

*Paul B. Beeson Emerging Leaders
2025 Annual Meeting*

How to Become an Advocate for your Research



Brian W. Lindberg &
Ashley B. Carson, JD
Nov 21, 2025



Public Policy Education and Advocacy

It's Your Right
and
the Right Thing To Do!

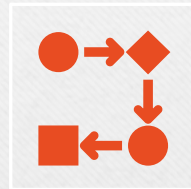
(And It's Your Job)



Three P's Driving Washington, Salem, Lansing, Hartford, etc.



Politics



Procedure



Policy

The Legislative Process (In less than two minutes)



BILL
INTRODUCTION



REFERRAL TO
COMMITTEES



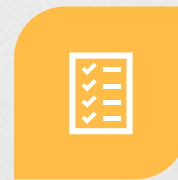
AUTHORIZATION VS.
APPROPRIATION



HEARINGS



MARK-UP IN
COMMITTEE



FLOOR ACTION

The Legislative Process...

Conference Committee



Back to House and Senate



President...Signature or Veto



Override Attempt



Public Law (e.g. P.L. 111-148)

How to Navigate the U.S. Senate

Five Things to Remember

1. “Greatest Deliberative Body”
2. Everyone is Equal
3. Germaneness
4. Seniority Still Rules
5. Relationships Matter

How to
Navigate the
U.S. House of
Representatives

Five things to Remember

1. Speaker Power
2. Committees
3. Floor Off Limits
4. Tea Party Movement
Power (Freedom Caucus)
5. Relationships Matter

Administrative Advocacy



As important as legislative advocacy



Think of the components of policy:

Federal law

State law

Administrative and agency interpretations that implement the law

Judicial interpretations of the law



After legislation is passed, state or federal administrative agency must implement the law

Administrative Advocacy (continued)

Implementation of the law
takes the form of:

Regulations

Guidance from
agencies

Consumer
materials:
notices,
explanations, etc.

As advocates, you want to be sure your interpretation of the law matches the way the agency enacts the law. This is administrative advocacy.

What can you do?

- ✓ Become involved in a coalition with other groups with a similar mission and share intelligence
- ✓ Attend webcasts and briefings to stay current on the status of regulations
- ✓ Track proposed rules and regulations (for example, read the Federal Register, sign up for the agency's mailing list or follow them on social media)



Engage with Partners and the Agencies!



- Comment on proposed regulations:
 - An agency is not required to respond to the comments submitted by advocates
 - However, if you collaborate with other groups, you may strengthen your voice and influence the final regulation.
- Meet with or write to the agency and voice your concerns

Be a Resource!



HOMework



ENGAGEMENT



FOLLOW-UP

Preparing for your meeting

- Get to the meeting early
- Practice your elevator pitch or talking points
- Keep the group somewhat small
- Be aware of current events and what they've done on your issues
- Create a one-pager to leave behind

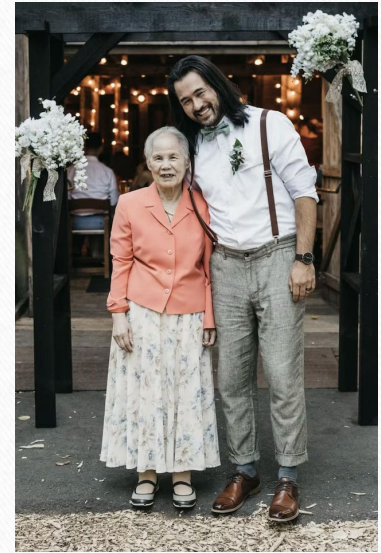
Top Lessons Learned From the Elder Justice Act and Older Americans Act Experiences





It all starts with stories (unfortunately)

- **National:** Brooke Astor, millionaire philanthropist and socialite, died in 2007 and the case of neglect and exploitation become national news.
- **National:** Mickey Rooney, famous actor, was exploited financially & socially isolated, a U.S. Senate hearing was held that was covered by every major media outlet.
- **Local:** Ki Soon Hyun died of hypothermia after a fall down an embankment on Christmas Day after walking out an unsecured door in the memory care community she moved into the day before.



Understand and Use the Legislative Process

- **Remember the 3 P's:** Policy, Politics, and Process
- Knowing how the Senate and House of Representatives work and the roles of staff, committees, and leadership is critical to ending up at a bill signing ceremony at the White House or Governor's Desk.



