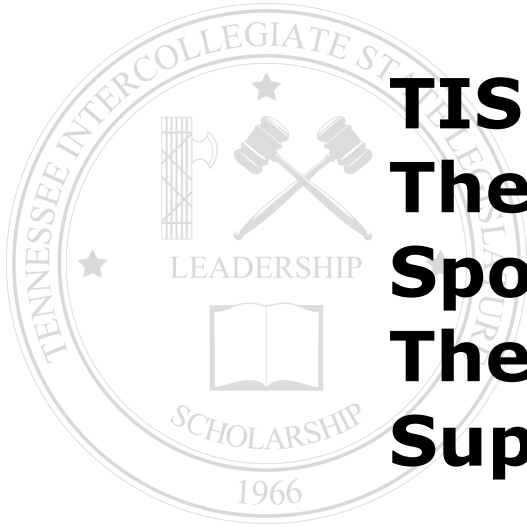




# LOBBYING HANDBOOK



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# TISL

Tennessee Intercollegiate  
State Legislature

## LOBBYING HANDBOOK 2018

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## LOBBYING LEADERSHIP

### Lobbying Director

Hailey Roberson, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro

### CEOs

**Diversity & Disability Coalition**

Megan Waddell, Maryville College, Maryville

**Organized Labor**

Christian Gay, Motlow State Community College, Lynchburg

**Tennessee Business**

John Hayes, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro

**Tennessee Gun Association**

Katrina Miles, Roane State Community College, Huntsville

**Tennessee Health Care**

**Professionals**

Jacie Womack, Trevecca Nazarene University, Nashville

**Tennessee Law Enforcement**

Hannah Clarneau, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro

**Tennessee Teachers**

Caroline Koch, Rhodes College, Memphis



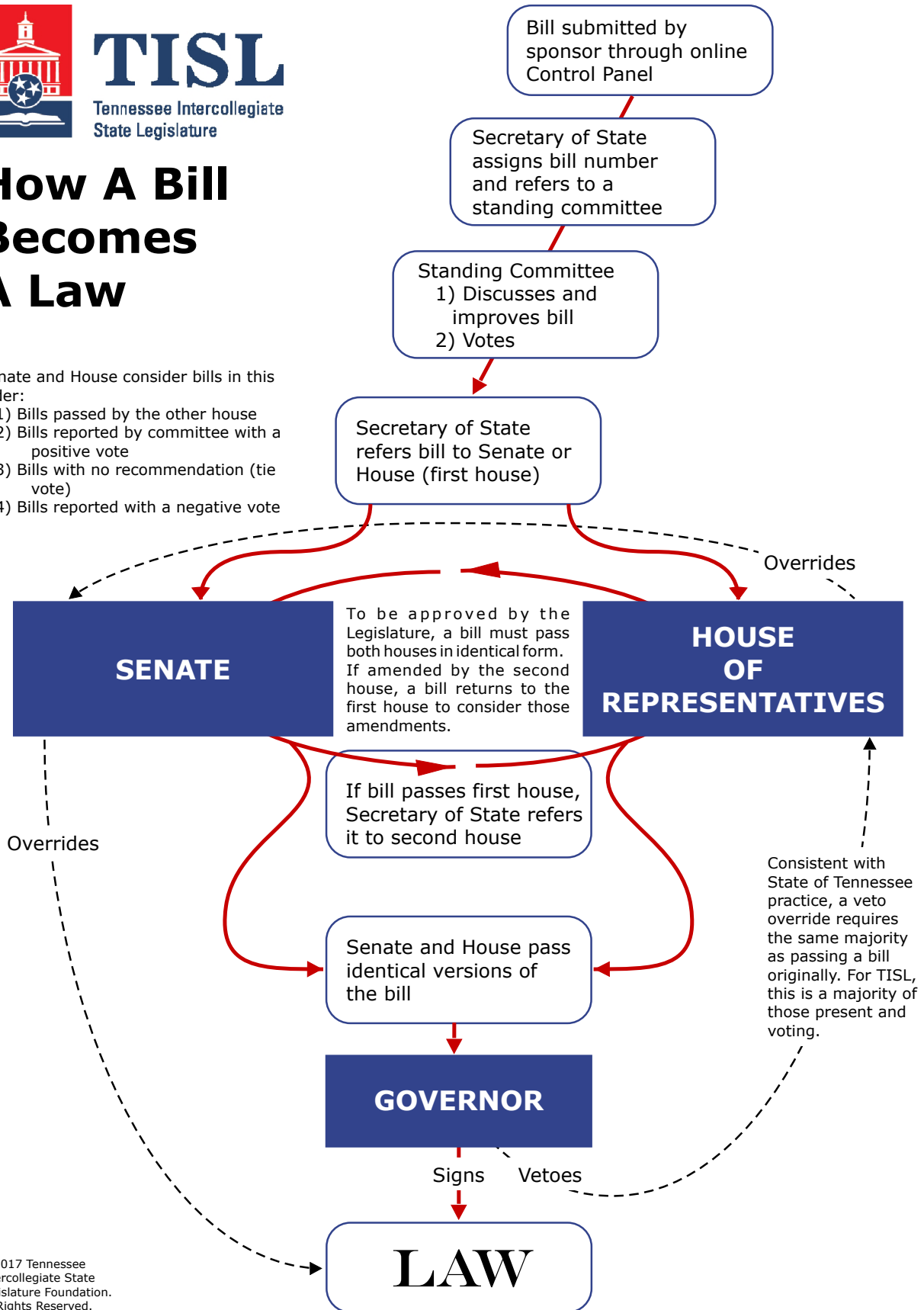
# TISL

Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature

## How A Bill Becomes A Law

Senate and House consider bills in this order:

- 1) Bills passed by the other house
- 2) Bills reported by committee with a positive vote
- 3) Bills with no recommendation (tie vote)
- 4) Bills reported with a negative vote



# OVERVIEW

[tisonline.org/GeneralAssembly/lobbying.html](http://tisonline.org/GeneralAssembly/lobbying.html)

Lobbyists represent clients who want to persuade the legislature to pass, modify or defeat legislation. They contact individual legislators, testify before committees, provide information and help to form strategy.

The lobbying program is a popular and successful part of TISL.

The firm will define the firm's mission and conceive a bill for the firm to research, write and pass. The firm will also identify bills written by others to support, oppose or attempt to change.

Firms will begin their work before the General Assembly through conference calls and will have their first in-person meeting on Thursday when the General Assembly convenes.

Lobbyists will conduct themselves in accordance with the Standards of Conduct of the Tennessee Lobbyists Association. Lobbyists may not provide food, drink, or any personal benefit to legislators, judges, or any TISL officers. They may not provide gifts.

Techniques for lobbyists:

- Talk to legislators one-on-one at the Capitol or after hours.
- Testify before standing committees when a bill is considered.
- Draft amendments for friendly legislators to propose.
- Perform research to help pass or defeat bills.
- Write talking points for or against bills for legislators to use in debate.
- Write information papers to distribute to legislators.

To make it easier for lobbyists to contact legislators, a limited number of floor passes will be available for lobbyists when the Senate and House of Representatives are in session. Each Lobbying CEO will have one floor pass for each chamber each day.

## FAQ: LOBBYING AT TISL

*By James Matthew Wyatt  
Union University, Jackson*

### **Where Can I Lobby?**

Lobbying at TISL occurs in a multitude of places. The majority will take place in the Committee hearings.

