for political and legislative activities.

UTU PAC is governed by a national committee composed of a chairperson, vice chairperson and a secretary/treasurer. The UTU PAC's national chairperson is the UTU International President, national vice chairperson is the UTU National Legislative Director and the national secretary/treasurer is the UTU General Secretary and Treasurer. The state UTU PAC committees have a chairperson, vice chairperson and secretary at the state level. All UTU PAC officers serve on a voluntary basis, and no UTU PAC funds are used for salaries or record keeping.

The International in Cleveland maintains the records and files the necessary reports for UTU PAC. Federal law prohibits the union from using dues assessments for political purposes, but it does not prohibit using the UTU facilities for accounting and filing. The complete record – from the important pledge you sign indicating the amount of your voluntary donation and collection of it, to the cancelled checks and records of income and disbursement – is maintained in the International offices. The law also requires UTU PAC to make regular reports to state and Federal agencies. These records are available for your inspection at any time at the International offices, your state chairperson's office, or at the secretary of state's office in individual state capitals.

## **How are UTU PAC funds distributed?**

UTU PAC funds are split on a 50/50 basis, with one half being guaranteed for use within the state where the member's local is headquartered, the other half being used at the national level. State funds are used for assisting candidates for offices which are statewide in nature, such as governor, attorney general, public utility commissioner, treasurer or state legislators. National funds are used in Federal elections for national offices such as President, senator or member of Congress.

UTU PAC funds do not go to just one political party. Candidates from both political parties receive UTU PAC assistance on the basis of their past record and attitude or position on subjects or goals which are vitally important to UTU members, rather than their political affiliation. Republican and Democratic parties have both good and bad representatives as far as the interests of UTU members are concerned.

To determine support, the candidate's record is first examined to see if he or she has done a good job in the past. If so, the person deserves support; if not, the person is denied assistance, particularly if his or her actions have been detrimental to UTU families and goals. In cases of new candidates for office where there is no past record for evaluation, the candidate is interviewed and screened on his or her attitudes and positions on matters of importance to labor in general and UTU members in particular.

Of course, you can't be sure what decisions a political candidate will make in the future. However, a study of his or her past voting record will usually show a pattern that the person will follow in the future. We look for a dependable legislator who supports our positions, or at least an open-minded individual who will listen to us and make a fair judgment. The established records and the current positions of all candidates are weighed, and the decision for or against UTU PAC support is made.

A complete accounting is made of all UTU PAC disbursements, so you know where the money goes. Both national and state expenditures are listed on the UTU PAC financial report which is sent regularly to every state UTU PAC chairperson. Any UTU officer or member can examine the UTU PAC accounting of all disbursements by contacting his or her state chairperson.

## **How can I contribute to UTU PAC?**

Contributions to UTU PAC are voluntary and can be started anytime, the sooner the better. Get a UTU PAC pledge card from a local union officer or the International, fill it out and sign it, keep a copy for yourself, and give the form to your local treasurer or send it to the International. Your pledge will be entered in the records and the contribution will appear on your dues receipt each month.

A UTU PAC member may increase or decrease his or her pledge at any time by filling out and sending a revised UTU PAC pledge form to the local treasurer or the International indicating the change in the amount of the contribution. After processing, the new amount will appear on your dues receipt and in records at the International.

You may stop your contributions at any time. If you decide to withdraw your pledge, notify your local treasurer or the International of your decision and the voluntary UTU PAC contribution will be stopped. No questions will be asked; it is your decision alone.

It is also possible to make a one-time direct contribution by mailing it to the International, or giving it to any local or International officer. You will receive an acknowledgement from the International President as a receipt.

The union awards different UTU PAC lapel emblems, membership cards and baseball-style caps to those members who contribute \$25 or more annually. Persons who contribute at least \$100 a year are enrolled in the Gold Club. Those individuals who contribute at least \$300 annually become members of the Diamond Club. Those persons who contribute at least \$365 a year are enrolled in the Dollar-A-Day Club. Diamond Plus Club membership is awarded to those individuals who contribute at least \$400 per year to UTU PAC, Double Diamond Club membership to those who contribute \$600 or more annually, and Platinum Club membership to those individuals who generously contribute at least \$1,200 per year.

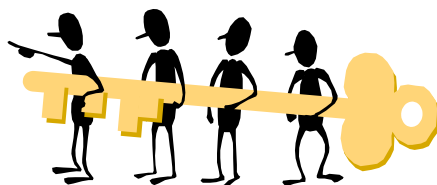
All UTU PAC members also receive a personal thank-you letter from the UTU PAC National Chairperson.

