

Grassroots: Shoot Straight and Make Your Mark

- Getting to know the people involved
- Knowing your issue
- Ways to communicate with legislator
- Following up
- Measuring your success

Why I Continue To Do this Work

- I believe in Democracy. **Democracy** is government by the people; a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system. (Dictionary reference.com)
- Ideally, this includes equal participation in the proposal, development and passage of legislation into law.
- I know one person can make a difference.
 - Capt. Luis Montalvan and his dog Tuesday.
 - Service Dogs For Vets Act.
- I believe we can make a difference in the lives of Minnesotans.

Get to Know Your Federal Legislator

- Get to know their record on your issues
- Understand the tone of region or state they represent
- Know your legislator's predispositions
- Understand constituent pressures
- Their job is to represent their district, listen to both sides and make a decision

Get to Know the Staff

- They help set tone of relationship with legislator
- The legislator will count on them to do follow up
- The staff will do research and watch for bill introductions on behalf of the legislator
- Staff will be your day to day contact with legislator

Get to Know the Staff - State

- Field Representative or Director – Work in district offices across state or region. Field representatives are assigned either an issue or geographic portfolio. These staff members are the eyes and ears for legislators. They also help set the legislator’s schedule and maintain a presence in a community.
- State or District Director – Oversee district or state operation, manage state staff, help develop schedule, and report directly to legislator.

Get to Know the Staff – Washington D.C

- Legislative Assistant (LA) – LA's work in Washington DC and are assigned an issue portfolio. They write legislation, work with committees, the White House, federal agencies and constituents.
 - Energy LA for Senator Franken:
 - Bidisha Bhattacharyya
 - 202-224-5641 (phone)
 - Bidisha_bhattacharyya@franken.senate.gov (email)
- Chief of Staff (COS) – Oversees the staff. The COS is the legislator's top political and legislative advisor and reports directly to legislator.

Senator Franken's Field Staff

St. Paul Office, 651-221-1016

Katherine Blauvelt, katherine_blauvelt@franken.senate.gov

Katie Topinka, katie_topinka@franken.senate.gov

Amy Hang, amy_hang@franken.senate.gov

Bethany Snyder, Bethany_snyder@franken.senate.gov

Senator Franken's Field Staff

- **St. Cloud Office**

Lisa Fobbe, Central Minnesota Field Representative, lisa_fobbe@franken.senate.gov, 320-251-2721

- Counties covered: Anoka, Benton, Big Stone, Crow Wing, Douglas, Grant, Isanti, Kanabec, Lac qui Parle, Mille Lacs, Morrison, Pope, Sherburne, Stearns, Stevens, Todd, and Traverse

- **Duluth Office**

Daniel Fanning, Northeast Field Representative, Daniel_fanning@franken.senate.gov, 218-722-2390

- Counties covered: Aitkin, Carlton, Chisago, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, St. Louis

- **St. Peter Office**

Nate Arch, Southern Field Representative, nathan_arch@franken.senate.gov, 507-931-5813

- Counties covered: Blue Earth, Cottonwood, Dodge, Faribault, Fillmore, Freeborn, Goodhue, Houston, Jackson, LeSueur, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Mower, Murray, Nicollet, Nobles, Olmsted, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rice, Rock, Sibley, Steele, Wabasha, Waseca, Winona, Yellow Medicine.

- **Northwest Minnesota**

Valerie Gravseth, Northwest Field Representative, valerie_gravseth@franken.senate.gov, 218230-9487

- Counties covered: Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clay, Clearwater, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnomen, Marshall, Norman, Ottertail, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake, Roseau, Wadena, and Wilkin

- **Willmar, MN**

Al Juhnke, Field Representative, al_juhnke@franken.senate.gov, 651788-5100

- Counties covered: Kandiyohi, Meeker, Swift, Chippewa
- Issues covered: Agriculture, Environment, Energy

Know Yourself

- Be genuine
- Tell your story
- Relate the issue to your organization - make it local
- Get your facts straight

Know Your Issue

- Talk about issue in your own words
- Share personal and local examples of the impact of the issues you are talking about
- Know your facts
- Be consistent on message

Know your Opposition

- Recognize it is the legislator's job to listen to both sides and make thoughtful decision
- You might want to address top talking points of your opposition

Ways to Communicate with Your Legislator

- Personal Visit
 - In Washington DC
 - In District office
 - Legislator to make site visit to your organization
- Letter or Email
- Telephone
- Attend Event

Personal Visit to DC or District Office

- Come prepared – bring materials
- Identify yourself at each visit – who you represent
- Be specific and direct about what you want – The ask
- Tell the truth – be willing to say, “I will get back to you.”
- Be brief – give everyone in the group a chance to speak
- Recognize timing – You do not want to be disrespectful to other constituents waiting

Legislator Site Visit

- Invite your legislator to visit
- Work with the Field Representative to develop a proposal
- Give as many details as possible
 - Who will be there
 - Timing of events
 - Issues to be discussed
- Make your visit a little different. Show why you are unique.

Letter or Email

- Make it personal
- Include address and write legibly
- Write to share your opposition or support for legislation
- Be brief and clear
- Form letters are fine but include a personal note
- Find legislators at <http://www.usa.gov/>

Telephone

- You can call the DC office or local office
- Be concise
- Know more than bill number. It is good to know bill title and basics about bill.
- Be willing to give contact information so the legislator knows you are constituent

Attend Public Event

- Attend public meeting, event or hearing
- Ask your question about issue
- Be respectful of meeting topic
- Give follow up information to staff

Senator Franken's Renewable Energy Listening Sessions

- **Monday, June 20**

2:30 p.m. Albert Lea, MN

Freeborn Mower Cooperative Services, 2501 Main
Street East

- **Monday, June 27**

10:00 a.m. Luverne, MN

Minwind Energy LLC, 800 S. Kniss Avenue, Suite 2

- **Tuesday, June 28**

9:00 a.m. East Grand Forks, MN

Northland Community College, 2022 Central Ave NE

Senator Franken's Renewable Energy Listening Sessions

- **Tuesday, June 28**

2:00 p.m. Bemidji, MN

Bemidji State University, American Indian Resource
Center

1500 Birchmont Drive

- **Wednesday, June 29**

10:00 a.m. Virginia, MN

Mesabi Range College, Schibel Conference Room,
1001 West Chestnut Street

- **Thursday, June 30**

Pine City, MN

Follow Up

- Say thank you
- Follow up to find out if the legislator followed through on a commitment or made decision
- Follow up on your commitments
- Stay in touch with staff

Measuring Your Success – Questions to Ask Yourself

- Were you successful in your ask? (i.e. Did they sign onto bill or vote the way you suggested?)
- Did you leave the legislator with facts and understanding your side of issue?
- Did you have a genuine conversation to help build a relationship with legislator?
- Did you listen to other side and help come up with alternatives?

Grassroots: Shoot Straight and Make Your Mark

- You are already successful if you are participating and helping to shape legislation.

- Alana Petersen

State Director, Senator Franken

651-408-3543 (cell phone)

alana_petersen@franken@franken.senate.gov