

PIERCE ATWOOD 



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Legislative Advocacy 101:

Engaging with the State Legislature

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What is Lobbying and Why it is Important?



- Familiarizing Legislators with your organization or issue
- Bringing issues of concern to public officials
- No one else is going to make your case for you
- You can't make a friend when you need one



Maine State Legislature



151 Representative in the House
Representing 8,800 Mainers each



35 Senators in the Senate
Representing 40,000 Mainers each


Natural Resources
Council of Maine

Committees and Public Hearings

- Committees are made up of both House and Senate members and specialize in specific topic areas.
- Committees include:
 - › Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry
 - › Energy, Utilities, and Technology
 - › Environment and Natural Resources
 - › Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
 - › Transportation
 - › Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee



Peculiarities of the Maine Legislative Process:

- Every bill gets a public hearing
- Joint Standing Committees
- Citizen Legislature
- Term Limits



When can you weigh in?



Lawmaker is elected

Introduce yourself to your lawmaker & suggest issues of concern to lawmaker for bill ideas



Committee hosts public hearing and work session

Show up to a public hearing, testify live, or submit written testimony

Committee votes on bill

- Call, email, or meet with your lawmaker before committee or floor votes and encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same
- Write and submit letters to the editor to your local paper
- Take actions like signing petitions with NRCM or other advocacy organizations
- Lobby your lawmaker in the statehouse (like at NRCM's State House Action Day!)



House and Senate vote on bill

Bill gets sent to the Governor's desk

Call or email the governor to support or oppose the bill



Bill becomes law or bill fails

Call or email your legislator to thank them or express your disappointment



Tracking Legislation

- How to stay informed about the legislative process.
- Committee referral
- Public hearings and work sessions
- Committee options
 - Ought to pass
 - Ought to pass as amended
 - Ought not to pass
- Consideration by the full Legislature



Contact Your Legislators

- Legislators publicly share their personal contact information
- Send them an email
- Pick up the phone
- Write a hand-written letter and mail to their home address
- Lawmakers rarely hear from folks in their district

The Maine House of Representatives | Your Resource for Legislative Information

> Member Profile



Jessica L. Fay
(Jess)
State Representative
(D - Raymond)

✉ Jessica.Fay@legislature.maine.gov
141 Spiller Hill Road, Raymond, ME 04071
Home: (207) 655-5020
Seat Number: 47 House District: 86 - ([View Map](#))
Town(s): Poland (Part) / Casco (Part) / Frye Island / Raymond (Part)
Committee(s):



Best Practices

- Make a personal connection
- Tell a story - speak from the heart
- Identify the bill LD # or title
- Consider yourself the expert
- Always tell the truth
- Make a clear ask
- Follow up after the vote



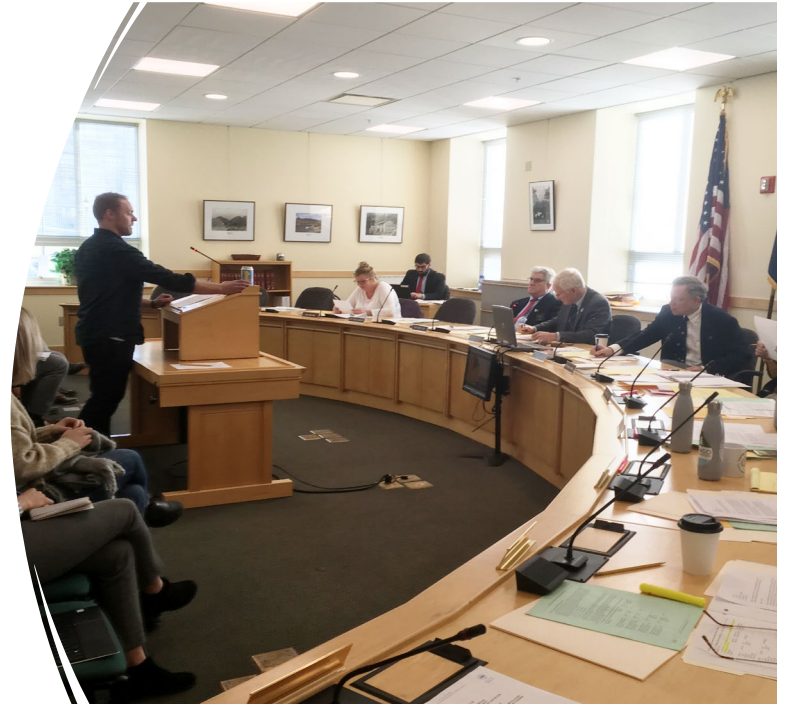
Testifying at a Public Hearing

- Public hearing process
- Outreach prior to public hearings
- Written and oral comments accepted
- Print 20 copies / stick to 3 minutes
- Zoom now a standard feature at public hearings
- Follow up in response to comments at a public hearing



Testifying at a Public Hearing

- Start by addressing the two committee chairs
- Identify the bill number, title, and your position
- Tell a story. Make a personal connection.
- Make a clear ask
- Ask for any questions



Direct Lobbying

- Build relationships with
 - Legislators
 - Executive Branch
 - Department Staff
 - Interested Stakeholders
- Develop a Legislative Agenda
- Anticipate Legislation
- Public Relations



Lobbying beyond the State House

- Member association outreach
- Grassroots or Grasstops lobbying
- Social media
- Op eds
- Letters to the Editor




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Types of Lobbyists

- Law and lobbying firms
- Trade Associations
- NGOs
- State Government Liaisons
- Individual citizens



Questions

