



Professional Recyclers of PA

Legislative Tool Kit



Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania

P.O. Box 25

Bellwood, PA 16617

800-769-PROP

www.proprecycles.org

PROP & the Future of Recycling

The Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania (PROP) is a professional organization of recycling, composting and solid waste managers and is Pennsylvania's affiliate to the National Recycling Coalition (NRC).

In addition to its many outreach and networking efforts, PROP also acts as an advocacy organization, commenting on proposed legislation, regulatory policy and grant and funding issues.

In response to both short and long term issues, PROP established a Recycling Strategic Planning Task Force several years ago. The Task Force was made up of both public and private sector recycling professionals and met a number of times over the last few years to discuss the future of recycling and program sustainability in Pennsylvania. PROP's Government Liaison Committee has continued this advocacy work.

Overwhelming demand, escalating costs and inflationary pressures have resulted in a cumulative funding shortfall of over \$35 million in the Section 902 grant program. To make matters worse, the upcoming grant award will be the last fully funded round unless the Recycling Fee is reauthorized. (Because Section 902 funds are taken from up to three budget years, the Recycling Fund is impacted several years prior to the sunset date of the fee.)

The recent court ruling on county administrative fees has endangered another important funding stream for county recycling and waste management programs and staff. It is with all this in mind that we hope to help legislators understand the need for continued funding.

This tool kit is designed to help PROP members and other recycling advocates to raise awareness and renew enthusiasm for recycling among local elected officials, local government associations, the legislature, the Governor and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Though there are considerable funding difficulties at this time, PROP members are also encouraged to extend their enthusiastic thanks to each of their legislators for their past support of recycling. You should also use this opportunity to continue building general support for and awareness of recycling and composting in the Commonwealth. The legislature has supported PROP and their concerns in the past and it should be our goal now to keep recycling and composting on their radar screen.

Contents

1.	The Pennsylvania State Legislature	2
	Pennsylvania House of Representatives	2
	House Leadership	3
	House Committees	3
	Pennsylvania State Senate	7
	Senate Leadership	7
	Senate Committees	7
2.	Communicating Effectively with your Legislator	9
	News Updates	9
	Letters and E-mail	9
	Meetings and Events	10
3.	Building Support Through Local Constituents	10
	Local and State Government Connections	10
	Educating Local Officials	10
	Helping Local Officials Communicate with Legislators	10
4.	Getting Around the Capitol	11

The Pennsylvania State Legislature

The Pennsylvania General Assembly, much like the federal legislature, consists of two chambers. The Pennsylvania House of Representatives has 203 members representing districts of approximately 59,000 citizens. The Pennsylvania State Senate consists of 50 members representing about 240,000 people. Members of the House serve two year terms, while Senators serve four year terms.

While much work goes on behind the scenes, actual lawmaking happens on the floor of the two chambers. Activities on the floor can appear confusing the first time you observe. Actually, the legislature conducts its business according to practices and procedures that have survived for centuries. This system of government has sustained Pennsylvania and the nation for more than two centuries and remains fundamentally unchanged since the 18th century.

Majority party members in each house serve as committee chairs and make up the leadership on the floor. The majority party, consequently, is better able to control the movement of legislation that may have controversial elements on which the two major parties may disagree. It is easy to see, then, that proposed legislation enjoying bipartisan support will move through the process more quickly and have a greater chance of reaching final passage.

A typical session week lasts three days and can last a standard work day or late into the night. The floor, then, is truly the hub of both the Senate and House of Representatives. But what you are observing below the visitors' gallery often takes days, weeks or months of preparation which legislators accomplish in individual meetings, phone calls and committee meetings. So when you think of your representatives "on the job," picture them also in committee rooms evaluating bills, in caucus exchanging views about bills with members of their own party and in their offices hearing from constituents about the merits of bills which are before them.

