

Advocating for Health Care
Legislative Process, Advocacy 101
With a focus on Meeting With a Legislator

By

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Presentation Overview

- Welcome, housekeeping & opening comments (5 minutes)
- Setting the stage – Overview of the \$18 million Immunization budget cut and impact (5 minutes)
- Civics 101 make up of our state legislative setting & how legislative process works (10 minutes)
- Reviewing possible advocacy activities (15 minutes)
- Focusing on meeting with your Legislator (20 minutes)
- Sharing experiences, discussion and Q & A with Participants (35 minutes)

Training Session Objectives

- Increase participants understanding of the \$18 million in recent immunization related budget vetoes, and impact on vaccine programs
- Increase participant's knowledge of the legislative process and effective advocacy
- Increase participant's skills in participating in and conducting successful meetings with elected policymakers and/or their staff
- Increase effectiveness and success building partnerships with state Legislators to prevent infectious disease and support immunization/vaccine programs

Summary of Budget Events – October 2010

- **Governor vetoed \$18 million of local assistance funding from CDPH Immunization Program**
 - \$3.5 million - Community Health Centers
 - \$4 million - Collaborative Projects
 - **\$3.2 million - Immunization Registry**
 - Also lost \$1.1 million in federal matching funds
 - \$7.3 million-Vaccine Funding (including state-purchased flu vaccine for adults)
- Loss of funds will limit access to vaccines, stall registry implementation, and hamper efforts to promote immunizations

Resources

- Call to Action – Coalitions and Health Departments
- CIC Website – www.immunizeca.org
- Talking Points
- Template Letter
- Legislative Visits
- Network of professional associations
- Social Media - Twitter and Facebook

Civics 101



**Advocacy
Concepts**

**Meeting with a
Legislator**

Civics 101 Objectives

Objectives of this Civics 101 overview:

- Increase participants knowledge of the legislative process

Profile of the California State Government

Four Balancing Parts of California Politics

People

Legislature

Governor/Admin

Courts

Generally:

- **The People choose who will be the Government and can establish law directly, through ballot initiatives**
- **Administration and Regulation side of Government is run by the Governor**
- **Legislature sets Budget, establishes New Laws**
- **Courts Interpret Laws**

Governor serves 4 year terms – unless challenged by the people

Three words – Recall & Arnold

Legislature runs in 2 year sessions – We are just beginning the first year of the 2011-12 session

General Information About State Legislature

Assembly & Senate

Assembly facts

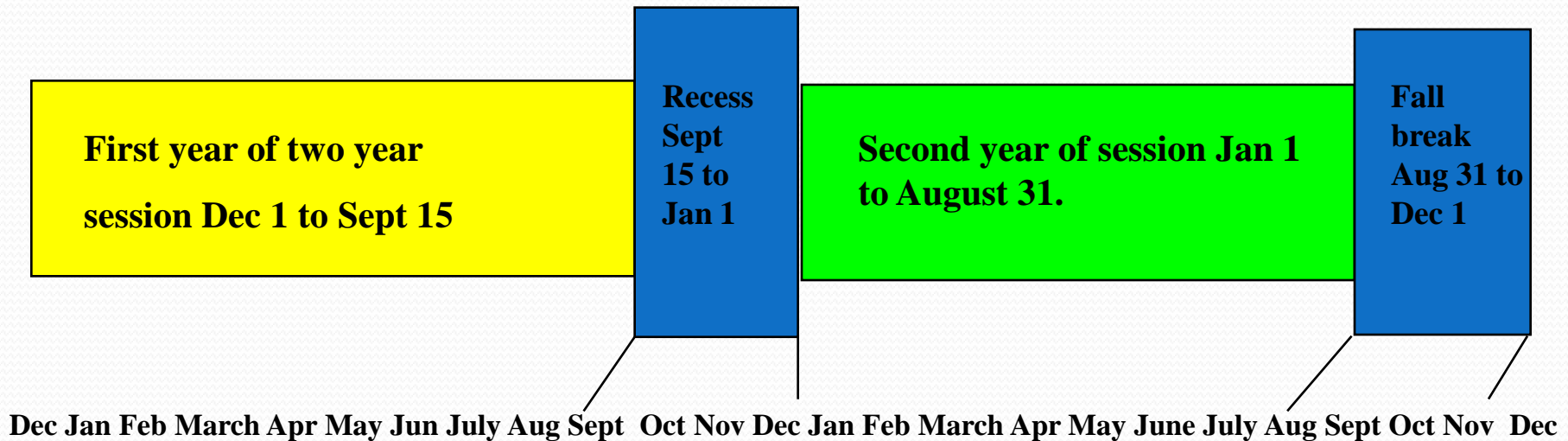
- 80 Members
- Each one represents 460,000 people
- 2 year terms
- 6 year term limit
- Current make up
 - 52 Democrats
 - 28 Republicans

