



Legislative Advocacy Handbook

October 2012

*Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence
Advocating change. Educating our community. Supporting Services.*



250 S. Rock Blvd., Suite 116 Reno, NV • Phone (775)-828-1115 • Fax (775) 828-9911

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Introduction

This handbook is designed to help you navigate the complex legislative system, which can at times be overwhelming and intimidating. Lobbying can allow individuals and programs to influence legislation and public policy issues by bringing about systemic change that affect our communities.

Lobbying is a term for a specific type of advocacy, and includes both direct and grassroots lobbying. Direct Lobbying is defined as: Communication with a legislator that expresses a view about specific legislation. Grassroots Lobbying is defined as: Communication with the public that expresses a view about specific legislation and includes a call to action.

Legislation can be an effective response to violence against women. For service providers/programs, practitioners, advocates, attorneys, and concerned citizens alike, lobbying can be a tool to represent the interests of battered women.

Let's begin by seeing how much you know about the legislative process and players...

Your Legislative IQ¹

Understanding who the players are in the legislative process and being comfortable communicating with them is an important part of legislative advocacy. The quiz below will help you identify what you know and what you don't know. It is not meant to be a comment on your IQ rather a tool to help you broaden your awareness of the variety of players in the process.

Please fill out and score this exercise before you begin reading this handbook.

DIRECTIONS: Answer Y for Yes, N for No

1. Do you know the name of your Governor and Lt. Governor? _____
2. Do you know the name of your State Representative? _____
3. Do you know the name of your State Senator? _____
4. Do you know the name of your Attorney General? _____
5. Do you know the names of your District, Municipal and Justice Court Judges and Mayor? _____
6. Have you ever written one of the people mentioned above? _____
 - a. Bonus: Have you written to one of the people above more than once?

7. Have you ever met personally with one of the people mentioned above? _____
8. Have you ever worked in or given money to the election campaigns of any candidates of the positions mentioned above? _____
 - a. Bonus: Have you ever given to more than one campaign? _____
9. Do you know how to find out where a bill is in the process in your state house?

¹ No specific cite for this document. Included in several different suggestions for what should be in a handbook.

10. Do you know what % of the state budget goes to health and human services each year? _____
11. Do you know how much money from the state goes to battered women's programs and to battering intervention? _____
12. Do you know your police chief? _____
- a. Bonus: Have you met with the chief regularly? _____
13. Do you know your local sheriff? _____
- a. Bonus: Have you met with the sheriff regularly? _____
14. Do you know the District Attorney/prosecutor? _____
15. Do you know at least one of your judges? _____
16. Have you ever visited with the Editorial Board of your newspaper? _____

Scoring: Give yourself 1 point for each "yes" answer.

Total _____

Bonus _____

Grand Total _____

A legislative wonk: 16 or above

A legislative expert: 12-15

A legislative advocate: 9-11

A legislative novice: 6-8

A legislative beginner: Less than 6

Lobbying

Nonprofits can *and should* lobby²

It is perfectly legal for 501(c)(3) organizations to lobby for legislation that benefits the individuals they serve. The IRS suggests that nonprofits “elect” to come under the **1976 Lobby Law** that governs nonprofit lobbying. To do so, your governing body must vote to come under the provisions of the law and file the one-page IRS Form 5768. The Lobby Law provides clear and generous instructions on how much lobbying is allowed as well as what lobbying is. Nonprofits that do not elect to come under the law are at a greater risk of not being in compliance with IRS regulations.

Direct Lobbying

Any attempt to influence ***specific legislation*** by communicating with **legislators** or **government officials** that participate in the making of laws. Examples of direct lobbying include visiting a legislator to discuss a particular bill or contacting a legislator to ask him/her to support a bill. The key element of lobbying is mentioning or discussing specific bills or pieces of legislation. If you are not talking about specific legislation, you are not lobbying

Grassroots Lobbying

Any attempt to influence ***specific legislation*** by trying to affect the opinions and actions of the **general public**. Examples of grassroots lobbying include requesting in a newsletter that readers contact their legislator to ask for more funding for domestic violence programs or giving a television interview and stating your organization’s support for a particular bill. Again, if you mention your position on a specific bill, or urge readers/viewers to act, you are lobbying. It is important to note that you are **only lobbying when there is an expenditure of funds**. Of course, your time is an expenditure if you are on the clock.

