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Advocacy in Indiana: A Tutorial

Brought to you by:



The Branches of Indiana's Government

Executive

The executive branch administers the state government and enforces state laws. This branch of government consists of eight Constitutional offices which are elected by the citizens of Indiana. These offices are:

Governor: ERIC HOLCOMB

Lieutenant Governor: SUZANNE CROUCH

Secretary of State: CONNIE LAWSON

State Treasurer: KELLY MITCHELL

State Auditor: TERA KLUTZ

Attorney General: CURTIS T. HILL, JR.

Superintendent of Public Instruction:

DR. JENNIFER McCORMICK

This branch also consists of over 70 state agencies, boards, and commissions that report to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.

Judicial

The judicial branch consists of the Supreme Court and the Appellate Court. It is the job of the judicial branch to uphold the laws of the state and our nation.

Legislative

The legislative branch is "the voice of the people" and writes the laws that we must follow. The legislature has two chambers: the House of Representatives and the State Senate. Indiana's General Assembly is a part-time legislature, meaning its members are only in session for a few months a year. However, the members of the General Assembly and their staff work for constituents year-round.

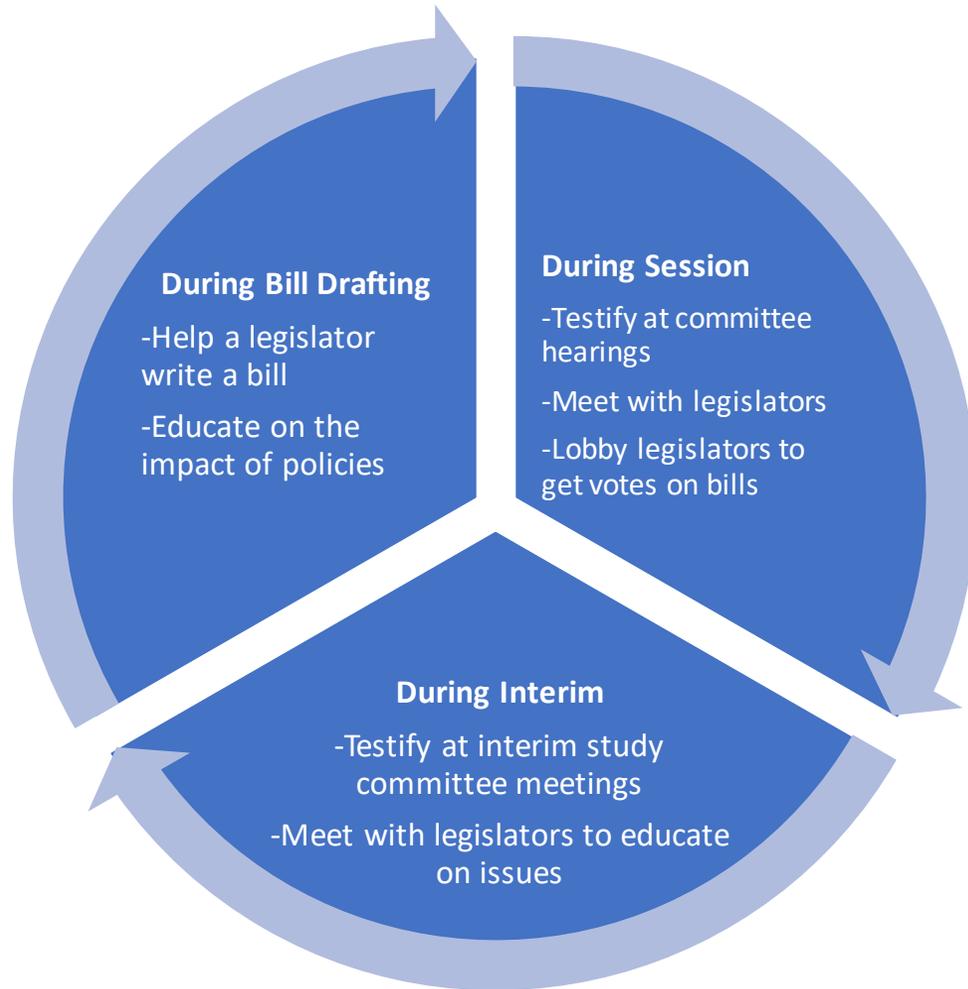
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

100 state representatives representing approximately 60,000 Hoosiers each and elected for two-year terms
Speaker of the House presides over the members when in session

STATE SENATE

50 state senators representing approximately 120,000 Hoosiers each and elected for four-year terms
Lieutenant Governor presides over the Senate and may cast tie-breaking votes