This input from constituents does matter and is the reason that PROP has organized a Legislative Day and encourages individual members to contact their local legislators. It is in this way that each legislator recognizes that there are constituents in their own district that have strong feelings on specific issues. While input from a statewide organization has value and can act as a unified voice, this input from local constituents often packs the strongest punch.

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Members of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives serve two year terms. Representing about a quarter of the constituents of their counterparts in the Senate, Representatives often enjoy a closer relationship with those in their district and uniquely local issues are of even more importance to them. Any discussions or correspondence with your representative needs to keep this in mind. Emphasize the local impacts of proposed legislative actions. When discussing recycling with them, be sure to explain what good has come of previous funding and how important continued funding will be to his or her constituents.

Much work is done through the committee process and it is important to keep a pulse on what issues are hot in committee discussions and hearings. Many pieces of legislation are introduced each session but most have a hard time getting out of committee. A bill is recommended to the appropriate committee initially and may sometimes go before several committees when elements of the bill are of concern to multiple committees.

The individual parties will often introduce bills in both chambers that are essentially the same with the ultimate goal of producing compatible legislations. However, amendments, both in committee and on the floor, frequently alter the original bill. After amendments, bills passed in one chamber may be vastly different from its companion legislation in the other chamber. When this happens, the bills will go before a joint conference committee to reconcile the differences. The compromise legislation is eventually voted up or down without amendments.

House Leadership

Position	Majority	Minority
• Speaker	John Perzel	
• Floor Leader	Samuel H. Smith	H. William DeWeese
• Whip	David G. Argall	Mike Veon
• Caucus Chair	Elinor Z. Taylor	Mark Cohen
• Caucus Secretary	Raymond Bunt, Jr.	Kevin Blaum
• Appropriations Committee Chair	Brett Feese	Dwight Evans
• Caucus Administrator	Merle Phillips	Fred Belardi
• Policy Committee Chair	Mario J. Civera, Jr.	Stephen Stetler

House Committees

Appropriations Committee

Majority (Room 245 Main Capitol)

Chairman	Feese, Brett
Vice Chairman	Fleagle, Patrick Elvin
Secretary	Reichley, Douglas

Subcommittee Chairs

Education	Zug, Peter J.
Fiscal Policy	Nickol, Steven R.
Health/Human Services	Baker, Matthew E.
Economic Impact and Infrastructure	Schroder, Curt

Republicans:

Armstrong, Gibson C.
 Barrar, Stephen E.
 Cappelli, Steven W.
 Dally, Craig
 DiGirolamo, Gene
 Forcier, Teresa
 Maher, John A.
 McGill, Eugene F.
 McIlhattan, Fred
 Petri, Scott
 Rohrer, Samuel E.
 Saylor, Stanley E.
 Stern, Jerry A.
 True, Katie

Minority (Room 512 Main Capitol)

Chairman	Evans, Dwight
Secretary	Walko, Don

Subcommittee Chairs

Education	Mundy, Phyllis
Fiscal Policy	Harold, James
Health/Human Services	Sturla, Michael P.
Economic Impact and Infrastructure	Tangretti, Thomas

Democrats:

Frankel, Dan
 Manderino, Kathy M.
 Melio, Anthony J.
 Myers, John
 Shapiro, Josh
 Washington, LeAnna M.
 Wheatley Jr., Jake

Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

Majority (Room 110 Ryan Building)

Chairman Adolph Jr., William F.
 Secretary Reed, Dave
 Subcommittee Chairs
 Energy McIhinney, Charles T.
 Parks and Forests Rubley, Carole A.
 Mining Stevenson, Richard R.

Republicans:

Armstrong, Gibson C.
 Causer, Martin T.
 Crahalla, Jacqueline R.
 Creighton, Thomas C.
 Harper, Kate
 Hershey, Arthur D.
 Hutchinson, Scott E.
 Miller, Ronald E.
 Pyle, Jeffrey P.
 Rapp, Kathy L.
 Ross, Chris

Minority (Room 38B East Wing)

Chairman George, Camille "Bud"
 Secretary Leach, Daylin
 Subcommittee Chairs
 Energy Vitali, Greg S.
 Parks and Forests Wansacz, John
 Mining Surra, Dan A.