² Adapted from the Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest *The Non-Profit Lobbying Guide 2nd Edition* 1999.
<http://www.clpi.org/images/pdf/nonprofitlobbyingguide.pdf>

The following table shows how much nonprofits can spend on lobbying under the 1976 Lobby Law:

Annual Exempt-Purpose Expenditures	Total Direct Lobbying Expenditures Available	Total Grassroots Lobbying Expenditures Allowable
Up to \$500,000	20% of exempt-purpose expenditures up to \$100,000	One-quarter of the total direct lobbying expenditure ceiling
\$500,000-\$1 million	\$100,000 + 15% of excess over \$500,000	\$25,000 + 3.75% of excess over \$500,000
\$1 million-\$1.5 million	\$175,000 + 10% of excess over \$1 million	\$43,750 + 2.5% of excess over \$1 million
\$1.5 million-\$17 million	\$225,000 + 5% of excess over \$1.5 million	\$56,250 + 1.25% of excess over \$1.5 million
Over \$17 million	\$1 million	\$250,000

Your organization is not lobbying when:

- You communicate with the public, legislators or others about broad social issues requiring legislative solutions, so long as you don't mention specific legislation or ask them to take action.
- You are a membership organization and you communicate with your members about specific legislation without urging them to take action (i.e. *NNADV Legislative Update* is not considered lobbying because we do not encourage readers to take action based on the information provided.)
- Volunteers are lobbying (because no money is being spent).
- You communicate with elected officials about regulations.
- You are testifying before a legislative committee at the request of the committee (not a single legislator).
- You are lobbying legislators about matters that affect your organization's existence, powers, tax exempt status, etc.
- You conduct research on legislation, so long as the research contains a full and fair analysis of the facts.

Some Areas of Caution

Elections

Nonprofits should be careful when participating in political campaigns. 501 (c)(3)'s cannot endorse or contribute money to political candidates. Nonprofits can sponsor debates, conduct candidate surveys, as long as all candidates are included and no favoritism is shown to a particular candidate.

On the Federal or State Dime

In general, a person cannot engage in lobbying if his/her time is being paid by a federal or state grant. This means you cannot lobby legislators, attend legislative events or analyze legislation while billing your time to a federal or state grant. There are some exceptions to this. If the grant specifically authorizes you to engage in certain activities (i.e. analyze legislation, develop materials to support public policy), then you may do so. Most of the time however, time spent lobbying will need to be supported by unrestricted funds, donations or other fundraising revenue. As a last resort, you can take a day off or use your lunch hour to participate in lobbying efforts.

Top Ten Tips for Advocacy³

So now, that you are convinced that domestic violence advocacy is important, what is the next step? Beyond knowing that domestic violence advocacy is important, how do you learn the basics of being an effective advocate? The following list provides a general guideline to keep in mind as we learn more about the legislative process and how to get involved.

1. **Get to know legislators well**- their districts and constituencies, voting records, personal schedules for when they are in the capital and when they are home in the district, opinions, expertise, and interests. Be sure to have a good understanding of the legislator and his/her concerns, priorities and perspectives.
2. **Establish a relationship** by contacting your policy-makers before you have an issue to be addressed. Pique the interest of the policy-maker in the issue, so that when you have a need you will get the policy-makers attention.
3. **Acquaint yourself with the staff members** of the legislators, committees and resource officials with whom you will be working. These people are essential sources of information and opinion for the policy-maker and can have significant influence in the development of policy.
4. **Learn the legislative process** and understand it well. Keep on top of the issues and be aware of controversial and contentious areas.
5. **Identify fellow advocates and partners** in the domestic violence community and beyond with whom you can partner. Finding common ground on an issue sometimes brings together strange bedfellows but makes for a stronger coalition.

³ Adapted from the American Public Health Association, <http://www.apha.org/NR/rdonlyres/B333E66A-5E83-408B-9871-9808EFAA209D/0/TopTenRulesofAdvocacy.pdf>

Foster and strengthen relationships with allies and work with legislators who are flexible and tend to keep an open mind.

