

POST-BUDGET LEGISLATIVE LOBBYING 2016

TO: Local League Presidents/Action Chairs
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Each year we ask League members to lobby their state legislators after the state budget is done, giving local League members and legislators an opportunity to exchange ideas and discuss the League's Legislative Agenda for the session. Legislative lobbying in the district office should be scheduled during the next month. These meetings will give legislators an opportunity to learn about League positions and share their ideas and agenda. Information on how to set up an appointment and how to lobby is on the next page.

This exchange of information benefits the state League in its efforts to develop strategies that promote our legislative agenda. Our influence in Albany depends on your contact with your state Senator and Assemblyperson(s). They know you elect them! If you haven't done so already, set up an appointment to see your state Assemblyperson(s) and Senator. Seeing a staff person is fine.

This year we are asking you to cover election reform, ethics reform, and delegate selection reform for a possible Constitutional Convention. Election reform is, as always, a core League issue. On ethics reform, the League believes that the legislature is still missing the big picture of corruption. Many of the "ethics reforms" that were ostensibly considered during budget negotiations this year would fail to significantly impact our legislative system. We believe that now is the time to start a conversation on reforms to make a possible Constitutional Convention as open and representative as possible. Talking points for each of these topics are attached in separate documents, formatted with League letterhead so that you can leave one or more with your Legislator. You do not have to cover all three topics in your meeting; cover whichever ones you are comfortable with. You can also use the 2016 Legislative Agenda brochures in your advocacy efforts and leave a copy (or several) with your legislator.

The State League spent the majority of winter lobbying against the Education Investment Tax Credit (ETC). We submitted testimonies opposing the legislation, held a press conference with our public education allies, conducted a legislative briefing to educate members of the legislature on the issue, and personally lobbied over a dozen assembly members constantly pushing our position of public dollars for public schools. With the help of our League members and education partners we were able to keep the ETC out of the final state budget. If the issue does arise again later in session we will be providing more information and asking League members to contact their legislators and urge them to oppose the legislation.

We also chose not to advocate for Raise the Age at this time. The Governor included it in his Executive Budget proposal but it was excluded from the final budget. The bill is currently in the Codes Committee in both houses. If the bill does become active later in session, we will issue a memo of support and ask members to contact their legislators on the issue.

This Packet is available on the state League homepage, www.lwvny.org, Please return the attached form to the League office following your meeting, by mail, fax or e-mail with an attachment.

You should feel free to rely on the main points in this document and the handouts for your visit, but more background information is available online on our website for your reference.

2016 TIPS FOR LOBBY VISITS

PREPARATION

1. **Making the appointment:** Contact the legislator's district office. Ask for a ½ hour of time, but accept less if necessary, and do not overstay your welcome. Notify the legislator of the number in your group as well as their names, if possible. Send a letter or e-mail confirming the appointment, mentioning the issues you will discuss. **If you cannot meet with the legislator, ask to meet with senior staff.**

Try to arrange for three to five League members to attend. If your League meets with several assembly members or senators, be sure to have a League member who is a constituent present. At least one person should be experienced in League. League members well versed on the issues to be lobbied should be included when possible. A new member can be included in this exciting action if accompanied by experienced League members. When more than one local League is involved, try to have representatives from as many of the constituent Leagues as possible.

2. **Assigning roles:** Each member of the lobby team should be assigned a specific role. The following are possible assignments:
 - Researching the legislator. Someone should be prepared to brief the other members of the lobby team on the legislator's relationship with the League and his/her voting record (if the legislator is a re-elected incumbent). What are his/her committee assignments and/or leadership positions in the legislature? Is this legislator a member of the League? If this legislator sponsored bills that League supported, you may want to take a moment to express League's appreciation.
 - Moderator/leader. This person should be certain that each League member introduces himself/herself. The leader must also watch the clock. Knowing ahead how much time the legislator has agreed to spend with you, the leader must allot an appropriate amount of time for each issue. It is the leader's responsibility to "pace" the visit and tactfully keep everyone (including the legislator) on the subject. **Remember, opinions expressed should be those of the League, not of individuals.**
 - Researching the issue or issues to be discussed. Look to the materials on this subject on the league website.
 - Recording and reporting the legislator's response. The leader should not be the recorder.

NOTE: If you anticipate printing any part of the interview in a League bulletin or newspaper, the recorder is obligated to get the legislator's permission and specific conditions under which you may print.

Write a follow-up thank you after the visit. This is not only a gesture of politeness, but it also allows you to underscore some points made during the visit, answer any questions you were not sure about, or send a League publication to which you may have referred during the course of the visit.

2016 LWVNYS LOBBY REPORT FORM POST-BUDGET LOBBY VISITS

THANK YOU!

Local League: _____ League Member Name: _____

Senator: _____ Assemblymember: _____

What did the legislator say about each issue?

1. *Election Law Reform*

2. *Ethics Reform*

3. *Constitutional Convention Delegate Selection Reform*

Please return completed form to LWVNY, 62 Grand Street, Albany NY 12207
or fax 518-465-0812 or save as a pdf and attach to an email to jennifer@lwny.org

by June 1, 2016