Democrats:

Butkovitz, Alan L.
 Freeman, Robert L.
 Levdansky, David K.
 Mann, Jennifer L.
 McGeehan, Michael P.
 Thomas, W. Curtis
 Yudichak, John T.

Local Government Committee

Majority (Room 45 East Wing)

Chairman Herman, Lynn B.
 Secretary Petri, Scott A.
 Subcommittee Chairs
 Counties Major, Sandra J.
 Townships Hennessey, Tim
 Boroughs McNaughton, Mark S.

Republicans:

Gingerich, Mauree
 Harper, Kate
 Hickernell, David S.
 Kauffman, Rob
 Keller, Mark K.
 O'Neill, Bernard T.
 Payne, John D.
 Pyle, Jeffrey P.
 Ross, Chris
 Steil, David J.
 Stevenson, Thomas L.

Minority (Room 36 East Wing)

Chairman Lescovitz, Victor John
 Secretary Gerber, Michael
 Subcommittee Chairs
 Boroughs Harhai, R. Ted
 Counties Hanna, Michael K.
 Townships Freeman, Robert L.

Democrats:

Biancucci, Vincent A.
 Casorio, Jr., James E.
 Curry, Lawrence H.
 Leach, Daylin
 Ramaley, Sean M.
 Siptroth, John
 Yudichak, John T.

