

Effective Government Affairs Programs

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1921-2021 ■ 100 YEARS OF NONPROFIT EDUCATION



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Introductions



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The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement



Overview

- Nonprofits serve as advocates for their members and communities. Despite your experience or your organization's size, establishing a grassroots network doesn't have to be overwhelming. Learn the basics of a successful approach to legislative advocacy and policy.
- Course objectives:
 - Determining who should be involved in the program and why.
 - Creating a legislative policy.
 - Running a grassroots network.

Importance of Government Affairs

- An organization's government affairs can provide an important perspectives and expertise in their various fields.
- This can include:
 - Updates and changes to laws.
 - Relationships between an organization, the government, and public
 - The future of an industry or political issues.
- Lawmakers and other government officials don't know everything...

Importance of Government Affairs

- Can be very valuable for an organization's mission:
- McKinsey: Business value related to government: 30%, 50% for financial sector.
- Not just good for profits, but also long-term well-being of a company.

Importance in Government Affairs

- Advocacy is increasingly global, competitive, and complex.
- More voices competing for the ears of Congress and the White House than ever.
- Some may feel discouraged by the amount of money some organizations put into their government affairs programs.

Personal Experience in Dealing with Government Affairs



**GREATER DES MOINES
PARTNERSHIP**

New to Government Affairs?

- Don't go all out when starting new.
- Visit the capitol or government agency.
- Collaborative with other groups.
- Raise Money.
- Keep it legal.
- Understand where to go to...

Who to Include in Your Gov. Affairs?

- Should be interested in government.
- Understand the policy or policies you are advocating for.
- Well-connected or is willing to make connections.
- Be bipartisan.
- A team player.

