



LOBBYING TIPS



INTRODUCTION: Introduce your group to one of the staff people sitting in the reception area of the office. Let him or her know you have an appointment and give the name of the staffer. If you do not have an appointment, tell them you would like to meet with the staff person who handles child nutrition issues. If the person is unavailable, ask if you can leave behind information and your business card.

TIME: Find out how much time the person you are meeting with can spend with you. Adjust your presentation accordingly, but be flexible as meetings can be cut short if Members are voting.

LOCAL STORIES: Tell a story about how each issue you discuss will affect your district, school or business. Members may forget the details of the issue, but will remember your stories.

POLITICS: DO NOT be partisan or argumentative; DO explain and inform. Be friendly and positive.

TALK CHILD NUTRITION: Explain how your school program works and the impact it has in the local community. Provide information to the office and be prepared to leave behind further information. Do be creative in what information you leave behind and include photos of school meals.



ANSWERS: Talk about what you know, and do not hesitate to say, “I don’t know but I can get that information for you,” or ask them to call SNA’s Child Nutrition & Policy Center for the information.

RELATIONSHIP: Establish a long-term relationship with the staff person handling child nutrition. Make sure to exchange business cards. Invite the Member or staff to visit your school and offer to send more information or answer future questions. Check in with that person periodically and be sure to touch base when there are key votes. You want to be the person they call if they have questions on school nutrition issues.

ALWAYS SAY THANK YOU: Thank them for their time, regardless of whether or not they agreed with you. Leave the lines of communication open. Sometimes it take numerous follow-up conversations, even years, before you can “sway” them to your side, but it can be done!