6. **Be open to negotiation.** Identify the groups and other legislators with whom you may need to negotiate for changes in legislation. Do not dismiss anyone because of previous disagreements or because you lack a history of working together. Remember, “Yesterday’s opponent may be today’s ally.”
7. **Be polite, remember names, and thank those who help you-** both in the legislature and in the domestic violence advocacy community.
8. **Be honest, straightforward, and realistic** when working with legislators and their staff. Do not make promises you cannot keep. Never lie or mislead a legislator about the importance of an issue, the opposition’s position or strength, or other matters.
9. **Timing is everything** for successful participation in the legislative process. The earlier in the process that you involve yourself, the better chance you have at influencing the outcome of legislation or a policy proposal.
10. **Be sure to follow up with legislators and their staff.** Send a thank-you letter, which is also a useful tool to remind policy-makers and their staff of your visit and the issues. If you offer your assistance or promise to provide additional information, do so in a timely and professional manner. Be a reliable resource for them today and in the future.

Building Relationships with Legislators

Communicating Your Message⁴

Patience and persistence are the primary characteristics of good legislative advocates. Building relationships and credibility are key and can be accomplished with time and effort by following these do's and don'ts:

Do . . .

- Know your issue. Do your homework!
- Develop a good relationship with your legislators and their staff.
- Treat your legislator with dignity and respect. The interaction will be mutual.
- Work with your legislator's staff. Staff do research, draft bills, make recommendations, and develop expertise in specific areas. They can be great allies.
- Develop strong grassroots support. The more people there are advocating your position, the more impact you'll have. Involve your friends. Spread the news!

Don't...

- Don't be rude, offensive, or argumentative.
- Don't give an ultimatum. Learn to accept rejection without having it destroy a relationship.
- Don't expect to change a legislator's mind immediately.
- Don't get frustrated. You can't expect a victory overnight.

⁴ Adapted from the Minnesota Legislature Website Frequently Asked Questions
<http://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/faq/faqtoc.aspx?id=47>

How do I contact my legislator? How do I let a Representative or Senator know how I feel about an issue?

There are a variety of ways to contact legislators and express your opinion on an issue. In this section we will cover telephone calls, email, letters, direct testimony and invitations to events. There is no 'best' way - each one lends itself to a particular type of information sharing. Following is an overview of each strategy with suggestions and sample scripts.

Phone Calls

Phone calls are most effective when time is short. Also, phone calls can be used immediately following a favorable vote to express your appreciation for the support.

When you make your phone call, keep the following points in mind:

- Take a personal, thoughtful approach to explain why you are calling.
- Identify yourself as a constituent and ask to speak to your legislator. If he/she is unavailable, take the time to talk with a staff member. If you have met with the legislator or a staff member, remind them of the contact.
- Make a phone appointment with your legislator so you can make sure that he/she will be available at an appointed time.
- Identify the specific issue you are talking about. If it is a bill, refer to it by number.
- Briefly state your position about the issue and tell your legislator you would like his/her support through a vote.
- Ask your legislator's view on the issue at hand.
- Offer to provide information about your issue so your legislator can make an informed decision.
- If your legislator is unsure about his/her support, offer to visit in person or share additional information.
- Leave your telephone number for future contact.
- Express your appreciation for the time the staff or your legislator spends with you.

- Phone calls are most effective when made within a week of the issue being heard in committee. Another effective time for calling is immediately before your issue goes before the entire legislative body.
- Personal phone calls are much more effective than a “blitz” of organized, generic phone campaigns.
- Pick up the phone. Tell your story. Share the facts. Answer questions. You’ll make a difference!

Sample Script for Phoning a Policymaker

Hi. I am Susan Voter calling for Representative John Smith. I live at 123 Green Valley Circle in your district. (If you reach Representative Smith, ask if this is a good time to talk. If not, ask him when you can call back.)

If you get the machine, leave a message:

I am calling to urge your support of SB66. This bill authorizes the Attorney General's Office to organize a statewide multi-disciplinary team to review the deaths of domestic violence victims. It also expands the authority of the courts and local agencies to organize such teams. These death review teams will only review adjudicated cases and make recommendations as to how to better respond to and prevent domestic homicides.

Again, I urge your support of SB 66. If you have any questions or comments, please call me back at 555-5555. Thank you for your time and for your public service.

E-mail

E-mail is a quick and efficient way to communicate with your legislators. Be careful with your form and structure. Be careful with your spelling and formality. You are still making an impression and you want it to be credible. Here are some tips for sending effective e-mails:

- Legislators get hundreds of emails. Make sure your subject line lets the legislator know the contents of the email. Example, Support SB 66
- Put your name and address at the top of your message to show that you are a constituent.