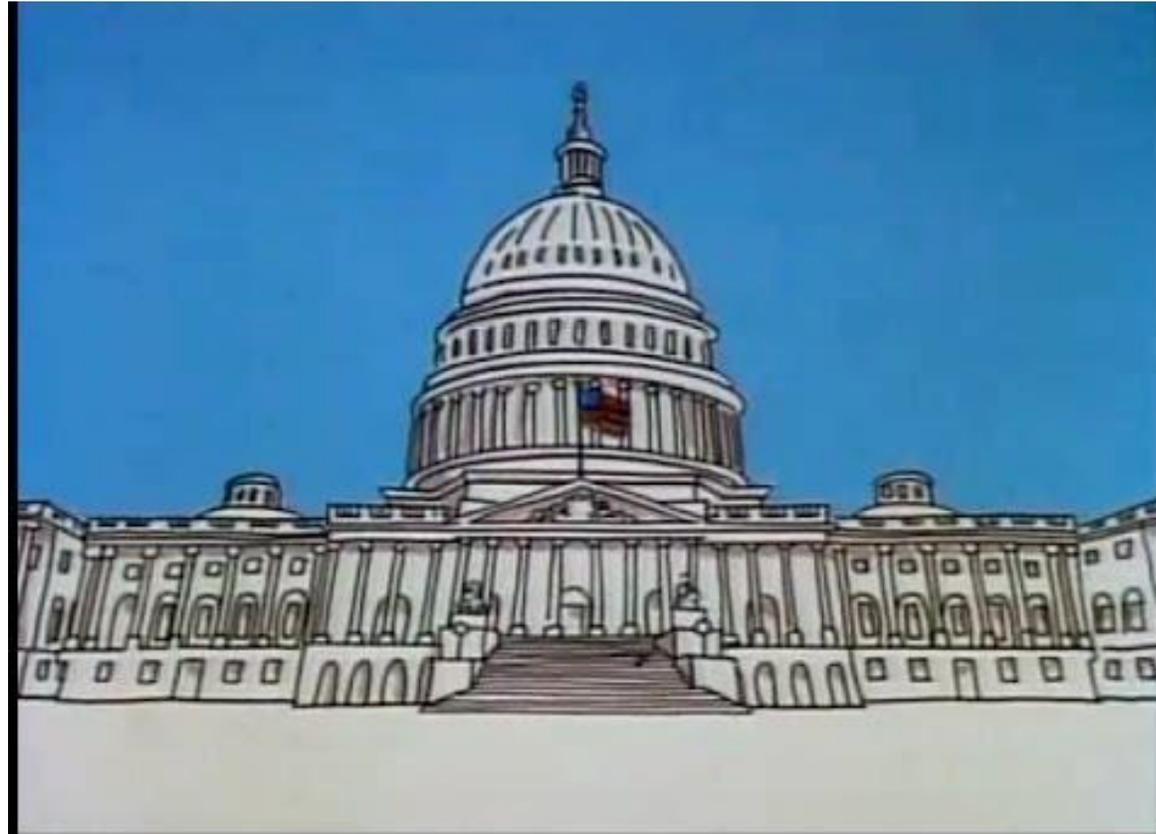
Government in Government Affairs

- Three Branches of Government:
- Executive Branch
 - President and Administration
- Legislative Branch
 - Congress (House and Senate)
- Judicial Branch
 - Courts

Government 101

- Different Levels of Government:
 - Federal
 - State
 - County
 - Local
- Legislative and bureaucratic sides exist at all levels of government.

How Do You Factor Into How a Bill Becomes a Law?



Government in Government Affairs

- More to the process than what Schoolhouse Rock taught you.
- You can have a major impact in the policymaking process with an effective government affairs program.
- Important to maintain relationships at all levels of government.
 - Local and state actions affect your operations more on a day-to-day basis.
 - Understanding bureaucratic agencies and their roles also pertinent.

Working in Government Affairs



Government Affairs in the Executive Branch/Bureaucracy

- The Executive Branch is more than just the President.
- Includes all the federal agencies in government.
- Department of Defense, Federal Trade Commission, Federal Communications Commission, etc.
- Responsible for interpreting and implementing legislative policies.

Government Affairs in the Executive Branch/Bureaucracy

- Exists at state/county/city level too!
- Each government has its own bureaucracy in charge of interpreting and implementing legislative mandates.

Government Affairs in the Legislative Branch

- Whether it is Congress, state legislature, or city council, it is important to advocate in those branches.
- They create the laws and policies that then get enacted and can affect your organization.



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With All of These Government Branches, How Do You Breakthrough?



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Be Prepared For Government Affairs...

Know What You Want To Do

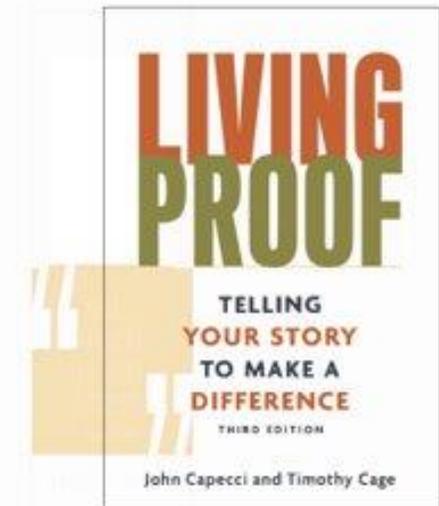
- Are you looking to:
 - Lobby?
 - Educate?
 - Advocate?

Lobbying vs. Educating

- Lobbying is an attempt to influence any legislation by communicating with policymakers, officials, or public and referring or reflecting on specific legislation, encouraging others to take action on a bill.
- Lobbying does not include non-partisan analysis, study, or research and the communication of research findings to the general public, officials, or governmental bodies.

Government Affairs Begin with Intent

- *Living Proof* by John Capecci and Timothy Cage.



Six Word Reason

Objective: Briefly explain how you got here and why you're an advocate (or are about to become one).

Use this exercise to:

- claim your identity as an advocate (if you're just starting out).
- refocus your story (if you're already speaking as an advocate).
- pinpoint the reason you're telling your stories.
- find concise, effective language.
- generate headlines and hooks.

How short can a story be?

Frederic Brown is credited with the shortest horror story: "The last man on Earth sat alone in a room. There was a knock at the door." Ernest Hemingway purportedly was once dared to write a story in six words. He penned, "For sale: baby shoes, never worn."

For nearly fifteen years, the online storytelling magazine *Smith* (<http://www.smithmag.net>) has asked people to summarize their lives in six words. The Six-Word Memoir project

spawned a popular book series that includes "terse true tales" of the human experience, including Johan Baumeister's "Joined Army. Came out. Got booted."