There are thousands of UTU members – many of them retired with fixed incomes – now participating in UTU PAC. Even though many retired members are on limited incomes, they gladly participate in UTU PAC and urge all working members to realize the importance of friends in Congress.

For proof, look at the legislative record of the UTU. The union, with its UTU PAC program, has made great legislative and political accomplishments in the last few years, and could increase these gains with assistance from you and other UTU PAC members. You joined your fellow workers for the fraternal benefits of membership in the UTU, so why not join them in the movement toward better laws and good government through UTU PAC?

## **LEGISLATIVE GOALS FOR UTU MEMBERS:**

- (1) Get Registered to Vote – including all family members, friends and neighbors – Talk about the importance of being registered with other people.
- (2) Make a Commitment To Cast Your Vote – no matter what it takes...absentee ballot, getting up early on election day, voting at lunch..... Whatever it takes to vote.
- (3) Vote Your Pocketbook – Cast an informed vote. UTU endorsed candidates will put your Pocketbook First.
- (4) Contribute At Least \$1 Per Day to UTU PAC – Our best investment for our families' future. Your union invests our funds wisely.



*Personal Involvement is the KEY!!*

### Our Mission:

To represent our members in a positive and professional manner and to aggressively address every issue that affects the safety of our work environment, our job security, our health care and our pensions.

### Our Goal:

To have a positive affect on the lifestyles of our members and their families.



# **What We Are Working On**

- Safe Work Environment
- Our Job Security
- Our Health Care
- Our Pensions



## **The Legislative Process – How laws are made**

If you want to successfully influence the legislative process, you must understand how it works.

The material presented here describes the highlights of the legislative process. First we'll look at the party leadership in the two houses of Congress, which directs the flow of legislation. Second, we'll follow a bill step-by-step as it progresses through Congress to become a law. Third, we'll take a brief look at the congressional budget process.

As you will see, Congress makes many decisions at different stages of the legislative process – as bills are introduced, examined by committees, scheduled for debate, and so forth. There are votes on amendments to bills, votes on allowing debate, votes by subcommittees and committees, and votes by the full House of Representatives or the Senate to approve the bill or not.

To successfully influence this legislative process, we must lobby and make our opinions known at every step. Our Legislative Department and many other concerned individuals and groups keep a close watch on these detailed workings of Congress. They realize each separate vote is crucial, so they may call for your support, in the form of letters or telegrams or phone calls, several times on the same piece of legislation as it moves through Congress.

Remember, the UTU fights for the rights of rail, bus and transit workers in two areas – the collective bargaining area and the legislative area. In the collective bargaining area, the UTU negotiates an agreement and administers it through the grievance-arbitration procedure. It is the basis for many of our rights and benefits. Collective bargaining, however, cannot serve all our needs or protect all our interests.

The legislative area can be as effective as collective bargaining in affecting our futures. Many benefits enjoyed by UTU members, including the right to bargain collectively, were won by laws created in Congress. As you can see, we must protect what we have gained and fight harder to gain new rights for a better future.

You one letter, mailgram, phone call or personal contact can make a difference in how your representative or senators will act. There has been an increasing turnover in Congress in recent times. Today, less than one-half of elected representatives now serving in Congress have held office for more than three terms. As a result, members now are aware that re-election is not guaranteed, so they listen more closely when a constituent speaks his or her mind.

When a legislator is undecided on how to vote on an issue important to a UTU member, as few as twenty letters can make the difference in his or her decision. If a

legislator is hostile to labor's view, expressing your view may not change the person's mind, but it may cause them to become less active in opposing our goals.

Remember, your informed opinion can provide the information your representative or senators need to make the correct decision. Your getting involved can determine how well the UTU's lobbying program works.

## **Party Leadership**

The process of a bill becoming a law is supervised by the party leadership in each house of Congress. The party's leadership speaks for the party and coordinates its activities. Usually, the majority party is able to control the movement of legislation and decide which bills will be considered by individual committees.

In the House of Representatives, the Speaker of the House is the presiding officer. The Speaker is elected by the full House and so is a member of the majority party. As presiding officer, the Speaker may vote at his discretion.

The Vice President of the United States is the presiding officer in the Senate, also called the President of the Senate. The Vice President, as presiding officer, only votes to break a tie. Because the Vice President is often absent from Senate proceedings, the Senate elects from its ranks a President Pro-Tempore, who presides in the Vice President's absence. Elected by the full Senate, the President Pro-Tempore is a member of the majority party, usually the party member with the most seniority.