3

Find a Hero or Heroine

- Senator Bernie Sanders
- Senator John Breaux
- Senators Hatch and Lincoln
- Senators Grassley and Kohl
- Rep. Rahm Emanuel
- Rep. Peter King
- Rep. Suzanne Bonamici

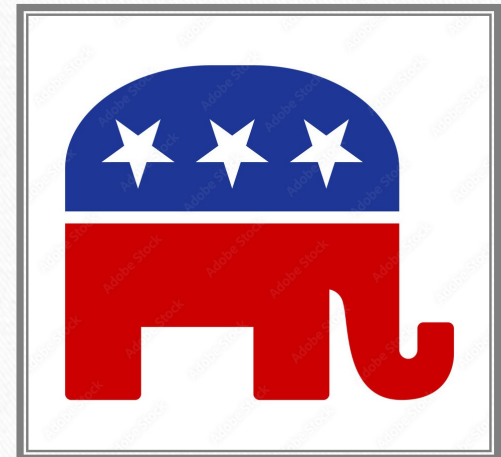
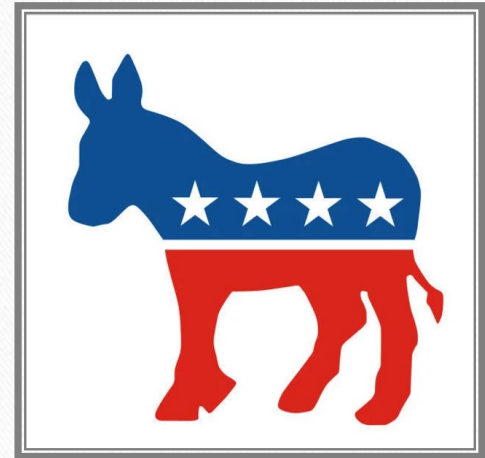




Bipartisanship is Best

We had EJA cosponsors from both sides of the aisle in the House and Senate.

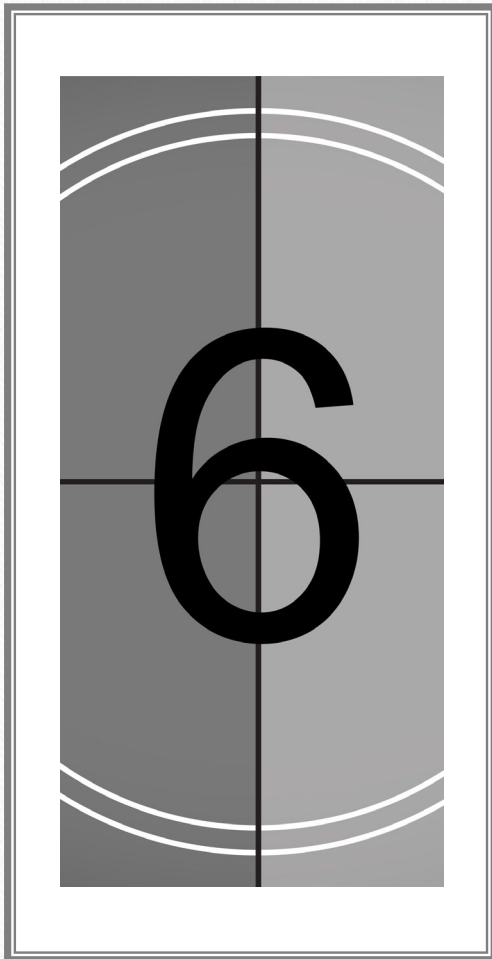
And we made a point of always referring to the Elder Justice Coalition as a bipartisan or non-partisan group and had members that represented more conservative viewpoints as well.



Wear Out Some Shoe Leather or Make the Rounds

- What makes the difference is often getting up to the Hill and meeting with staff and members. You can do this back in the state (district), too.





Coalitions are Stronger than Individual Organizations

- We created the Elder Justice Coalition for the sole purpose of moving elder justice legislation.
- We worked with the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) for the reauthorization of the OAA.

Members of Congress want to see that there is broad support from diverse groups and from folks back in the state or district



THE EJC STARTED OUT SMALL WITH OBVIOUS GROUPS JOINING EARLY.

