



14 Reasons Why Legislation Fails

By
Corky Kyle, CAE, MPA
President
The Kyle Group

1

Not Doing The Research. Time and time again clients ask me why did this work or why didn't they make it through committee with regards to their legislation. And time after time I ask them "did you do your research". They look at me with surprise and say "What research?" Part of your planning is to do all the research that you can do on the issue. How many times has this legislation been attempted, who offered it, who opposed it, why didn't the legislature support it? Was it in an election year or an off year. Who were the sponsors, what committee was it sent to. All of these issues need to be studied and addressed before beginning your legislative journey.

2

Not Having The Support of the Association. The association must be supportive of the legislation. If the issue is not significant to the Board of Directors, what makes you think that the membership will support the association's legislation. Without support of the leadership the legislation will go nowhere.

3

The legislation is not timely. The legislation must be appropriate for the session. It must be current and reflective of an issue that is of serious importance to the body as well as the industry. If there is no perceived threat, hard or good the legislation will go nowhere.

4

No legislative plan in place. Running legislation requires planning and commitment. Without a plan, how are issues to be determined? Where will accountability reside? How will success be measured? Who will be responsible for what? Who is the opposition. How will the lobbyist interact with the committee? These and many other questions need to be asked and approximate responses created.

5

Legislative Budget is inappropriate. Understanding the key components of the legislative campaign will determine the budget. Too many times I have seen associations or businesses nickel and dime their legislative campaign without obtaining their objective. Without understanding the real costs the program will not be successful.

6

Not using a lobbying professional. The legislative process is very complicated. It requires knowledge of the rules of the body as well as, having established relationships with leadership, committee chairs, and staff. Going it alone will lengthen the time it takes to get things done and there will be lots of trial and error before beginning to make any progress. To maximize your results you want a professional working with you.

7

Using the wrong sponsor. Finding the right sponsors for your legislation is critical toward its successful passage. You want sponsors that are committed to your issue, who are ready to go to leadership to help the bills committee assignment, scheduling, and eventual passage from one house to another. The sponsor must believe in the issue to gain their commitment. Without commitment there is no passage.

8

No leadership support. With any attempt to pass legislation it is very important to discuss your issue with the leadership of both houses in advance of the bill being introduced. Your job is to minimize conflict and bring in everyone early to discuss your legislation will help reduce the likelihood of it not passing.

9

Not knowing your opposition. This is critical toward eliminating obstacles that will prevent the passage of your legislation. Doing the opposition research will help you form your message when discussing your legislation. You will be able to counter their arguments and strengthen the validity of why your legislation should pass.

10

Not paying attention to deadlines.