

SWCD Training Program | *January 2011*

Module 10: Legislative Process Training



Effective Legislative Relations

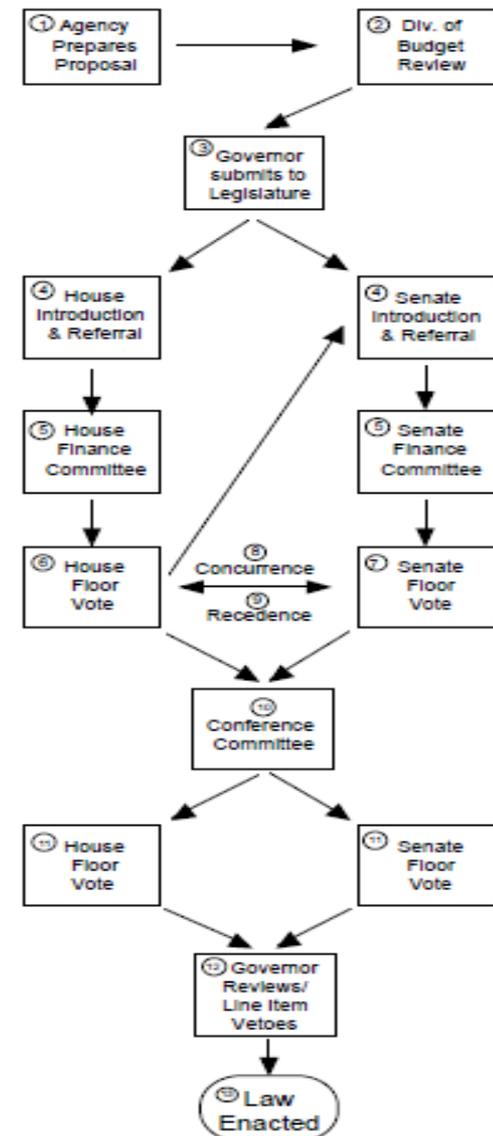
Establishing and maintaining quality working relationships with your elected officials is not difficult, but it is extremely important. For you to have an effective dialogue and the ability to influence legislation, policy and funding, your elected officials need to know you on a first-name basis. It is important to communicate effectively, have credibility, and build trust with elected officials. Be open, honest, and ALWAYS keep your word.



State & Federal Bills & Budget Passage Flowchart

- 1) State agencies prepare their budgets during the late summer and fall of each year and submit them to the Governor's Office of Budget Review during October.
- 2) The Governor's Office of Budget Review checks agency requests for accuracy and format and prepares recommendations to the Governor.
- 3) The Governor reviews, sets budget amounts and submits the appropriation bill and budget documents to the Legislature by December 15.
- 4) The House and Senate Rules Committees introduce companion bills (HB & SB), which receive their first reading and are referred to House and Senate Finance Committees respectively.
- 5) Typically, the House acts on the bill first and submits their version to the Senate, but work in House and Senate Finance Committees begin simultaneously. Subcommittees work on the budgets for each department and submit recommendations to the full Finance Committees. The full House Finance Committee finalizes the budget for each Department and moves a Committee Substitute bill out of committee.
- 6) The bill goes to the floor of the House in second reading and can be amended at this point. Then the bill is moved to third reading, voted on, and sent to the Senate.
- 7) The Senate Finance Committee completes their work and sends their own Committee Substitute to the floor of the Senate, where it can be amended and then voted on.
- 8) The Senate version is sent back to the House for concurrence. Typically, the House does not concur, but asks the Senate to recede from their amendments.
- 9) Typically, the Senate does not recede, and a conference committee is appointed.
- 10) The Conference Committee works out a compromise version of the budget.
- 11) The House and Senate approve the Conference Committee Substitute and send it to the Governor.
- 12) The Governor has 20 working days (excluding Sundays) to review the bill after he receives it and exercise his line item veto power, if he wishes to do so.
- 13) The bill becomes law and is effective with the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1.

Highlights of the Operating Budget Process



Lobbying Restrictions For Board & Staff

- Per Alaska Statute, "lobbyist" means a person who
 - (A) is employed and receives payments, or who contracts for economic consideration, including reimbursement for reasonable travel and living expenses, to communicate directly or through the person's agents with any public official for the purpose of influencing legislation or administrative action for more than 10 hours in any 30-day period in one calendar year; or
 - (B) represents oneself as engaging in the influencing of legislative or administrative action as a business, occupation, or profession;
- Section 24.45.161(a)(2) of Alaska Statutes (Regulation of Lobbying) provides an exemption for State entities if acting in an official capacity or within the scope of employment.