In both houses of Congress, the majority party elects a Majority Leader and Majority Whip, who direct the party's legislative strategy and serve as its leading spokespersons. The minority party in each house elects a Minority Leader and a Minority Whip, who perform similar duties for their party.

The chairmanship of committees in each house is controlled by the majority party, which also has a majority of members on each committee. Democrats in the House of Representatives are nominated to committees by the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee, and the Democratic Caucus gives final approval. In the Senate, Democrats are nominated to committees by the Democratic Steering Committee and approved by the Democratic Conference. Republican members in each house of Congress are nominated to committees by the Republican Committee on Committees and approved by the Republican Conference.

## **How a bill becomes a law**

A bill must move through Congress in an orderly and definite series of steps to become a law. This section follows a bill from its introduction, through the Congress, to the President's desk and into the law books. Although these steps are specific to Congress, the principles set forth apply to other levels of government.

## **The bill is introduced**

A bill may be introduced in either the House of Representatives or Senate by a respective member of that body. It may be the legislator's own bill, a bill introduced at the request of the Administration (the President or other officials), or the idea may have originated back home with a business or labor group.

A House member simply drops a bill into the "hopper," a box on the clerk's desk. A Senator will send the bill to the clerk or propose it on the floor of the Senate.

The bill is given a bill designation and bill number according to the house where it was introduced. For example, "H.R. 235" means that this bill was first introduced in the House of Representatives and was 235<sup>th</sup> in the order of bills introduced. A bill introduced in the Senate, for example, would be designated "S. 2718"

## **Committee Action**

Once the bill is numbered and printed, it is sent to the committee that has jurisdiction over the subject of the bill.

The committee usually refers the bill to a subcommittee which studies the issue in depth and holds hearings in which concerned citizens, organizations and government agencies can provide facts and offer opinions on the bill. The subcommittee may also vote to amend the bill. When done, the subcommittee reports the bill with recommendations back to the full committee.

The full committee may consider the bill further, make additional amendments, then vote it down, allow it to die by not taking any action, or report the bill favorably to the full House, usually accompanied with a report explaining the bill and the committee's decision.

## **The bill is debated**

After a bill is reported out of committee, it is scheduled for debate by the full House or Senate. In the House a bill is scheduled by the Rules Committee, which determines when the bill will be debated, how much time will be allotted for debate, and whether or not amendments to the bill will be allowed from the House floor. If the bill is not scheduled, it dies in the Rules Committee.

In the Senate, bills go on the Senate calendar and are scheduled for debate by the majority leadership. There is no time limit on debate in the Senate unless agreed upon by unanimous consent.

When the scheduled time arrives, the bill goes to the floor of the House or Senate for consideration by all members. The bill is debated, possibly amended, and voted up or down.

## **The bill is forwarded**

If approved by one body (the House or Senate), the bill is sent to the other body where it again moves through the committee procedure. Should the second body pass the bill without changing it, it is sent to the President for his signature.

If the Senate and House pass different versions of a bill, they are sent to a Conference Committee. This committee is made up of members from both the House and Senate committees that first considered the bill. They meet to iron out the differences in the two bills, and, if they can agree on a compromise bill, it is sent back to the Senate and House for approval. No further amendments are accepted, and the bill must be voted up or down. If the Conference Committee fails to reach a compromise, the bill dies in the committee.

## **The President acts on the bill**

When approved by both House and Senate, the bill is sent to the President, who has three choices. He may sign the bill, and then it becomes law. He may veto it and send it back for reconsideration to the House and Senate where the veto can be overridden only by a two-thirds vote of both houses. If the President does not sign or veto the bill within 10 days (Congress must be in session), then bill then automatically becomes law.

## **The congressional budget process**

The congressional budget process is important because much legislation affecting UTU members comes out of this process, such as funding for Amtrak, mass transit, Railroad Retirement and safety inspectors. It is the center of intense political struggles and legislative maneuvering. The four steps of the process we will be looking at are: authorization, appropriation, budget resolutions and reconciliation.

## **Authorization**

Legislation proposing particular programs or governmental activities, including the spending of funds for these programs and activities, is called authorization bills. These bills proceed through Congress in the manner described above in "How a bill becomes a law." They are considered by the proper authorizing committee, which deals with the particular subject matter of the bill in question.

For example, bills which most affect UTU members come before the following committees:

### **Senate Committees**

Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation & Related Agencies – Department of Transportation, Surface Transportation Board, National Transportation Safety Board;

Committee on Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs – urban mass transit;

Committee on Commerce, Science & Transportation – interstate commerce, highway safety, regulation of interstate common carriers (including railroads and buses);

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources – coal production, distribution and utilization;

Committee on Labor and Human Resources – railway labor and retirement matters;  
Finance Committee – taxation.