- Make your message personal by sharing your experiences, feelings, and beliefs about your specific issue. This information “humanizes” the issue and illustrates the potential impacts.
- Be brief and share only the strongest points regarding your issue. Limit these points to two or three short paragraphs.
- State your request plainly, “I would like your support on SB 66.”
- Send your message when the legislation is being considered. Timing is everything!
- Be respectful and don’t threaten or be argumentative in your e-mail.
- Do not send attachments; offer to send support information if it is requested.
- Don’t become “Spam.” Do not send repeated e-mails every day. Your message will be lost and your credibility damaged.
- Don’t send a copy of your message to everyone in Congress. This mass “cc” undermines the direct link you are trying to establish with your legislator.
- Take a break before you press “send,” and proof your message.
- Thank your legislator for reading the e-mail and ask for a response and commitment.

Sample E-mail to a Policymaker

To:

From:

Subject: Support SB 66

Hi. I am Susan Voter writing to Representative John Smith. I live at 123 Green Valley Circle in your district.

I am writing to urge your support of SB66. This bill authorizes the Attorney General’s Office to organize a statewide multi-disciplinary team to review the deaths of domestic violence victims. It also expands the authority of the courts and local agencies to organize such teams. These death review teams will only review adjudicated cases and make recommendations as to how to better respond to and prevent domestic homicides.

Again, I urge your support of SB 66. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me via my email address. Thank you for your time and for your public service.

Writing Letters

An important way to get a legislator's attention is with a short, well-reasoned letter. Writing a letter to your legislator does not have to be a chore. You are taking a stand and advocating your position. By writing to your legislator, you are engaging in your political system. Your voice is being heard.

- **Identify yourself as a Constituent** —Put your name and complete address on both the envelope and the letter. It's important to identify yourself as a constituent so your legislator will know you live in his/her district. Additionally, it will make it easier for your legislators to contact you with questions if they want more information. Do not use postcards!
- **Use Proper Salutations** —address your legislator as "The Honorable." Also, be sure to use their correct title, e.g. Representative, Assembly Member. Use "The Honorable" in the address and the office title in the salutation (Dear Representative Smith).
- **Make an Outline** —List the points you want to make so you can keep your letter focused and well-organized.
- **Keep It Short and Simple** —Keep the length of your letter to two pages at the most. In the first paragraph, state your purpose and what you want. Don't get into an extensive explanation or argument. Stick to your main point. Refer to the issues specifically or by bill number, if possible.
- **State Your Position**—Make your position and/or request clear in both your opening and closing paragraphs. Be specific. State what action you want. If you want to advance a piece of legislation, say so. If you want support on a particular issue, request it.
- **Offer specific information on why it is important.** If you would like a response to your letter, request a reply.

- **Personalize Your Message** —a personal letter is much more effective than a form letter. Persuasive constituent mail humanizes issues by placing them in a local, personal context. Share your personal story to illustrate your point and position.
- **Be Polite** —End your letter with a statement of appreciation for consideration of your position. This will help build your long-term relationship with legislators and their staff. Send them a follow-up letter after the vote to either thank them for their time and support or let them know you are aware of their voting records. Everyone responds better to praise instead of criticism. Threats and ultimatums do not convince a legislator to adopt a position. Be polite even in the face of initial defeat. Take a step back, find a new approach, and try again!
- **Do Not Enclose Additional Material** —Additional reports or articles are rarely read or filed. If you have a good resource, simply mention it in your letter and offer to send a copy upon request. Don't overwhelm the office with paper or you run the risk of your letter being discarded along with the mass of additional material.
- **Do Not Exaggerate or Lie** —Stick to your facts and experiences. Exaggeration undermines your credibility. Many legislators and staff become adept at spotting a tall tale. Be a source of reliable information.
- **Make Your Message Timely**—Don't procrastinate. Timing is critical. If your letter arrives too early, it may be forgotten before the vote. If it arrives too late, it will be ineffective. Be aware of the legislative process and time your letter accordingly.
- **Keep a Copy** —Keep a copy of your letter for your own records. Note the date you sent the letter so you can estimate the reply, if requested.
- **Keep It Neat** —Type your letter or have someone type it for you. If you cannot send a typed letter, write legibly.
- **Use plain paper** —Save your fancy stationery for your friends. Write your letter in business style on plain paper. If you need a reminder about business letter formats, there are numerous books in your library or on the internet that show you how to create a letter in business style.
-