Senate facts

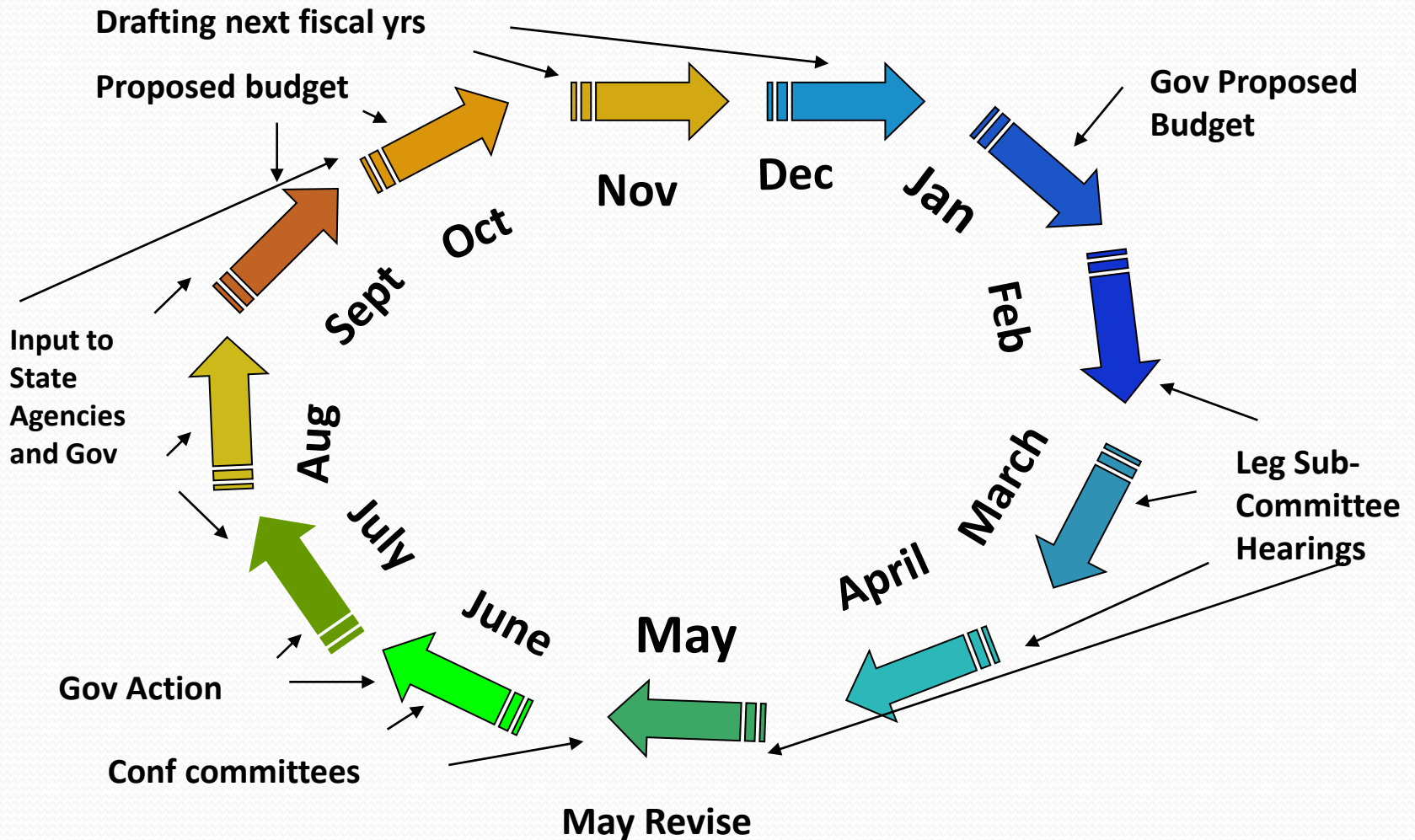
- 40 Members
- Each one represents 846,000 people
- 4 year terms
- 8 year term limit
- Current make up
 - 24 Democrats
 - 14 Republicans
 - 2 Vacancy