### **House Committees**

Committee on Appropriations – Subcommittees on Transportation and on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education;

Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities – labor standards and statistics, mediation and arbitration;

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure – includes railroads, mass transit, rail labor and Railroad Retirement;

Committee on Ways and Means – taxation.

Authorizing committees evaluate bills in terms of the value of the program proposed, and the needs of the agency affected. The committee also considers the cost of legislation and suggests, or authorizes, spending levels.

### **Appropriation**

While an authorizing committee approves programs and authorizes dollar amounts to be spent, only the appropriations committees can actually assign government funds to authorized programs.

The appropriations committee in each house of Congress examines each item in an appropriations bill, and may raise or lower the dollar amounts authorized for programs as it sees fit. Appropriations bills pass through Congress in the usual manner described.

### **Budget Resolutions**

The Budget Act of 1974 created a new budget process, so Congress now passes a unified budget, or budget resolution, that sets limits on total spending for the year.

Congress must pass a First Budget Resolution by May 15 of each year. This resolution is considered and approved by the Budget Committee in each house of Congress. It is formulated through a process of planning, negotiation and coordination with the other committees and the party leadership. It sets non-binding guidelines on spending limits for the other committees.

As the various committees and full houses consider and pass spending bills, the Budget Committees assemble approved spending amounts into a Second Budget Resolution. It can closely resemble the First Budget Resolution.

When complete, the Second Budget Resolution is reported out of the Budget Committees and considered by both houses. When passed by both, spending limits become binding, and the authorization and appropriations committees should not spend beyond them.

The Budget Act mandates that the Second Budget Resolution be passed by September 15, and Congress may not adjourn until it is passed.

## **Reconciliation**

To enforce the budget process, the Budget Act provides for a procedure called reconciliation. Reconciliation is put into effect only when the Budget Committees believe that the authorizing and appropriations committees will not limit their spending to the levels set in the Second Budget Resolution.

To require the authorizing and appropriations committees to follow the Second Budget Resolution's spending limits, the Budget Committees attach reconciliation instructions to it. They require the committees to report out reconciliation bills which reconcile their spending with the Second Budget Resolution's limits. These bills are referred to the Budget Committees, which combine them into a single "omnibus" or overall reconciliation bill in each house, and report them out to the full houses. When passed and signed by the President, the reconciliation measure becomes law. The authorization and appropriations committees are then required to spend within the Second Budget Resolution's limits.

# Communicating with Congress

Of course, the best method of communicating with Congress is face to face.

## Face to Face Meeting

- When scheduling a meeting, be sure to state the subject of the meeting in advance.
- Before the meeting, review the subject so you have a thorough knowledge of the subject.
- During the meeting, be concise, speak clearly and present the pros and cons of the matter, as well as your reasons for your point of view.
- At the end of the meeting, don't forget to thank the Member for their time.



## Faxes

- Sending a one-page fax is the next best method of sending your message to Members of Congress.
- Begin your message with either thanks for something the legislator has done in the past or with your specific request.
- Include your mailing address in the fax, so they know that you are a constituent.



## Phone Calls

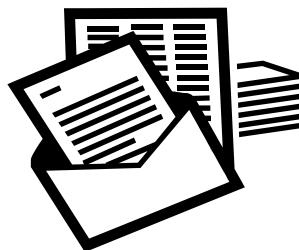
- If you don't have access to a fax machine or your Representative or Senators do not publish their fax number, call their office.
- If you don't know the name of the relevant staff person, tell the person answering the phone the subject and you will be told which staff person handles it.
- If you talk to a "live" person, offer to follow up with a fax with more information.
- If you get their voice mail, leave a substantive message, leaving your name, phone number and address (so they know that you are a constituent).
- The staff person may not have time to actually return your call, but they will get the message



## Sending Letters

**Due to security measures, regular mail takes a very long time to reach Capitol Hill.**

- If you must use regular mail, *send it to the District office*, not the Washington DC office.
- Again, don't forget to include your name and address.



## Email/Websites

- Another way to send a message is via email.
- Your correspondence should include your name and address also.
- Many members also use a form on their website.
- This form enables the member to record your name, address and subject in a database for future correspondence.



## Town Hall Meetings

- Be on the alert for “town hall” meetings. This is when Congress and legislators hold meetings to hear what is on their constituents’ minds.



**Always Stay Positive!**

**No matter what form your communication takes – always stay positive! Being hostile is never productive.**

**WHERE WE ARE ACTIVE.....WE ARE EFFECTIVE!**

## State Legislative Directors

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