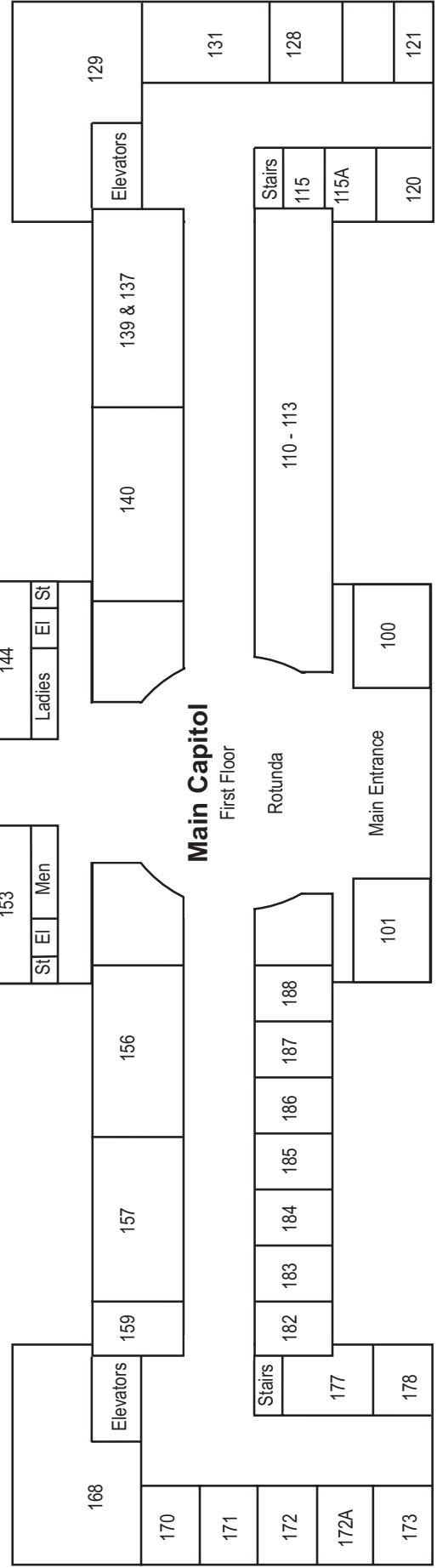
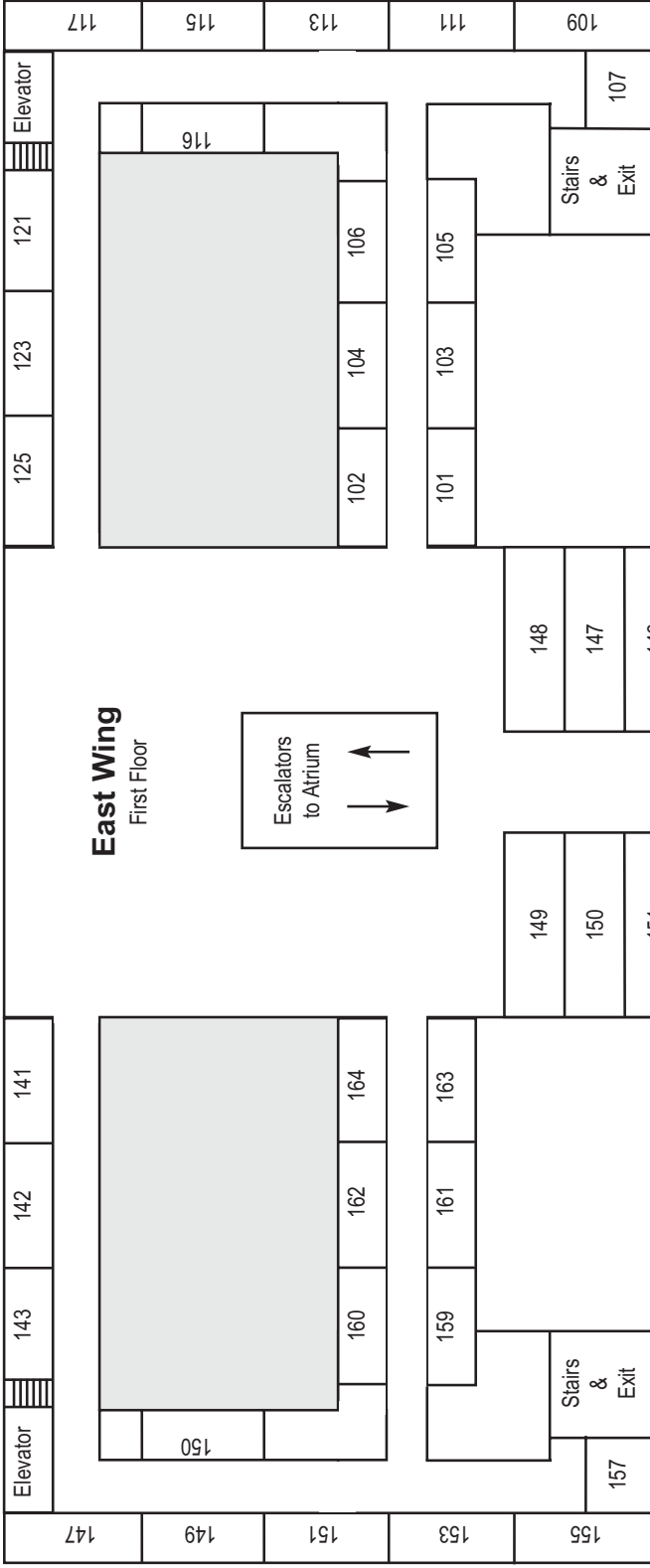
Tourism and Recreational Development Committee