WE ALLOWED INDIVIDUALS AND STATE AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO JOIN AND KEPT THEM INFORMED AND ACTIVE. THIS HELPED TREMENDOUSLY WITH MEMBERS WHO NEEDED TO HEAR FROM CONSTITUENTS BEFORE THEY WOULD SUPPORT THE BILL.

Grassroots and Grass Tops Work



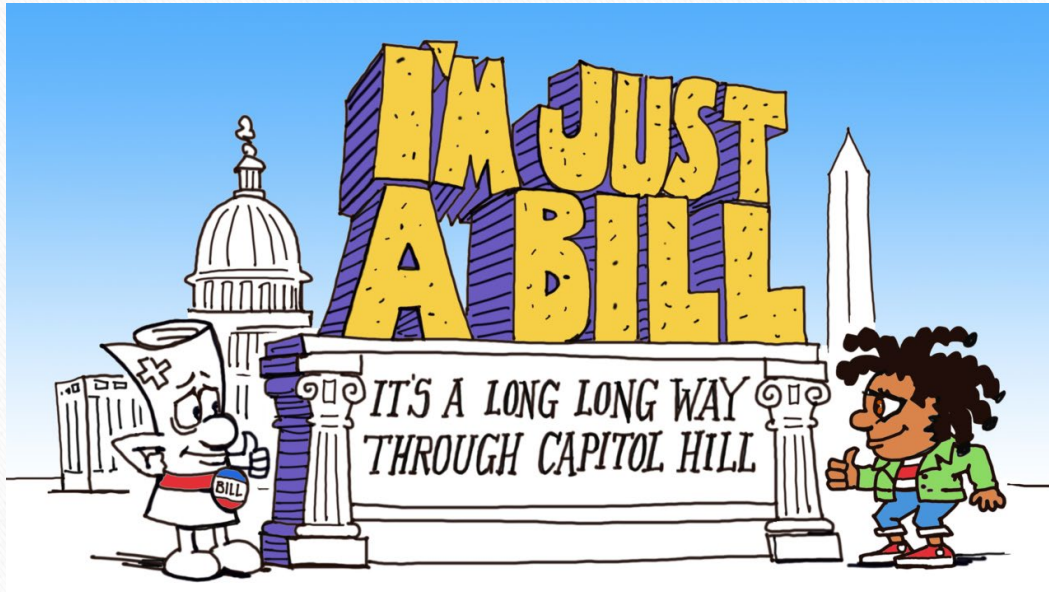
- There are many grassroots tools at your disposal including ***emails***, ***call-in days***, and ***petitions*** circulated at conferences like this.
- Keep your grassroots participants informed.
- Don't overwork them with requests that won't make a difference.
- Try to keep them energized and spreading the news

Use Opportunities to Spread the Word or Communications 101

- Outreach can turn a good issue into a movement and that is what we used Bob Blancato to do.
- Advocacy endeavors need good communications
 - To the media
 - To the public
 - To Congress
 - To the Coalition members.



Persistence Pays Off!

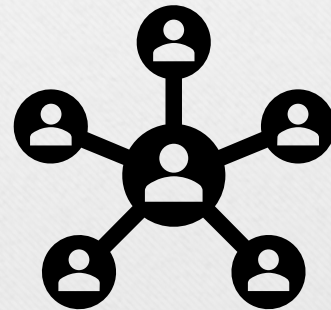


- 10,000 plus bills are introduced each Congress; 200 - 400 become law (Only 103 so far this Congress).

10

It's All about Relationships

- Within the organization and Coalitions
- Between you and congressional staff
- Between Members of Congress
- Between DC and the grassroots.



Resources

www.house.gov

www.senate.gov

www.whitehouse.gov

Capitol Switchboard: (202) 224-3121

Bill Search www.congress.gov

Preparation Activity

1. Write your one-minute elevator pitch!
2. What info should be on your one-pager?
3. Locate your local state Rep and Senator.
4. Locate your U.S. Rep and U.S. Senators.
5. What's your ask?

Thank you and on to Q & A

Ashley B. Carson, JD
Executive Director
Center for Hope and Safety
Salem, Oregon
971-900-7923
ashley@hopeandsafety.org

Brian M. Lindberg
Vice-President, Health & Aging Policy
GSA Public Policy Advisor
Healthsperien, LLC
Washington, DC
202-306-6128
blindberg@healthsperien.com