However, lobbying can take place anywhere! You can lobby a senator or representative outside the chambers, inside the chambers (with a floor pass), over a meal, or in the hotel.

### **How Do I Lobby?**

Lobbying at TISL can be as frustrating as it is enjoyable.

Because you are not a professional lobbyist doing this for a career and payment, lobbying is slightly different. Remember: you are still trying to convince and persuade senators and representatives to come to your side. Therefore, you must present facts and well-planned argument.

Be prepared before approaching a politician or speaking in front of them. Have all the facts straight and simple for them to understand.

### **Who Do I Lobby?**

You may lobby to any senator or representative at the General Assembly. A good strategy is to choose one legislator, or more than one, who will speak on your behalf in the chambers to the other Senators; find a legislator who genuinely supports you and wants your bill to succeed or fail, depending on your stance. You are not allowed to speak at the well, but a legislator can speak for you!

### **What Is My Utmost Goal When Lobbying?**

You are trying to convince senators or representatives to understand why your firm approves or disapproves of a bill. Facts and personal testimony are your best weapon! The goal is not to take a strong stance on a position; the goal is to pass or kill a bill.

## What Do I Do In Committee Hearings?

- Arrive early so you can speak with the chairman and let him or her know that you are a lobbyist, not a senator or representative.
- Ask politely if you may speak on behalf of your firm about bills that will be discussed in the committee. You may only speak if you are called upon by the chairman.
- Be concise and respectful. You are not the center of attention in the committee. You are there to present relevant information regarding bills and your firm.
- *You represent your entire firm when speaking.* Always be respectful. Senators and representatives will not take you seriously if you are not respectful.

## What Do I Do In The Chambers?

- Before entering the chambers, you **MUST** have a valid floor pass. Floor passes are the property of your CEO.

- You may not approach or speak at the well. You may only approach legislators who are sitting at their desks. You are allowed to quietly whisper to them or ask to have a conversation with them outside the chambers.
- Your presence in the chamber is the discretion of the Speaker. If you are asked to leave, please do so. If there is an issue, speak with your CEO, who will then report to the Lobbying Director.
- Lobbying in the chambers is difficult, but possible. Once legislators are in the chambers, they will not be focusing on lobbyists as much when compared to committee hearings.
- Providing “one-sheets” of facts and information to give to legislators is highly recommended.

## Where Is The Lobbying Director?

The Lobbying Director will primarily be at his/her desk outside of the House Chamber. However, the Director does have other duties during the General Assembly. If the situation arises that you need the Lobbying Director and he/she is not at the desk, reach out to your CEO.