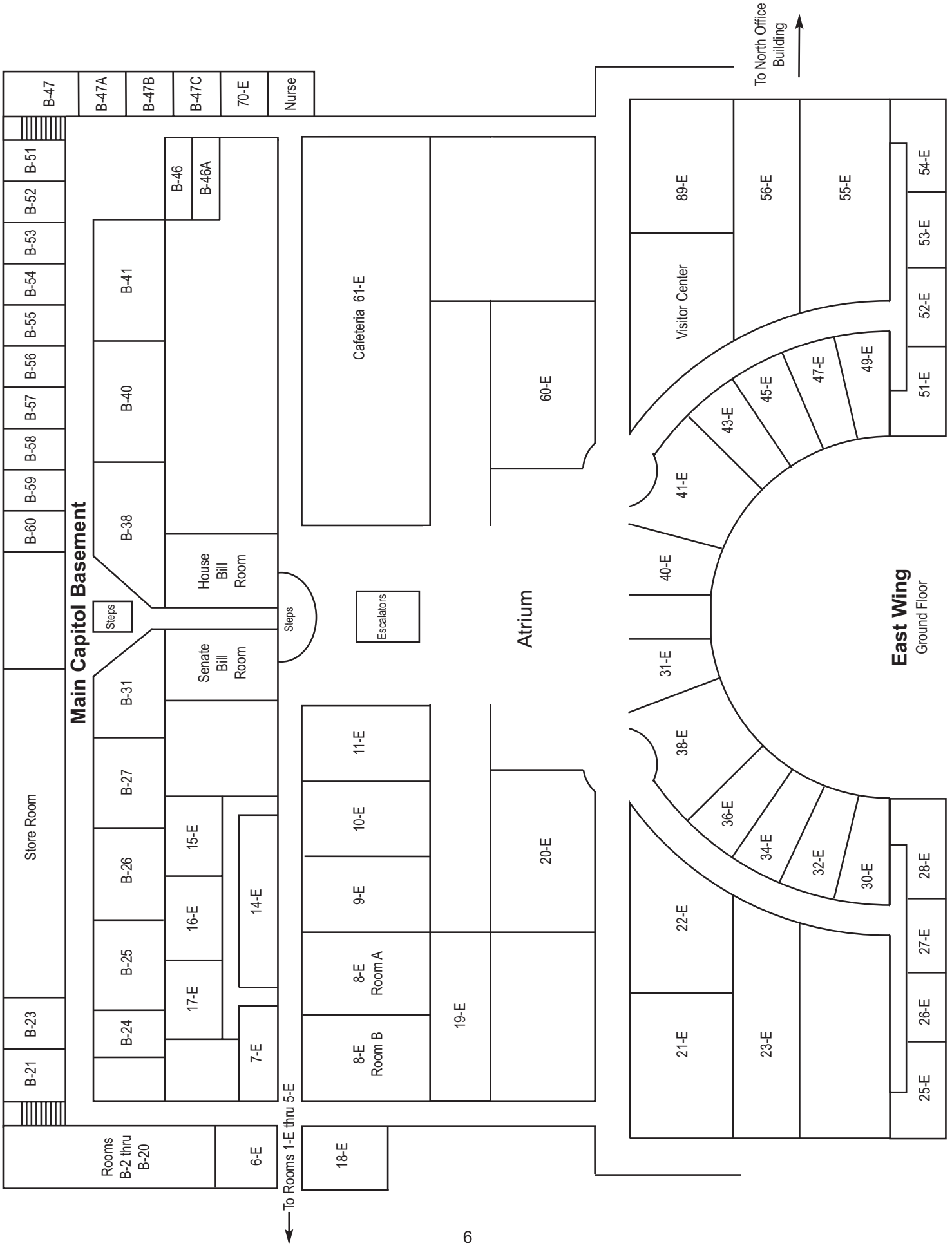
Majority (Room 150 Main Capitol)

Chairman Godshall, Robert
 Secretary Boyd, Scott W.
 Subcommittee Chairs
 Arts & Entertainment Metcalfe, Daryl D.
 Recreation Pickett, Tina
 Travel Promotion Scavello, Mario M.

Minority (Room 302 Main Capitol)

Chairman LaGrotta, Frank
 Secretary Santoni, Jr. Dante
 Subcommittee Chairs
 Arts & Entertainment Lederer, Marie A
 Travel Promotion Costa, Paul
 Recreation Sainato, Chris





The Pennsylvania Senate

Pennsylvania Senators serve four year terms and represent nearly a quarter million constituents. Though serving much larger districts than House members, it is still important to discuss the local ramifications of any legislative action. Though sometimes concerned with bigger picture issues, Senators still must answer to local voters and the voice of constituents wields considerable influence.