Sample Letter Supporting Legislation

The Honorable John Smith
c/o Nevada Senate
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701-4747

Dear Senator Smith:

I am writing to urge your support of SB 66, which authorizes the Attorney General's Office to organize a statewide multi-disciplinary team to review the deaths of domestic violence victims. This bill is part an ongoing effort to improve Nevada's response to domestic violence, as this state repeatedly is in the top five states for domestic homicides. It also expands the existing authority of a court or local agency to organize such teams. These teams will only review adjudicated cases and make decisions as how to better respond to and prevent these social catastrophes in our communities. Your consideration and support will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Susan Voter

123 Green Valley Lane

Reno, NV 89510

(775) 555.5555

svoter@yahoo.com

Testifying Before the Legislature

When you speak before a group of government officials who are conducting a public hearing on a proposed law or a government policy, your remarks are called “*testimony*.” These hearings, often required by law, are opportunities for individuals to tell whether they are “for” or “against” a bill or a policy. Officials may not always want to hear what you have to say, but you always have a right to be heard at an official public hearing.

It’s important to know that, and to take advantage of it. When you testify — whether it is in a formal hearing, a face-to-face meeting or another type of public forum — follow these general rules:

- Be brief and to the point — so you keep the officials interested in what you have to say. Try not to repeat what others have already said.
- Face the group (committee) of officials when you speak, and begin by identifying yourself. Tell whom you represent, what your organization does, what it stands for, the number of members it has, what other group it is affiliated with, i.e. MCADV.
- Give a clear statement of your position on the issue: “*We are opposed to this bill and urge you to vote against it.*” Then state the reasons for your position.
- Don’t try to be more of an expert than you are — just give your own reasons for your position, in your own words. Your sincerity is a valuable asset.
- If possible, give examples to support your position. If you have case histories, statistical data, etc., give it to the committee in written form and summarize it orally. Be careful to provide a limited amount of paper: three pages, if possible.
- *Don’t ever read your whole statement!* Use notes, an outline, or whatever you need. Eye contact with the persons you’re addressing is very important.
- End your remarks by thanking the committee and offering to answer any questions the members have.
- Dress neatly; appearance is important to some. But dress comfortably, so you can relax and *be yourself*.

- Legislative committees will accept written testimony when an interested person or group can't be present to testify in person. However, unless the chairman or a committee member asks for and uses this written statement, it will receive little attention.

Sample Testimony

April 28, 2011

Chair William Horne

Assembly Judiciary Committee

Nevada State Assembly

Legislative Building

Carson City, NV 89701

Chair Horne and Members of the Committee;

My name is Susan Voter. I am the Executive Director of the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence (NNADV), the statewide coalition of domestic violence programs in Nevada. I am here to speak in support of SB 66 which allows the Nevada Attorney General's Office to convene fatality review teams to review domestic violence homicides.

Since 1995 the NNADV has been collecting information about domestic violence homicides in Nevada. I have attached our list for 2009. It is an unscientific process. We have volunteers who review newspaper clippings and pull information about domestic homicides. We began this process in 1995 to create the Nevada Silent Witness Project and have continued it until today. These accounts provide only a snapshot of the end of a life. Fatality review seeks to examine the totality of the

relationship and identify what could have been done differently to prevent this deadly outcome.

Nineteen states, including Nevada have statutes convening fatality review teams for domestic violence. In some states those teams are based solely in communities, in other states they are entirely a statewide effort and in other states it is a combination of the two. While Washoe County has had a team for many years and Clark County is working to reconstitute their team, rural communities may find it difficult to sustain a team over time. This bill would provide an option for a state team to conduct reviews in communities that don't have a standing team or to be a resource for those who do.

We know that Nevada ranks high (per capita) in the number of women killed by men using handguns. You have the stories of the 19 individuals killed in 2009 as a result of domestic violence and the 5 individuals who subsequently took their own lives. The goal of this bill is to create a process to better understand why these murders and suicides occur and to develop or improve processes that will prevent these tragedies.

I appreciate your attention to my testimony and would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

How to plan a tour of your facility⁵

One more way to engage policymakers through direct contact is to invite them to visit your program or to attend an event. Legislators and other elected officials want to meet and hear from their constituents, and learn about organizations that help their constituents. In-person visits can help forge strong relationships with your program and build their understanding of victim services. If you will be taking a tour of the shelter make all participants are aware of your confidentiality policy and have a have signed confidentiality agreements before the tour.