In 2010, journalist Michele Norris began asking people to submit their six-word thoughts about race and cultural identity, which she turned into an online archive called The Race Card Project (<http://www.theracecardproject.com>).

It features candid contributions such as Laura N. Wesson's "I am both, not just one," and Pauline Devlin's "We joke, but it's not funny."

The Six-Word Reason exercise is our spin on the Hemingway, Smith, and Race Card challenges. We use this exercise to jump-start our Living Proof Advocacy workshops and focus advocates on their personal reasons for sharing their stories.

Here are a few examples:

"An art teacher changed my life."

—Jamal, a board member for an organization that pairs artists with disadvantaged youth

"Bikes opened the world to me."

—David, an advocate for a community-based cycling nonprofit

"I believe nobody should be hungry."

—Roberta, an advocate for ending world hunger

Six Word Reason

- For the next three minutes, create your six-word reason for advocacy.
- Talk with the person next to you about each of your reasons.
- We'll come back in 5-7 minutes.

Expand That Reason

- Now that you have a simple, straight-forward reason for advocacy, it is time to expand into your organization goals.

Create a Position Statement

- What are the core values of your organization or company?
- Important to be clear on what you stand for.
- When an elected official asks, you should be prepared.
- "Give us a reason/issue that is important."

Position Statement from C of C on Infrastructure Bills

Sometimes it can be hard even for seasoned veterans to follow all the machinations and posturing around the two biggest pieces of legislation being considered in Washington this year: the bipartisan infrastructure bill and the partisan reconciliation bill.

So let's be clear where the Chamber stands:

- The Chamber fully supports stand-alone passage of the bipartisan infrastructure bill.
- The Chamber adamantly opposes the partisan reconciliation bill.
- We oppose any attempt to link the two bills—such that for one to pass they both must pass.

Prior to last Friday, it was clear that Congress could enact the infrastructure bill without enacting the reconciliation bill.

Now, Congressional Democrats are linking the two bills together, resulting in holding the infrastructure bill hostage until the reconciliation bill moves forward.

We will not back off our opposition to reconciliation because of our support for infrastructure.

And we will continue to fight to delink the two bills so that we can enact the long-overdue infrastructure bill and avoid the economy crushing reconciliation bill.

Position Statement Example

- Source: American Institute of Architects.

Supporting Position Statements

1. Definition of Professional Practice and Use of the Title Architect

The AIA supports a uniform definition of the “practice of architecture” that delineates the scope of services a registered architect may perform as stipulated by regulatory controls of the local jurisdiction. The definition should follow the recommendations developed by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. Furthermore, the AIA supports protecting the public by reserving the use of the term “architect” to those individuals licensed as architects. The AIA further recommends that all jurisdictions implement a category designated as Emeritus or Retired, for persons who have held a license to practice architecture but have retired and are no longer in practice.
(approved September 2015)

2. Design of Structures for Human Occupancy or Use

The AIA maintains that to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, only architects should program and design all structures primarily intended for human occupancy or use. Architects are uniquely qualified through education, experience, examination, and practice to lead the design process to design buildings. The process of planning and designing the construction of buildings is complex, so sound professional judgment of an architect is needed before and throughout the design process and in construction. Therefore, it is incumbent on each jurisdiction that has a responsibility to the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens to ensure that the architect is engaged early in planning and managing the design of buildings.
(approved September 2015)

3. Practice and Title Regulations in the Built Environment

In the public interest, the AIA holds that only architects and engineers licensed through examination possess the necessary education, training and experience to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public in the built environment. Other individuals may assist these licensed professionals in shaping the built environment, but fragmentation of responsible control of the building design process including interior architectural elements as defined by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards Model Regulations 100.903, endangers and misleads the public as to respective areas of competence and expertise. The AIA generally opposes practice or title regulation of individuals or groups other than architects and engineers for the design of buildings.
(approved May 2019)

Write a Position Statement

- Take 10-15 minutes to create your own position statements about your organization.
- Feel free to talk with the people around you for ideas.

Build a Legislative Agenda

- Applicable to all levels of government.
- Legislation can affect you directly and indirectly.
- From position statement, build it into a legislative agenda.
- Includes:
 - Background on policy issue.
 - Organization's relation to the issue.

Build a Legislative Agenda

- Example from UnityPoint Health.