# LOBBYING TECHNIQUES

*“Politics is of the heart as well as of the mind. Many people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.”*

— Morton Blackwell

*By Elliot Young  
Rhodes College, Memphis*

## Don't fire all of your ammunition at once

When lobbying for or against a bill, whether speaking in a committee or individually to legislators, don't throw down all your research at once.

Pick two of your best arguments, and lay those out clearly and concisely. If you can get your audience to appreciate and thoroughly understand your two most powerful arguments, your more peripheral points, when presented later, will be much clearer. They can be the last nail in the coffin to sway legislators on the margin.

One big reason is better than many little reasons.

## Don't make the perfect the enemy of the good

Nobody is perfect. No bill is perfect. No legislator is perfect. You will get nowhere if you cannot accept anything less than perfect.

An incremental gain is still a gain. When presented with an opportunity to compromise, take it. Get the bill author(s) and those proposing a change together, find common ground, and mediate a compromise amendment that makes both sides happy, while keeping the goal of the bill in sight. Often, even a small shift in the right direction will pave the way for future success toward your policy goal. Don't let the effort to create that bill be in vain.

## Never miss a political meeting if you think there's the slightest chance you'll wish you'd been there

Lobbyists should take every opportunity to hear bills presented or talk with legislators about bills.

It is in the committee meetings that the final fate of most bills is decided; most legislators will have their first and most powerful opinions on bills formed after these meetings.

Don't let the other side frame the debate. Get in first, define the issue your way, and you'll have the advantage.

Lobbyists should jump on these as opportunities to catch legislators with fresh ears, to get the first word in on bills they are supporting or opposing, and present arguments in more depth than might be possible in the hallway or chambers.

### **The mind can absorb no more than the seat can endure**

Know when your words are being wasted. When you've made your case, and made it well, and when legislators have asked all their questions, and you've given them the right answers, be certain that your arguments are clear to everyone in the room, and then **stop**.



If legislators have questions, take the time to answer them, clearly articulating why your side is right.

Know when you've hit a wall with a legislator. Time is valuable, and there's little point in wasting time trying to convince someone who would no more agree with you than a scorpion would with a turtle.

### **Political technology determines political success**

Personnel is policy. You can't beat a plan with no plan.

This isn't technology in the way we normally think of it.

Political technology is having more effective lobbyists than the other side. It is having a game plan before any of the meetings. It is knowing your firm's weaknesses and knowing that the other side has problems too. It is having lobbyists who take the initiative to talk with legislators and get the first word in.

Lobbyists who know the facts like the back of their hand and who are confident in their presentation are more effective than any fact sheet or charismatic speech.

### **Tips for 'Working the Room'**

1. **Be transparent** about your interests: Legislators will see a lack of transparency as a lack of honesty and a lack of tact.

2. Remember that **your audience isn't just the room you're addressing**: Legislators talk. If you spark an interest in them, they'll talk with colleagues about you, your firm, and the ideas you presented. Again, transparency is key here; if you project a dishonest persona, your ideas will be seen and related as such.

3. **Timing is everything**: Get in early, give them the pitch, and follow your issues through to the end of the process. Enter the meeting too late, and you will miss your chance to frame the debate. Getting your argument in early allows you to frame the debate to your advantage, limiting the directions from which the other side can attack.

4. **Think politically**: Find the focus of the political argument, the values and interests involved, and lay out a plan for your issue that appeals to and directly addresses those values and interests, as well as a plan for compromise. Remember that moral outrage is the most powerful motivating force in politics: use it to your advantage.

5. Mobilize people to act. Both your personnel, and legislators: **Seek out allies in legislators or other firms, and form coalitions where possible**. Legislators will appreciate getting input from different sides of the issue, because if disparate parties can agree on some bill, it gives the legislator more certainty that he/she is taking the proper action. Forming coalitions with other firms or legislators makes the lobbying process much less arduous for everyone involved: many hands make light work. The more lobbyists or legislators you can get talking about an issue or bill the way you've framed it, the easier your job at convincing undecideds will be.

6. **Make your presentation creative, and above all, memorable**. Whether it's your fact sheets or your oral arguments, you want legislators to remember your name or your firm when someone brings up the issue you lobbied them on. In oral arguments, keep it clear and concise. Think of it like "elevator persuasion." You have exactly as long as it takes from when the elevator doors close to when they open again to get your argument across to the legislator. Economy of words, clearness of message, and confidence of presentation are the keys to lobbying success. To ensure this, prior preparation is paramount! Remember, in moments of crisis, the initiative passes to those who are best prepared. Often just getting to the legislator before another firm is the deciding factor in whether they support your issue or not.



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The Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature has a 50-year history of giving students a voice in government and teaching them to be more effective citizens. Our alumni have become Representatives, Senators and Judges. Our ideas have become law. You can participate in this year's TISL General Assembly at the State Capitol.



## TISLonline.org

Campus Contact

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