Pitching to Policymakers

STEM Solutions
Overview

• Legislative Crash Course
• Proposing Legislation
• Legislative Meetings
• After the Meeting
• Refining your Pitch
• Practice Time!
What is Needed to Carry a Bill

Sept-Feb
- Idea Gathering
- Backgrounder
- Bill Language
- Fact Sheet

February 19
- Backgrounder
- Fact Sheet
- Bill Language
- Talking points
- Witnesses
- Q&A

May 14th
- Backgrounder
- Talking points
- Witnesses
- Q&A

June 4th
- Talking points
- Q&A

July 14th
- Backgrounder
- Talking points
- Q&A
- Witnesses

Oct 10th
- Letter to the Governor
- Bill Language
- Leg Office Outreach

Sept 10th
- Bill Passage Deadline
What Determines if a Bill is Selected

• Who supports and opposes?
• Will it be controversial?
• How much does it cost?
• Is there a sponsor?
• Is it a hot topic? (“ripped from the headlines”)
• Is it complicated/technical?
• Does it match the legislator’s interest/brand? Is it a priority?
• Does it address a constituency or a district issue?
• Does the member have room in their bill package?
• Does the member have the time and human resources to staff the bill?

Before meeting, visit the legislator’s website, twitter feed, other news.
Legislative Meetings - Scheduling

• No promises!
• An opportunity to advocate for your bill idea
  • Typically with a legislative staffer – this is a good thing
  • Assigned to your subject matter area
  • Influence which bills the member decides to run
  • If your bill is selected, you may be working with that staffer

To set up (we will handle this):
1. Call their office
2. 1-sentence on your bill area and that you have a bill proposal
3. Ask if it would be possible to get in touch with staffer responsible for that issue area
   • If they don’t transfer you, likely will get email contact info
4. Email to set up meeting time, offices likely have a zoom account or conference line (depends on staffer preference)
5. Provide them with very basic background information (they may or may not have time to look at it)
Legislative Meetings - During

• They may have to reschedule the day-of, flexibility is key, reschedule
• They may have to leave in the middle of the meeting, do not take it personally

1. Thank them for their time
2. Introduce yourself & STEM Solutions (we will handle this)
3. Transition into your bill pitch (we’ll turn it over to you)
4. Ask if they have any questions
   • Who you’ve reached out to, where do X organization stand, how much will it cost, how to pay for etc..
5. Thank them for their time
6. Give the staffer a leave behind (we won’t be doing this)
Legislative Meetings - After

1. Immediately after – write down any concerns or suggestions that were raised by the staffer. (we’ll work with you)

2. Within 24 hours - thank them for their time and answer remaining questions (we will do this)

3. Within 1 week, thank them again for vetting your bill and see if there has been movement in considering your proposal (we will do this)
   • It’s your job to ask and their job to say yes/still looking/no

4. If selected for their legislative package, what happens next will depend on the office.
   • You might be involved in creating materials, or the office may take over from there.
Questions and Break
Pitching to Legislators

Science Talks

- Background
- Supporting Details
- Results/Conclusion

Policy Pitch

- Bottom-Line
- So What?
- Supporting Details

Redrawn from AAAS
Pitching to Legislative Offices

**Bottom-Line**
- What is the big problem/policy gap
- What is your policy solution – avoid jargon

**So What?**
- Are there district implications
- How Californians are affected
- Why else their member should care

**Supporting Details**
- What groups might be supportive
- Counter arguments to opposition
- How will it be paid for
- Where else has this policy been implemented
Answering Questions

• Be brief and avoid jargon

• It’s ok to say you don’t know, but promise to follow-up if possible

• We’re there to help if we can answer questions about process, STEM Solutions, etc.
Practice Time!