IOWA PRIORITIES



Behavioral Health

One in five Iowans live with some form of a behavioral health condition. Of those, approximately 130,000 are living with a chronic or other form of Serious Mental Illness (SMI) daily. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the health and well-being of patients, families and front-line health care workers. Beyond its devastating physical effects, the COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed a mental health crisis marked by anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and even suicide.

In 2018 and 2019, landmark legislation was passed by the Iowa Legislature and signed into law by Governor Reynolds that achieved significant progress in expanding vital community-based and

crisis services to meet the needs of Iowa adults and children. While these bills are an important achievement in advancing behavioral health care for Iowans, the state and providers remain challenged in serving the comprehensive needs of patients and families dealing with a behavioral health diagnosis. Collaborative efforts between the legislature, providers and payers are vital to allow us to continue to make progress in 2021.

As the largest provider of inpatient, outpatient and community-based behavioral health services in Iowa, UnityPoint Health is dedicated to working with lawmakers, providers and community stakeholders to formulate additional bipartisan solutions to meet the needs of Iowans.

LEGISLATIVE REQUEST: Identify and appropriate adequate, equitable and sustainable funding for adult and children's behavioral health systems in Iowa.

Taking Action

- You now know what your needs are to have an effective government advocacy program.
- Next, we will discuss how to put that knowledge into action...
- ...after the break!

Break



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Best Tactics

- Many ways of creating a strategy for an effective government affairs program.
 - Using media to tell your story.
 - Create a grassroots/volunteer network.
 - Reach out to a representative/government official.

Government Affairs in Action



What Can Your Organization Do?

Giving Public Testimony

- Use your position statement to provide a framework to articulate your objectives in government affairs.
- Cohesive, well-thought-out statements push your issues out in the forefront.
- Take your case directly to Congress by being a part of a hearing.
- Can also register public comments at government agencies.

Prepare for Public Testimony

- Attend or watch other hearings to get a sense of the process.
- Get notifications on bills or hearings or sign up for updates from advocacy organizations.
- Keep current on news pertaining to bill/proposal.
- Read the bill/proposal.
- Learn testimonial guidelines.
- Draft testimony and submit in advance.
- Practice, Practice, Practice!

Examples of Public Testimony Schedule:

From the U.S. House of
Representatives.

3 OF [14 RESULTS](#)

Growing the Small Business Supplier Base in Government Contracting

117th Congress (2021-2022)

HOUSE COMMITTEE HEARING

[Hide Overview](#) ✕

Committee: [House Small Business](#)
Subcommittee: House Small Business Subcommittee on Contracting and Infrastructure
Related Items: Data will display when it becomes available.
Date: 10/13/2021 (12:00 PM EDT)
Location: Data will display when it becomes available.
Website: <https://smallbusiness.house.gov/>

Witnesses

Ms. Alba Alemán
Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Citizant, Inc.

Ms. Lynn Ann Casey
Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Arc Aspicio

Mr. Victor Holt
Chief Executive Officer and Founder, V-Tech Solutions, Inc.

Ms. Sophia Tong
Chief Executive Officer and Founder, T and T Consulting Services Inc.

Supporting Documentation

Hearing: Witness List [\[PDF 172KB\]](#)

Video of Proceedings

Data will display when it becomes available.

Hearing Record

Hearing Notice [\[PDF 170KB\]](#)

Structure of Public Testimony

The introduction provides historical background on the subject matter.

STATEMENT OF JOHN CRABTREE, CENTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS, MARKET STRUCTURE PROJECT, WALTHILL, NE

Mr. CRABTREE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Harkin, the rest of the Committee. Thanks for having this hearing and giving the opportunity to speak. My name is John Crabtree. I work at the Center for Rural Affairs in Walthill, Nebraska.

For most of this century, the farm share of the consumer and export dollar has trended pretty steadily downward, and, not coincidentally, the number of farms has trended down at a mirroring pace. If the current farm share trend line is extended for another 20 or 21 years, the farm share of the consumer dollar would be predicted to reach zero. Following that logic, if we leave current policies and trends in place for another generation, there will be virtually nothing left of family farming and ranching in this country. It doesn't need to be that way. Trend lines are economic constructs and predictions of the future. If you see a bus hurtling to-

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Testimony moves into the issues/research into it.