However, they are very busy people, so it is crucial to make the most of the time you have with them. The following guidelines will help you do just that:

Step 1: Pick a Date

- Begin your planning at least three months in advance.
- Choose a date that does not conflict with the schedules of persons to be invited. For instance, if state legislators are the target audience, do not schedule your event from January to May when the Nevada Legislature is in session. Find out when your Federal representatives have recesses.
- Choose a time of day that is convenient and offers interesting interactions between guests and your facility or program.
- Consider offering a meal or refreshments in conjunction with your event. For example, early morning meetings that offer coffee and a light breakfast are popular and often fit into people's busy schedules.

Step 2: Determine Invitation List

- Research the people you want to invite. Who are the state senator and state representative for the district in which the facility is located? What audience are you seeking to educate? You may wish to invite an assortment of federal, state

⁵ Adapted from "How to host a tour of your facilities" by the Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

and local officials. Contact information and scheduling protocols can usually be found on websites.

- In addition to elected officials and policymakers, consider inviting opinion leaders from the community, prominent donors or board members for your organization, and representatives of local news media outlets.
- Create a database from which you can generate mailing labels and track responses.

Step 3: Plan the Program for your Tour or Event

- What do you want people to see? What is it that will be interesting to guests?
- Who is the best spokesperson for the programs or activities that participants will be shown? Would it be appropriate for a customer or client to be included?
- What preparations are required? For instance, if guests are invited to observe programming or service delivery, should employees or clients be notified and prepared in advance? Are there legal issues or privacy issues to consider?
- Are there logistical concerns? Do guests need to travel to another location, such as a separate building on a campus? Could inclement weather create complications? Plan ahead to minimize challenges.
- Consider the amount of time it will take to welcome guests, introduce staff and leaders, tour the facility and regroup for questions and answers, and possible refreshments. From start to finish your tour should last 60-90 minutes. Longer tours are possible, but create scheduling challenges for some of the persons you might invite.

Step 4: Create and Distribute Invitations

- Include all pertinent information on your invitation, including directions and parking information. Indicate the nature of the tour or the persons that will be speaking to create interest in the event. Also indicate if meals or refreshments will be provided.

- Include a rough schedule of events on the invitation so participants may plan to attend a portion of the event. For instance, if coffee and rolls precede the tour, indicating the time the tour begins may encourage some guests to attend even if they must arrive late or leave early. A rough schedule also indicates the end time of the tour so guests can see the time commitment involved.
- Mail invitations to guests at least 5 or 6 weeks prior to the date.
- Follow-up your invitation a few days later with a phone message. Mention the names of any confirmed attendees to create additional interest.

Step 5: Prepare Written Materials

- Determine the documents and materials that will be given to guests. Including copies of publications or marketing materials adds variety to a packet of written materials. You may want to include a token gift such as a note pad.
- Fact sheets on issues of concern or statistics about your program or facility may be useful to the elected officials.
- Collate the documents into a packet for each guest to take with them.
- Include titles and contact information for the employees or spokespersons they met during the tour.

Step 6: Rehearse Roles of All Participants

- You may wish to have a different person welcome the guests than the person that leads the tour. Each person's role should be clearly outlined and they should be aware of time constraints for each portion of the tour.
- Determine the time limits for each portion of the tour. Assign someone the responsibility to be timekeeper to ensure the tour ends on time.
- Develop talking points or scripts for each presenter.
- Plan in advance who will respond to anticipated questions.

Step 7: Make Reminder Calls Prior to the Date of the Tour

- Personal calls and voice mail messages should be made about a week prior to the event. Remind the invited guests that they indicated they would attend and you are looking forward to hosting them.
- Dropping names of confirmed attendees may create additional interest in attending. “Well, if Senator So-and-So is attending, I need to be there, too.”

Step 8: Follow-Up your Event with Thank You notes

- Send a thank you card to each participant. Include the business card of a contact person should they have any questions.
- Send the packet of written materials to anyone that planned to attend but did not show up for the event. Express understanding for their busy schedule and your availability to host them on another date or answer any questions that they have.

Step 9: Stay in Touch

- Remind the participants in all future communications that you met during their tour of your facility. This adds context and credibility to all future communications you have with elected officials that toured your facility.
- Add participants to your mailing list for newsletters or publications. They cared enough to tour your facility; keep them updated on your operations and issues.

