An Engineer in Washington...
Involvement in the Policy Game

103rd Annual Purdue Road School
Theresa E. Harrison, P.E., ENV SP, M. ASCE
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Why Get Involved in the Policy Game?

• Government **OF** the people, **FOR** the people and **BY** the people...
• Laws & legislation affect the engineer’s work, daily
• Legislators need data, facts, input
• Industry: better relations = better assist clients = more business
• Government: better relations and connections = better service for citizens
• Understanding of our government
• Assistance to local, state, and federal governments
• Voice in legislation and regulations
• Informed citizenry
Where to Get Involved in the Policy Game

- Local Government
  - Participate in local community government meetings
  - Planning Commission
  - Board of Public Works
  - Parks Board
  - Building, Utilities Boards and Commissions
  - City or Township Council
  - County Council
  - Task Forces
  - Develop relationships with Mayor, Council, Public Works Director, other agency staff
Where to Get Involved in the Policy Game (cont’d.)

- State Government
  - Commissions
  - Task Forces
  - State Representative and State Senator relationships
  - ASCE Government Relations

- National Government
  - Commissions
  - Task Forces
  - Representative and Senator relationships
  - ASCE Government Relations
How to Get Involved in the Policy Game

• Get educated about issues and vote
• Reach out to elected officials
  • Telephone
  • E-mail
  • Written letter
  • In person visit (home state, Washington, D.C.)
• Provide valuable information
  • Workplace
  • Professional society
• Invite elected/government agency official to speak at a meeting
• Volunteer for opportunities to contribute and serve
• Run for elected office
Professional Advocacy – Lobbying?

• Professional organizations - Doctors, Teachers, Pilots, etc.
  • Input and guidance to legislative body
  • Organizational guidelines and policies
  • Conformance to Codes of Ethics
  • Sound institutional principles, not politics
• ASCE Key Contact Program
• Key Contact briefing conference calls
• Click & Connect with Congress
• Monitor legislation in your home state
• Back home visits
• Legislative fly-in
• Organize a Section or Branch Government Relations Committee
• State drive-ins and legislative days

www.asce.org/advocacy_programs
ASCE Initiatives

- Infrastructure
  - 2017 US Infrastructure Report Card – March 9 release
  - Failure to Act Reports
  - Infrastructure Policy Reports
  - State and Regional Report Cards
- Raise the Bar
  - Raise the Bar Articles & Publications
- Sustainability
  - ENVISION
  - ASCE Grand Challenge

www.ascegrandchallenge.com
ASCE Advocacy

• ASCE Public Policy Statements
  www.asce.org/public_policy_statements/

• Priority Issues
  • Federal Priority Issues
  • State Priority Issues
  www.asce.org/priority_issues/
Public Policy Committee (PPC)

- Infrastructure & Research Policy Committee (IRPC)
  - Subcommittee of PPC
  - 167 policies
  - 3 year review rotation
  - Input from committees
  - Valid? Review, Edit, Re-write
  - Send to Board for review and approval
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<th>Title &amp; number</th>
<th>Policy</th>
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<th>Rationale</th>
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ASCE Advocacy Tools & Training

• PR University
• GR University
• State Public Affairs Grant Program (SPAG)
• ASCE Congressional Engineering Fellow (suspended at this time)

www.asce.org/advocacy/
ASCE Congressional Engineering Fellow

• One year on Capitol Hill
• Two weeks of training
  • Congressional Research Service
  • NGOs, Governmental Agencies
  • Senators & Representatives
• Congressional reception
• Prepare for interviews
  • Committees
  • Congressional offices
• Offers.... acceptance
How a Bill Becomes Law

Bill introduced in House of Representatives

Referred to House committee and subcommittee

Voted on by full committee

House debates and votes on passage

House and Senate vote on final passage; approved bill is sent to the President.

A House-Senate conference committee writes a compromise bill. That bill goes back to both houses.

Bill introduced in Senate

Referred to Senate committee and subcommittee

Voted on by full committee

Senate debates and votes on passage

President can sign bill into law or veto it.
Typical Senate Office

• Chief of Staff
• Legislative Director
• Legislative Assistants
• Media & Press Team
• Legislative Correspondents
• Legislative Fellows
• Interns
A Day in the Life of a Congressional Fellow

• Welcome to the Senator’s office
  • Computer + phone = set to go!
  • Constituent Meetings
  • Briefings
  • Hearings
  • Receptions
  • Special events
Daily Goings On

• Mostly staff meeting with constituents and lobbyists
• Pop-ins in with Senator
• Communication with Region Offices, State Agencies, MPOs, etc.
• Daily media mention reports
• Preparations for press conferences, colloquies, floor action, votes
• Staff time with Schumer
Briefing & Hearings

• Briefing
  • Informational
  • Experts in field or industry
  • Heavy duty lobbying

• Hearing
  • Like a court hearing
  • Something went wrong, finding fault
Receptions & Other Special Events

• Lobbyist events
• States’ events
• Local government organizations events
• Embassy events
• Dignitaries and celebrities (Dalai Lama, Bill Nye, Capt. Sullenberger)
• State of the Union Address
• Military Bands Concerts
• Christmas Tree Lighting
Theresa E. Harrison, P.E., ENV SP, M. ASCE
269-362-2015
thmichigan@gmail.com