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ward a cliff, you think you know the eventual outcome is catastrophic. It assumes that you don't take action to change its direction or speed or anything else. Agriculture today is kind of like that bus heading for a cliff.

Agricultural concentration and the decline of owner-operated farms and ranches are not the inevitable result of inexorable forces of nature. Family farm decline is not driven by efficiency gains associated with large-scale agriculture. Iowa State University economist Mike Duffy's research of Iowa farm records demonstrates that economies of size and production run out at about 600 acres of row crops and about 150 sows, farrow-to-finish. These are levels that are far below the size of operations which are currently expanding today.

The farm share of profit in the food system is declining, and at the same time the profit share captured by farm input, marketing, and processing companies is increasing. Food processors and meat packers rationalize their consumption of an increasing share by saying they are adding value to farm commodities. That isn't without any truth whatsoever, but judging by current trends in the farm share of food system profit, farmers and ranchers can ill afford to have much more value added to the crops that they raise.

Unless we reverse this trend and ensure that farmers and ranchers receive a fair share of the profit from the food system, nothing else we do to maintain family farms will succeed. It doesn't mean we should lose hope. Concentration in agricultural production is driven by policy choices, and we can choose another path. There can be a future for family farms and rural communities. The choice is before us and the time to act is now. Time is of the essence.

Just a little bit about why we should care about this. The common assumption on U.S. policy on family farm decline is that it is the result of forces of competition that leads to more efficient production, and that is the way the rest of the economy is organized. Why should farming be any different?

This view is fundamentally flawed, however. Societies in which income, wealth, and power are more equitably distributed are generally healthier than those in which they are highly concentrated. A system of economically viable, owner-operated family farms contributes more to communities than systems characterized by inequality and large numbers of farm laborers. Replacing mid-size farms with big farms reducing middle-class entrepreneurial opportunities in farm communities, and at best replaces them with wage labor, below-average income, little ownership or control of productive assets.

Some would argue that agriculture is economics irrelevant to rural communities. Our research at the Center for Rural Affairs would argue differently. We have identified 277 counties that remain highly dependent on farming and ranching in the 6-State area of the Dakotas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, and Nebraska. These farm-based counties account for over half the counties in

Conclusion makes recommendations or proposals to committee.

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The funds should also be committed to new market development initiatives. Consumer markets are becoming segmented. Many consumers are willing to pay premiums for products that have the unique attributes that they desire, and their desires are not well served today. That presents an opportunity for family farmers and ranchers.

The last point is on market access. The greatest future for family farms is in high-value markets, but in the meantime, most family farmers must survive in raw commodity markets.

Those markets are increasingly biased against small producers, especially in livestock production. Large corporate hog producers use market power to gain price premiums not available to small producers raising hogs of identical quality.

Two immediate actions: First, the Federal Government should take immediate steps to require meat packers to report prices, especially their contracting arrangements and volume-based premiums provided larger producers.

In addition, Congress should clarify what constitutes an illegal price discrimination against small producers. Senator Harkin mentioned enhancing competition. The Packers and Stockyards Act prohibits price discrimination, but legal decisions have narrowed its application in recent years and make the statutory prohibition almost meaningless. Congress should clarify that an undue price preference is a price preference based on volume that does not reflect differences in transaction costs associated with size.

The Center for Rural Affairs has developed and would like to offer a legislative proposal that would help clarify what price discrimination is. We hope it will receive serious consideration.

There is a palpable anger in farm communities and a growing sentiment that their future is being sacrificed to transnational corporate agribusiness. The choices that we make today will decide if the next century has a place for viable family farms and rural communities or if family farms and many rural communities will become distant memories.

The time to act is now. If you choose a path of boldness and decisive action, rural America will stand with you.

Thank you.
The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Crabtree.
Mr. MacLeod.



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Example of Public Testimony

Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions

**Making Health Care More Affordable:
Lowering Drug Prices and
Increasing Transparency**

SEPTEMBER 26, 2019
2:00 P.M.

The graphic features a dark background with a faint image of the U.S. Capitol building. The text is centered and uses a mix of white and yellow colors for emphasis.