(Adapted from “How to host a tour of your facilities” by Mendez, Steadman & Associates.)

Appendix A

Informative Web Sites

- **To listen or view a legislative meeting via computer:**

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/MeetingDisplay/AudioVideo/>

- **To look a bill from last session, watch testimony, see exhibits submitted for the bill:**

<https://nelis.leg.state.nv.us/76th2011>

- **To find a lobbyist or an organization who has a lobbyist:**

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/AppCF/lobbyist/>

- **Contact information on Legislators**

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Assembly/Current/Assembly/alist.cfm>

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Senate/Current/Senators/slist.cfm>

- **To find out who your legislator is:**

<http://mapserve.leg.state.nv.us/website/lcb/viewer.htm>

- **To sign up to receive information on a committee:**

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/ICSubscriber/A/Default.aspx>

- **Frequently asked questions:**

<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Library/FAQ/FAQ.cfm>

Appendix B

Nevada Legislative Introduction

The Nevada Legislature meets on a biennial basis (every two years) and is one of only six states with legislatures on this schedule. The Legislature is composed of a 42 member Assembly and a 21 member Senate. During biennial regular sessions, which are limited to 120 days, the Legislature must work on proposed new laws and regulations, deal with proposed changes to existing statutes, and adopt a budget for the next two years. Every 10 years after the federal census, the Nevada Constitution requires the Legislature to reapportion district boundaries to reflect population changes.

Nevada Assembly and Senate

The total number of members in the Nevada Legislature, and the relationship of those numbers to each other, is defined by the Nevada Constitution. The Senate must be at least one third but no more than one half the size of the Assembly. The total number, however, can be set by the Legislature up to the constitutional limit of 75. As of 2011, there were 42 Assembly members and 21 Senate members. Most of these legislators represent districts in Clark County (Las Vegas), where the majority of Nevada's population is concentrated. Washoe County (Reno and vicinity) is the other area in Nevada with an urban concentration and several representatives in the Nevada Legislature. The few remaining legislators represent rural residents spread across the vast open spaces of Nevada.

Regular Sessions of the Nevada Legislature

The Nevada Legislature meets on a biennial (every two years) basis during odd-numbered years. Regular sessions begin on the first Monday in February and, since 1988, are constitutionally limited to 120 days. Only six states have biennial legislatures.

Adopting a state budget for the next two years is one of the top priorities of each Legislative session. The Governor is required to submit his or her budget proposal to the Legislature at least two weeks before the beginning of the session.

Special Sessions of the Nevada Legislature

Special sessions of the Legislature (sessions outside the 120 day regular session period) may be called by the Governor. Special sessions can deal with any state government concerns, but have increasingly been called due to budget issues. The Governor controls the special session agenda and must state the specific purpose for the session. During special sessions, the Legislature may only act on the subjects for which the session was convened.

Terms of Office

All Assembly members are elected to two-year terms at the general election in even-numbered years. Members of the Senate serve four-year terms. Senators are elected in alternate years, with 10 being elected in one general election and 11 in the next. Term limits came into effect with the 2010 election - members of the Legislature can only serve 12 years in either house. However, those termed out in one chamber can seek election to the other if they have not served there before or have yet to reach the term limit for service in that chamber.

Legislative Council Bureau

The Legislative Council Bureau provides staff support to the Legislature through several divisions - fiscal, legal, research, audit, and administrative. The Bureau is non-partisan and is supervised by a Legislative Commission composed of six members from each house of the Legislature.

Interim Committees of the Nevada Legislature

Between regular sessions, a number of interim committees work on issues and make recommendations for the next legislative session. Interim committees may hold public hearings, engage in research, and debate possible legislation for the upcoming session.

The Citizen's Guide to Interim Committees of the Nevada Legislature provides a good overview of these committees and what they have to do with lawmaking in Nevada.

Nevada Legislature Live Online Broadcasts

The Nevada Legislature provides live broadcasts of various meetings and proceedings. To find out what is playing and when, go to the Live Broadcasts page and follow the viewing directions.

Appendix C

Nevada Legislative Process⁶

Nevada Legislative Process – Making Law 101

Passing a bill in the Nevada Legislature may seem at first blush an easy feat, in reality it is a laborious process and a bill can endure many twists and turns before reaching the Governor's office waiting to be signed into law.

