THE ART OF ADVOCACY

A Grassroots Handbook

IAHCSMM Government Affairs

International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management
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GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

What is grassroots advocacy?

Grassroots advocacy means actions taken by citizens to demonstrate support or opposition to a public policy issue. This means that you, as a constitute to your elected officials, have to participate in the legislative process. More importantly, IAHCSMM cannot be successful in passing certification legislation in the states unless you help us.

We understand that you are busy in your day-to-day life and do not have the time to think about how legislation affects you or how you can influence public policy. Don’t sweat it! We will provide all the tools and information you need to influence your elected officials.

Grassroots advocacy campaigns are a numbers game. The more individuals that write letters (via email) and place phone calls to their elected officials to express support or opposition to legislation will determine the effectiveness of our campaign. Your participation is vital to our campaign’s success. You, the voter, determine whether or not your elected official shall be re-elected to another term and that is why your opinion is so important.

Our grassroots advocacy campaign can wield considerable influence on the outcome of public policy decisions, even rivaling the biggest corporations or trade associations BUT only if you help us.
HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW IN THE STATES

Idea → 1st Reading → Committee Consideration

Referral to another committee → Reported to House or Senate With or without Amendments → Killed

Killed → 2nd Reading. Bill debated and voted. → 3rd Reading. Vote is taken.

Passed. Bill sent to 2nd chamber and process repeats. → Killed

Bill passes 2nd chamber without differences. → Bill passes 2nd chamber with differences.

Governor’s Action

Governor Signs or becomes law without signature.

Legislature

Vetoed

Overrides veto. 2/3 vote of each house. → Sustains veto. → Report passed by both chambers. → Killed

Conference committee appointed to address differences.

Law becomes effective.
STEPS TO INTRODUCING CERTIFICATION LEGISLATION IN YOUR STATE

1) You want to get started on grassroots activities on the certification issue in your state.

2) Try to get two to five IAHCSMM members to help you.

3) Contact Josephine (Jo) Colacci, IAHCSMM Government Affairs Director, at jo@iahcsmm.org to convene a webinar for the group.

4) Jo will email/call elected officials concerning the legislation.

5) Jo will provide draft legislation and educational materials for the elected officials.

6) Jo will reach out to organizations in the state.

7) Jo will determine with the Advocacy Committee, IAHCSMM Board of Directors, and IAHCSMM Executive Director if a lobbyist is needed for the state.

8) If a lobbyist is needed, state chapters will be responsible for paying a portion of the lobbyist cost. This is sliding scale depending on the number of members in the state.
CONTACTING YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

IAHCSMM has made it very easy for you to contact your elected officials. Simply respond to an “Action Alert” that will be sent to you via email and follow the steps provided. Here is an example of an “Action Alert:”

1) You will receive an email that will look like the picture below.

2) Click the Take Action button in the top right left corner.

![Contact Your Elected Officials email example](image-url)
3) You will be brought to a page that will look similar to this. Please note that this page and the next two pages will all appear on your computer screen as one page.

4) As you see, it has the original email and directions.
5) This is the message that will be sent to the elected officials.

6) You need to enter your name in the box to the right of “Sincerely.”
7) This is where you will enter your personal information.

8) Click “send message.”
**MEETING WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

During the legislative process, you will meet with elected officials.

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<th>DO’S &amp; DON’TS</th>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON’T</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DO</strong></td>
<td>Dress in business attire</td>
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<td>Show up early</td>
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<td>Ask for the contact information from the staff members present</td>
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<td>Be prepared to speak for 5 minutes or 30 minutes</td>
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<td>Engage the person you are meeting with. Don’t just talk at them.</td>
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<td>Use easy to understand vocabulary. Explain terms in your industry.</td>
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<td>Get straight to the point.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Go through the information discussed in the call with Jo.</td>
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<td>Make specific and reasonable requests. For example, ask them to sponsor or co-sponsor the legislation. Remember – do this only if Jo has requested this. Some legislators we meet with may not be the right people to ask to do this.</td>
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<td>Thank the member and staff for their time.</td>
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<td>Offer to be a resource to them and provide your contact information.</td>
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<td>Follow up with a written thank you note and provide requested follow up information.</td>
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<td><strong>DON’T</strong></td>
<td>Inundate the legislator with voluminous materials unless they request more follow up information</td>
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<td>Assume your audience knows the terms of your industry</td>
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<td>Be afraid to say you don’t know the answer to a question. If you are asked a question that you don’t know the answer to, tell them that you will try to find out the answer to their question and get back to them.</td>
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<td>Be intimidated. Remember, your elected officials work on behalf of you.</td>
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• CSSD professionals are those responsible for ensuring that instrumentation and equipment used in medical and surgical procedures are properly cleaned, disinfected, inspected and sterilized prior to patient use.

• Explain what you do – remember legislators do not know; use layman terms.

• Keep your statements short and concise – no more than 2 minutes.

• What is required to do this job? High school diploma or GED

• Education programs – Purdue online, self study, local community colleges

• Explain the complex instrumentation – robotics, endoscopes, joint replacement, etc.

• New surgical instruments are being introduced regularly, which requires an advanced technical knowledge that only certification will provide.

• Why certification? Certification will keep technicians educated on standards-based instrument processing practices so these professionals can perform their jobs safely and effectively while keeping quality and patient safety at the forefront.

• Give examples – a bad outcome at your facility or event that happened to someone you know but it must be from a dirty surgical instrument.

• You guys are the front-line to prevent patient infections.

• PATIENT SAFETY, PATIENT SAFETY, PATIENT SAFETY

• States license or certify: dog groomers, nail techs, tattoo artists, hair stylists.

• Subjects – microbiology, medical terminology, infection control, decontamination, etc.

• You may be asked about on the job training. This is a trick question because if you respond by saying that you receive great on the job training then legislators think this bill is not needed. If you get this question, I want you to respond by saying that your on the job training consisted of heating your lunch in the sterilizer. Yes, I am serious.

• Financial implications (these are cited in the policy brochure):
  o AAMI standards recommend certification.
  o Joint Commission recommends processes to prevent patient injury.
  o The CDC estimates costs associated with hospital infections are $45 billion a year.
  o In 2002, there were 1.7 million HAIs and 99,000 deaths.
  o In Oct. 2012, Medicare payments to hospitals will be tied to protecting patients from infections.
WHAT NOT TO SAY TO LEGISLATORS

You can hurt our legislative efforts if you say any of the following statements.

**DO NOT SAY:**

- **Mandate**
  - Legislators don’t like to mandate anything.
  - This is a very negative word in politics.
  - This is the hospital associations’ argument.
  - Use the word “require” instead.

- **Techs should make more money or techs don’t make enough money.**
  - Legislators don’t want to increase costs to hospitals.
  - This is the hospital associations’ argument as to why our bill should not pass.

- **This issue is a “no brainer.”**
  - Nothing in politics is a “no brainer.”
  - Legislators may take this as a condescending remark.
  - Remember legislators are dealing with a lot of issues and they don’t consider any of them “no brainers.”

- **“Techs receive great on the job training.”**
  - Legislators will think we don’t need a bill.
  - If you get asked about on the job training, I want you to say that your on the job training consisted of heating your lunch in the sterilizer. Yes, I am serious.

- **“All the hospitals in this state require certification for techs.”**
  - Legislators will think we don’t need a bill.
  - If there are a significant amount of hospitals that do require certification in your state, I want you to emphasis that there are a lot of hospitals that do not require it.