Use the Media to Tell Your Story

- Media is a powerful tool in dealing with government affairs.
- Many different forms to help promote your agenda:
 - Print
 - Radio
 - TV
 - Online
 - Social Media
- Advertise, Advertise, Advertise!
 - Be public in talking to elected representatives.
 - Take your issue to the public and educate them.

Use the Media to Tell Your Story

- Example of using media to promote advocacy (Courtesy: National Federation of Independent Business):



Draft Your Own Gov. Affairs Media Campaign

- Partner up and consider what each of your own government affairs media campaigns could look like.
- Things to consider:
 - The issue
 - Budget
 - Length of campaign
 - Who are you targeting?
 - Federal level or state level campaign?
 - Take 10-15 minutes to do this exercise. We will discuss when everyone is done.

Running a Grassroots Network

- Government affairs needs a community of volunteers, advocates, and activists around it to:
 - Give legitimacy.
 - Grow awareness.
 - Gain allies.
- Brand engagement
 - People can associate with more than just the product/cause.

Building a Volunteer Network

- People share your advocacy goals from all backgrounds.
- Bring in partner organizations who can provide connections and resources.
- Keep them engaged.



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Putting Your Volunteers to Work

Letters, and Emails, and Calls - Oh My!

- Keeping your affairs out in the forefront.
- Encourage your employees, volunteers, and advocates to actively contact elected officials when the time comes.
- Whether it is through email, letters, or calling, these tools make a difference.
- Encourage people to draft their own personal comments instead of boiler plate material.
- Elected officials will pay more attention to personalized comments.

Gov't. Affairs During Recesses

- Target representatives when they are on congressional recess and are home.
- Look for town halls to attend and organize.
- Schedule meetings in their district office with them or a staffer.
- While they can't introduce or vote on legislation during recess, it allows the legislator to consider the issue.
 - Make sure to follow-up with the member of Congress when the session resumes.

Effectively Advocating in the Government

- Schedule a face-to-face meeting with a legislator or staffer.
- Take a conversational approach.
- Work to build a relationship.
- Connect your issue to something that can be relevant to the elected official.

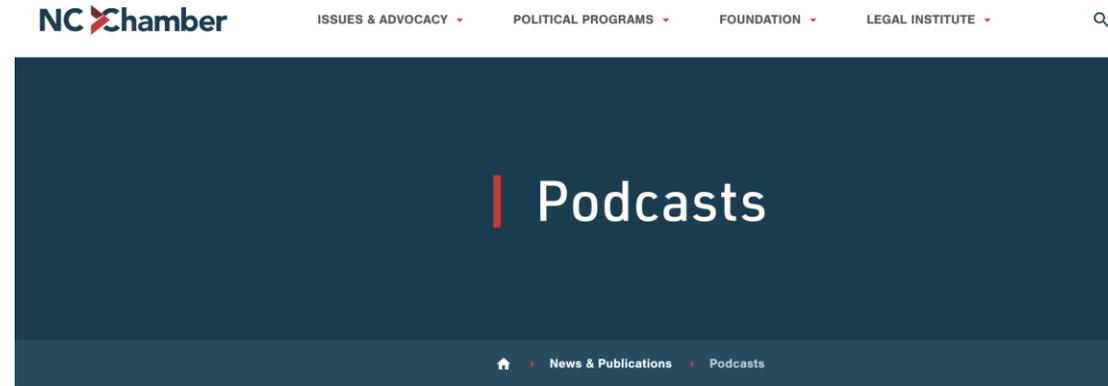
Need Additional Support?

Prominent Government Affairs Firms

- Cornerstone Government Affairs (CGA)
- Holland and Knight
- McKinsey & Company
- Stateside Associates
- Taft, Stettinius, and Hollister LLP

Chamber Resources

- The Chamber of Commerce has multiple resources at your disposal.
- Workshops
- Conferences
- Media Outreach
- Social Media
- Podcasts



The NC Chamber is excited to announce its new podcast, *The Business Playbook*, featuring the perspectives and best practices of our state's foremost business leaders. If your organization has interest in participating in one of our programs, please reach out to [Emmy Boyette](#), director of marketing.



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- An effective government affairs program puts significant leverage into whatever you are advocating for.

Review

- From this class, you are now able to succeed in these course objectives:
 - Determining who should be involved in the program and why.
 - Creating a legislative policy.
 - Running a grassroots network.

Questions?



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Thank You!



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