Initial Steps by the Author

Idea: Sources of ideas for legislation include state agencies, local governments, elected officials, businesses, lobbyists, organizations and citizens.

Drafting: Requests for drafting may be made by the Governor, legislators, legislative committees, state agencies and local governments. A staff attorney for the Legislature prepares a formal draft of a bill.

Introduction and First Reading: A bill is submitted for introduction by an individual legislator or committee chairman. The bill is then numbered, read for the first time, referred to the committee and printed. A bill or resolution may be introduced in either the Senate or the Assembly and cosponsors in the other house may be listed on the front of the measure. A bill however must begin in the sponsoring legislator or chairman's house of origin.

Action in the House of Origin

Committee: A committee holds a hearing to take testimony and gather information about the bill. The committee may recommend that the House pass a bill as it is written, pass it with amendments or not pass it at all. If members of a committee feel a bill requires further committee consideration, it may recommend that the legislative house amend the bill and re-refer it to the same committee or that it re-refer the bill to a different committee. Finally, a committee may vote to indefinitely postpone consideration of a bill, in effect killing the bill, or it may take no action at all. After committee reports are read, bills are placed on second reading for the next legislative day unless the committee recommends the bill be placed on a Consent Calendar. This action is limited to certain, non-controversial bills reported out of committee with no amendments

⁶ Adapted from NEVADA'S LEGISLATIVE PROCESS. Legislative Counsel Bureau
<http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/LegManual/2011/AppC.pdf>

Second Reading before the Full House: A bill given a “Do Pass” recommendation is read a second time before the House and placed on the General File for debate and vote. A bill that is given an “Amend and Due Pass” recommendation is read a second time, amended and reprinted before being placed on the General File for action.

Floor Debate and Vote by the Full House: Bills are read a third time and debated. A roll-call vote follows. For passage of a measure that requires a constitutional majority, 11 votes are needed in the Senate and 22 in the Assembly. The passage of a measure that imposes or increases a tax or fee requires a two-thirds majority or 14 votes in the Senate or 28 votes in the Assembly. A measure that does not receive at least the required number of votes is defeated. Any member who votes against a measure that is defeated may serve notice of reconsideration to request a second vote. All bills that are passed by the first legislative house are then forwarded to the second legislative house where the process begins again.

Action in the Second House

First Reading: The bill is read for the first time and referred to committee.

Committee: Procedures and possible actions are identical to those in the first legislative house, or house of origin.

Second Reading Before the Full House: If passed by the committee, the bill is read a second time and placed on the daily file, or agenda, for debate and vote.

Floor Debate and Vote by the Full House: The procedure is identical to that in the first legislative house. If the second legislative house considers and passes a bill without amendment, it is returned to the first legislative house for enrollment and transmittal to the Governor. Resolutions that are passed are routed to the Secretary of State*. If the second legislative house amends a measure, it is returned to the house of origin for consideration of amendments.

Resolution of Differences as Necessary

Consideration of Amendments: The house of origin decides whether to accept the second legislative house’s amendments. If the house of origin accepts the amendments, the bill goes to the Governor. If the amendment is rejected, the bill is returned to the second legislative house for a decision whether to withdraw the proposed changes. If the second legislative house does not recede, the bill is referred to a two-house conference committee.

Conference: After meeting, the conference committee attempts to reconcile the differences and presents its recommendation in the form of a conference report and both legislative houses vote on the report. If both legislative houses accept the report, the bill goes to the Governor. If either legislative house rejects the report, a second and final conference committee may be appointed. The bill dies if the members of the second conference committee fail to agree.

Role of the Governor

Generally, the Governor must act on a bill within five days of receiving it if the Legislature is still in session, not including Sundays. However, if there are fewer than five days remaining in session, or if the bill is delivered after the adjournment or sine die, the Governor has 10 days to act following sine die. The Governor may sign the bill into law, allow it to become law without signature or veto it. A vetoed bill returns to the house of origin for a possible vote of overriding the veto. An override requires a two-thirds majority vote of both legislative houses. If the Governor vetoes a bill following sine die, it returns to the next legislative session. Measures become effective on October 1 following sine die, unless otherwise specified in the bill.

*The process for a resolution varies slightly depending upon whether it is a simple, concurrent or joint resolution. Deadlines for final action on bills and resolutions by committee and house are typically established by rule at the beginning of session.