Key Times to Influence Legislation

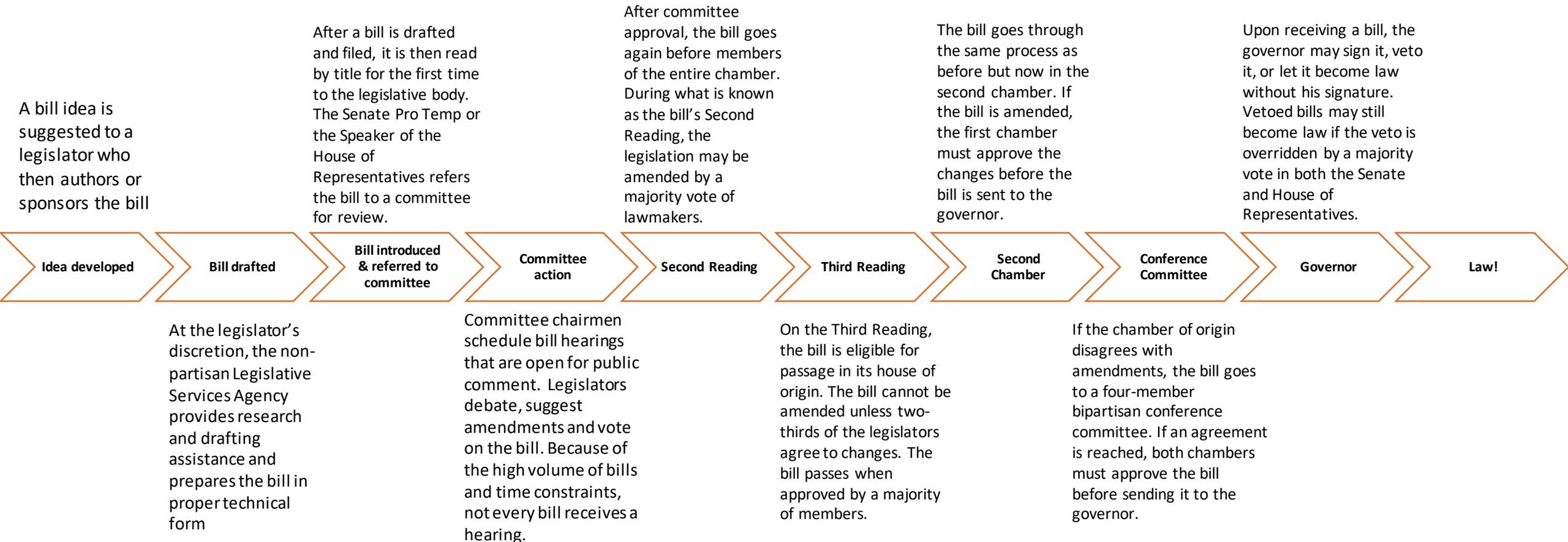


Legislative Timeline

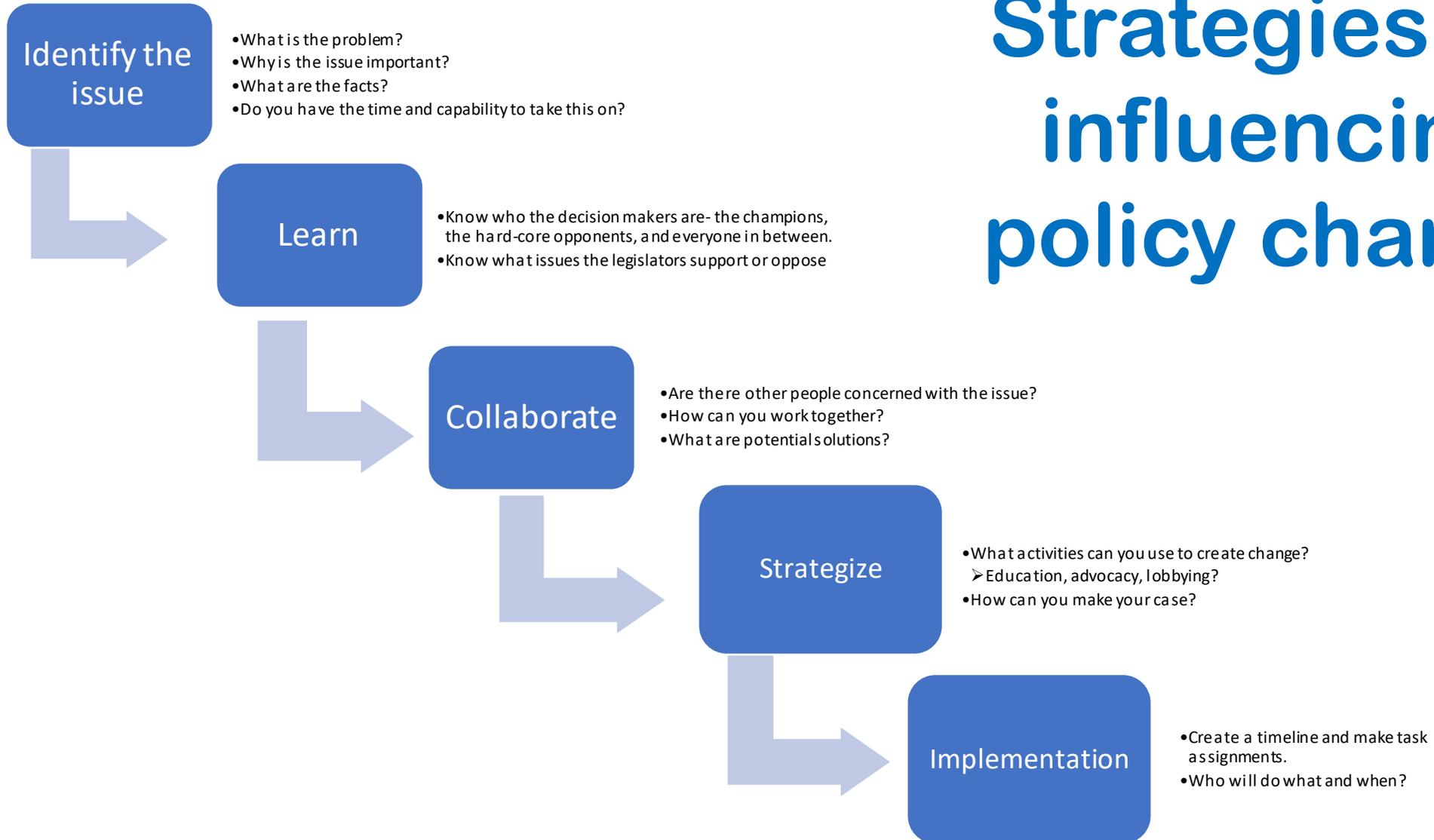
| Legislative Session | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Even years "short" clean up session | Odd years- "long" budget session |
| January- mid-March | January-April |