(District 1 will go to Gaines-R and Dems will pick up Dist 28)

Legislative Session Timeline



STATE BUDGET PROCESS Timeline

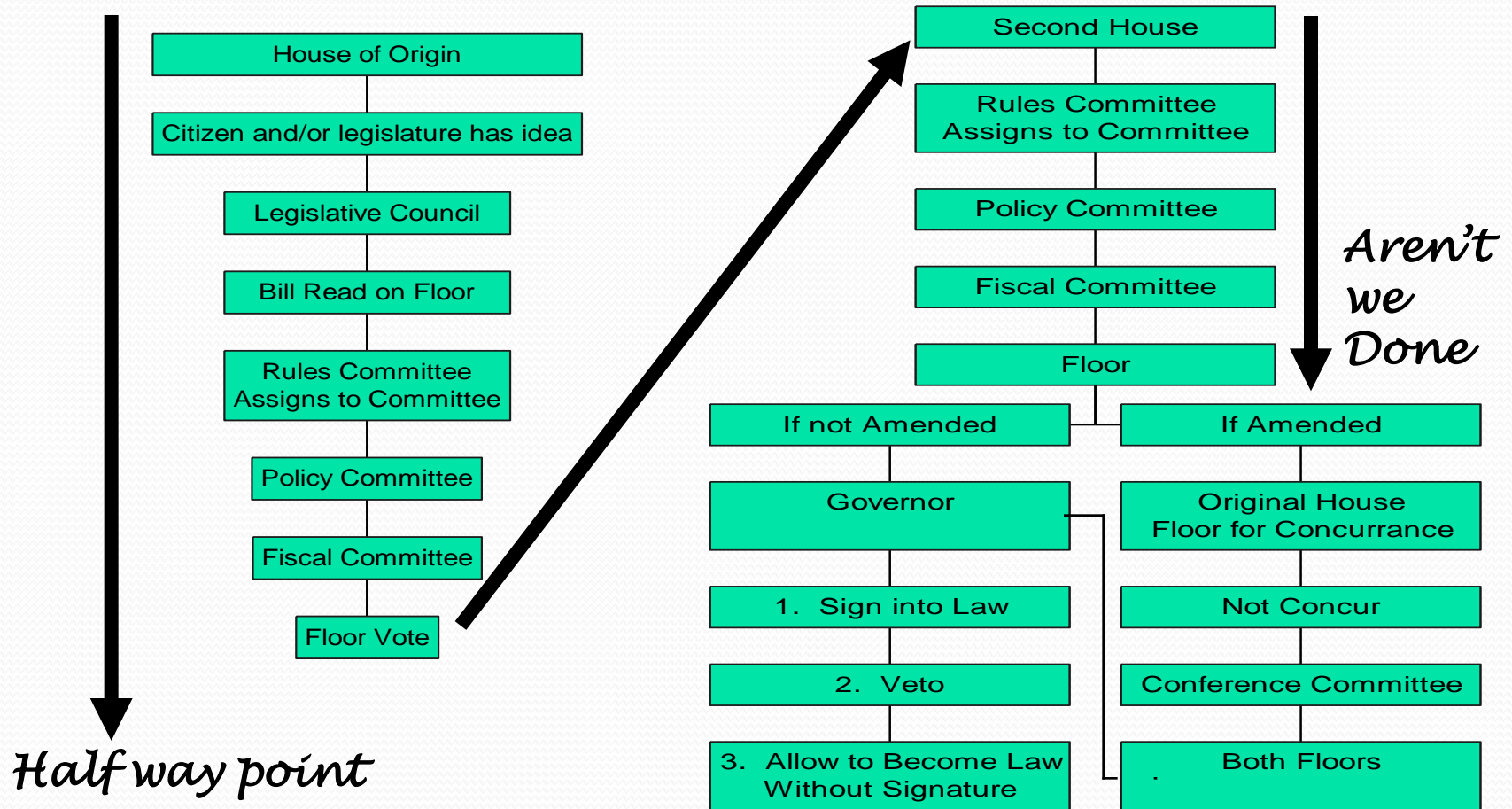


HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW

The State Legislature is designed to be a deliberative multi-step process

Start here - Bill Introduced

Wheee! Here we go again - 2nd House



Civics 101

**Advocacy
Concepts**



**Meeting with a
Legislator**

Advocacy Concepts Objectives

Objectives of this Advocacy Concepts overview:

- Increase participants knowledge and view of Advocacy

Opening Comments and a Need to Multi-task

- We must chew gum, walk, talk and juggle all at the same time
- There are more than 50 ways to advocate - use them
- When thinking about advocacy and the Government remember there are several different venues you may need to address or direct your advocacy to – know them & use them
 - ✓ **Administration and Regulation**
 - ✓ **Courts**
 - ✓ **State and Local Ballots**
 - ✓ **Legislature**
- Sometimes your advocacy efforts need to be focused on several different venues at the same time
- The main lesson is knowing who your audience is and what venue you are or should be focused on

Initial Rule of Advocacy

- Know and understand the landscape or audience of your advocacy efforts
- Put in another way WHO will your Advocacy be carried out on
 - Legislature
 - Regulatory Agencies
 - Governor
 - Courts
 - Media
 - Public
- Today's focus is primarily on the California State Government, especially the State Legislature and Administration

Know Your Stuff

- Do your Homework
- Define Your Issue – Set the Vision
- You are the **one most interested in your issue**

Know Your Stuff

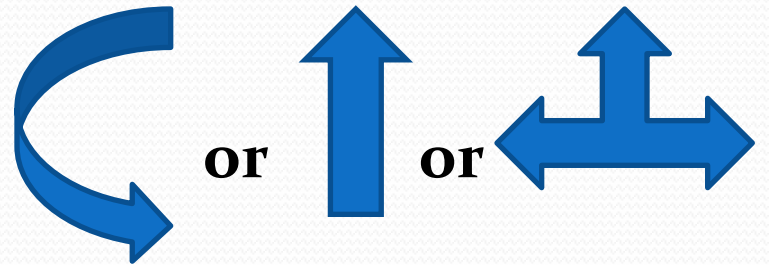
- You are the **Expert**

Know Your Stuff

- You are the **Expert, So**

- Vision Includes –

- **Where are we going and why**





Drawing and Defining a Line in the Sand

- What is the Issue
- What is the Vision
- What needs to be done
 - Generally
 - Specifically
- Don't leave it to someone else to define your issue
- If someone redefines or draws a line over yours – Redraw the Line – Bring it back to your Issue and Vision
- Stay in control of what the issue and vision is



How

Capture the Technical Edge

- You are the expert in your issue area, so:
- Be seen as the expert on your issue and go to source for information about immunization or at least how to connect to vaccine resources and information
- Some ways to establish yourself as are the “Go To” group/person on your issue area
 - ✓ Technical reports
 - ✓ Resource Guide
 - ✓ Providing public testimony
 - ✓ Host policymaker education or training session
 - ✓ Develop and maintain relationships – Leg/Leg Staff/Media

Build and Nurture Relationships

- With Legislators
- With media – Reporters – Editors
- Other groups – Coalitions and/or Organizations

Build and Nurture Relationships with Legislators

- How

- **Meet with them – Legislators**



Meet with their staff -- Know their staff by their first names – health issues person, scheduler, secretary, etc.

- **Keep the Legislator's file on your issue current**
 - **Provide them with a resource guide on your issue (i.e. experts, who to talk to, where to get information, where to go to SEE)**
 - **especially contacts in their District – if you have them**
 - **Testify at public hearings**
 - **Volunteer to help them in their district office, during their campaign**
 - **Walk a precinct with them**
 - **Identify people they are close to in your community, who you or your group is also close to**
 - **Take them on a reality tour to learn first hand what the issue looks like, feels like and where it lives**

Build and Nurture Relationships with Legislators

Give them what they need

Legislators:

- Understand how the Legislative process works
- Learn what type and what format of information is useful in the legislative setting: For example:
 - How to write a letter to a legislator
 - How to testify
How to be an expert witness
 - How to say thank you when they do the right thing or were helpful on your issue

Establish and Keep Up Relationships with Media

Who – Primarily Reporters & Editors

★ How – Give them what they need: Resources, Stories & Access

- Build a relationship – meet with them before they need you
- Press conferences
- Invite them to reality tours, community health events
- Editorial Board Visits
- Provide them with resource guide and contact information