| Interim | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Study Committees | Mid-July-October |
| Bill ideas formed; drafts written | October- December |

How a Bill becomes a law



Strategies for influencing policy change



Framing your message

Questions to consider when preparing your message:

- What is the issue?
- Are there any bills regarding this issue, if so, what is the bill number?
 - Are they effective?
- What are some key facts or strategies regarding the issue?
- Who is your audience? (legislators? Media?)
 - What values do they have?
- What information and what format works best for this audience?
 - Written or verbal?
 - Social media or print media?
- What is your goal?
 - Increase awareness?
 - Generate support?
 - Motivate action?
- What do you want to see happen?
- How does this issue impact you personally?
- What would the opposite view be regarding the issue?
 - How would you respond?

FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE CHART

Your name
(Tell where you are from)

Issue
(Include any current bills, if there are any)

What do you want to see happen?

Facts or Statistics

Personal Story

Restate what you want to see happen.

Advocacy Tips: WHEN MEETING WITH A LEGISLATOR



- Keep it short and simple
- Have your facts straight
- Be on time, polite, and patient
- Be a resource
- Before you leave, say “thank you” again
- Continue the relationship with the legislator (e.g. send a thank you letter, follow up with updates)

Advocacy Tips: WHEN WRITING TO A LEGISLATOR



- Use correct address and salutation
- Type or write your letter clearly
- Use your own words
- Keep message brief and focused
- Be specific about how the issue affects you
- Know your facts
- Find out how your legislator voted on this issue or similar issues in the past
- Be persistent
- Don't use a negative, condescending, threatening, or intimidating tone
- Say thank you

Advocacy Tips: WHEN CALLING A LEGISLATOR



- Start your call by saying, “My name is _____, and I am from _____.” End your call by saying “thank you.” (Some offices may ask for your full name and mailing address so they can follow up with you on the issue)
- “Please let the Senator/Representative know that I support/oppose* (bill number and title). For your information you may want to ask what the legislator’s opinion is on the issue.
- “I would like to urge him/her to vote for/against this provision because (give one or two reasons).”
- If you would like to discuss a bill in greater detail with your legislator, ask the staff person taking your opinion to relay your name and telephone number to your policy maker or a legislative staff and ask that your call be returned.

* If you are a paid employee of a 501c(3) organization and calling on behalf of your role in that organization, asking a legislator or their staff to support or oppose a particular bill is considered lobbying and should be carefully evaluated according to the rules of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Advocacy Tips: WHEN PROVIDING TESTIMONY



- Address the committee chair and members and introduce yourself.
 - *“Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill _____. My name is _____ and I am (job title) at (your employer)”*
- Share why this is an important issue for you.
 - Personal story either about yourself or someone you know.
 - Add data or other information that helps make your case.
- Discuss why you feel this bill would help (or hurt) the issue and why you feel legislators should vote in support or opposition.
- Close by saying, *“thank you for considering my opinion on this important issue and I hope that you will vote in support (or opposition) of this bill. Thank you.”*
- Committee chair will ask committee members if they have any questions. Wait for questions- if there are none you can go back to your seat.