★ Keep their file on your issue **current**

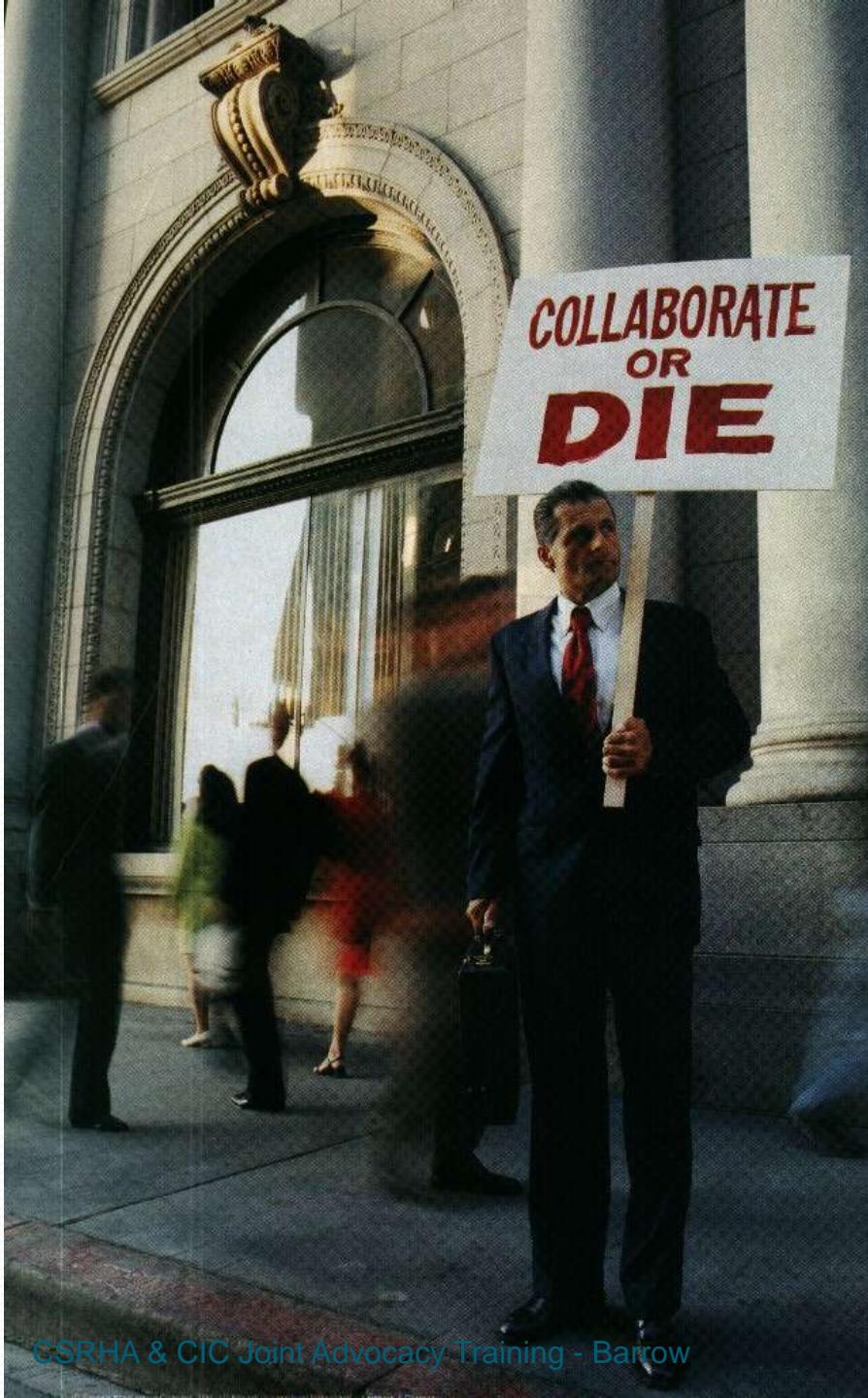
★ Write an Op Ed, letter to editor

- Buy space in the paper

★ Be prepared with real life stories

Respond when they call

- Smile at them and provide cookies



Collaborate or Die

- Public health, non-profits and front line health care workers are seldom in a position to have the political clout they deserve
- Be realistic and build a broader base of support by aligning yourself with others where appropriate and with those organizations and individuals that do have political clout
- And, just like with the Legislators and media, build and nurture relationships with those you collaborate with by: liaisons, be a resource for them on your issue, and when appropriate support what they are working on

Collaborative Advocacy – Why

Here are ten reasons it is smart to partner with other existing organizations and coalitions:

- Builds a **broader unified voice** on your issue
- Creates a **broader based foundation of support** and coordination to more effectively support your advocacy efforts
- **Shares established integrity** of other existing and respected settings
- Provides more resources to help **elevate your issue above the din of noise** of many other issues
- Allows for more education and **outreach to a wider array of decision makers**
- Provides **opportunities for coordination** of the choir of interest groups on your issue that otherwise would be an ineffective discordant group of voices
- Helps you **coordinate logistic and administrative support** what otherwise could be ineffective uncoordinated efforts on the same issue
- Allows for the **utilization of a broader array of lessons learned** from other multifaceted health care groups
- Increase **funding opportunities**
- Elevates your issue by **adding more legitimacy to your issue** efforts that otherwise may be seen as self serving

Collaborative Advocacy – How

Examples and suggestions for how to partner with other exiting groups:

- ❑ Establish official liaisons between groups
- ❑ Sponsor and participate in a joint leadership council to periodically meet and conduct joint strategic planning
- ❑ Provide your members with brief monthly or quarterly summary newsletter what other groups doing and contact information
- ❑ Incorporate the other group's web site links into your web site
- ❑ Host a summit of group leaders on a common and current issue area to ensure alignment and coordination of activities on that issue area
- ❑ Invite one or two 5 minute presentations by other group's representatives to your normal meetings
- ❑ Jointly work on a grant proposal or fundraising effort together – sharing support for different parts of the same issue
- ❑ Anecdotes – mental health Healthy families

Build Knowledge and a Foundation of Support In the Grass Roots

- Bring together who have been directly impacted by preventable diseases
- Provide them with written material and resource guides
- Build story banks to chronicle real life stories – it is said a picture is worth a thousand words, a well told real life story is worth more in the world of politics

Know and Understand your Detractors & Opponents

- Use **detractors and opponents** questions and issues to **sharpen your image, message**, and to more clearly define your issue
- Opponent's issues help force you to get better and better at knowing your issue and learning **how to steer more effectively toward your objective**
 - And can sometimes result in unique and unusual partnerships
- ★ Take the time to compile your opponents issues, and to **develop a Q and A** based on issues they raise

Tenacity

Why

- Immunization issues are not going away, whether we win today or not

How

- ❖ Be prepared for the long haul – You are experts at the “long haul”
- ❖ Do not let set-backs deter you – learn from them
- ❖ Remember in the end they (your clients, your families, your children and state and local policymakers) depend on you
- ❖ You are the experts, you set the vision, you provide the leadership

Tenacity from Gandhi's View Point



M.K. Gandhi

First they ignore you,

Then they laugh at you,

Then they fight you,

Then you win.

Civics 101

Advocacy
Concepts

**Meeting with a
Legislator**



Meeting With a Legislator Objectives

Objectives of this Meeting with a Legislator overview:

- Increase participants knowledge and understand how to get a meeting and how to conduct a meeting with a legislator

How to Get a Meeting With a Legislator or Their Staff

- Call Legislator's local office
- Legislator's local contact information at
 - Assembly Member www.asm.ca.gov
 - State Senate Member www.sen.ca.gov
- If you do not know your Legislator's name call your County Elections Office or go to www.leginfo.ca.gov click on "Your Legislature," put in your zip code
- During Legislative Session – Jan to Aug – Legislators in office Thursday afternoon through weekend
- Federal Legislator contact information
 - <http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW.shtml>

Tips of How to Conduct a Meeting With a Legislator

- Meeting time is typically short -15 minutes to ½ hour
- Everyone has a key point to make or issue area they are responsible for
- Have three priority core messages you want the Legislator to walk away from the meeting knowing and understanding
- Do not argue with legislator
- If legislator or staff ask distracting question “bridge” topic back to your theme and issues – “I see your point, but the issue I want to discuss is.....”
- Offer to be a resource on Health issues & questions
- Do not speak beyond your knowledge level
- Jot down all questions or promises to get information, and follow up in timely manner

More Tips for the Legislative Meeting

- **During the meeting engage the Legislator in dialogue about:**
 - Any concerns they have about health care in CA?
 - How aware were they of health care programs in their area?
 - Are they interested in being kept informed about this issue?
 - Is there additional information we can provide for them about local efforts?

Resources

- Immunization advocacy efforts in California and background information on vaccine policies in California:
 - Catherine Martin or Sabrina Torres-
 - cmartin@communitycouncil.org
 - STorres@communitycouncil.org
 - CA Immunization Coalition – <http://immunizeca.org/index.pacq>
- CA State Rural Health Association
 - www.csrha.org
- Steve Barrow, Policy Director CSRHA & CIC Bd Member
 - sbarrow@csrha.org - bio http://www.csrha.org/bio/bio_sbarrow.html