Like the House of Representatives, much work is done through the committee process. The dynamics of the two chambers are sometimes quite different. In recycling, solid waste and environmental legislation debated over the last few years, the Senate has generally experienced significantly fewer committee amendments. The smaller Senate committees have generated fewer amendments than their counterparts in the House during the committee process. Both the Growing Greener debate and the landfill permit moratorium bill reported out of committees were heavily amended in the House and nearly untouched in the Senate.

Though the Environmental Resources and Energy Committee is the primary committee dealing with recycling, solid waste and illegal disposal issues, several committees in both chambers discuss some aspect of recycling. When talking with Senators or Representatives, it is also worthwhile to discuss issues with specific committee staff and committee members.

Senate Leadership

Position	Majority	Minority
• Floor Leader	David J. Brightbill	Robert J. Mellow
• Whip	Jeffrey E. Piccola	Michael A. O'Pake
• Caucus Chairman	Noah W. Wenger	Jay Costa, Jr.
• Caucus Secretary	Robert D. Robbins	Gerald J. LaVale
• Appropriations Chairman	Robert Thompson	Vincent J. Fumo
• Caucus Administrator	Mary Jo White	Constance H. Williams
• Policy Committee Chairman	Joe Conti	Richard A. Kasunic

Senate Committees

Appropriations Committee

Majority

Thompson, Robert, Chair
Tomlinson, Robert, Vice Chair

Republicans:

Brightbill, David
Corman, Jake
Erickson, Edwin
Greenleaf, Stewart
Madigan, Roger
Orie, Jane
Rafferty, Jr., John
Rhoades, James
Scarnati, Joseph
Waugh, Michael L.
Wenger, Noah
White, Mary Jo

Minority

Fumo, Vincent, Minority Chair

Democrats:

Boscola, Lisa
Hughes, Vincent J.
Logan, Sean
Mellow, Robert
Musto, Raphael
O'Pake, Michael
Stack, Michael
Stout, J. Barry

Environment Resources & Energy Committee

Majority

White, Mary Jo, Chair
Erickson, Edwin, Vice Chair

Republicans:

Greenleaf, Stewart
Pippy, John
Rhoades, James
White, Donald

Minority

Musto, Raphael, Minority Chair

Democrats:

Costa, Jr. Jay
Stout, J. Barry
Williams, Anthony

Local Government Committee

Majority

Erickson, Edwin, Chair
Regola, Bob, Vice Chair

Republicans:

Robbins, Robert
Thompson, Robert
Vaugh, Michael L.
Wonderling, Robert

Minority

Ferlo, Jim, Minority Chair

Democrats:

Logan, Sean
Mellow, Robert
Williams, Anthony

Public Health & Welfars Committee

Majority

Corman, Jake, Chair
Orie, Jane, Vice Chair

Republicans:

Erickson, Edwin
Scarnati, Jim
Vance, Patricia
White, Mary Jo

Minority

Hughes, Vincent J., Minority Chair

Democrats:

Costa Jr., Jay
Kitchen, Shirley
O’Pake, Michael

Joint Legislative Committees

Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Conservation Committee Room 408, Finance Building

House Members

Hutchinson, Scott E., Chair

George, Camille, “Bud”

Grucela, Richard

Harhart, Julie

Petrone, Thomas C

Vitali, Greg

Senate Members

Musto, Raphael, Chair

Gordner, John

Kasunic, Richard A.

Madigan, Roger A.

Pippy, John

White, Mary Jo

Wonderling, Robert C.

Wozniak, John N.

Communicating Effectively With Your Legislator

Communicating with your legislator is not rocket science. But due to the volume of material that an elected official reads, it is important to follow some simple rules. Here are some tips to consider as you ponder how to become a valued resource to elected officials.

More is not better unless they ask for it. **Effective written communications are accurate, brief, clear, timely and followed with a phone call.** What is the most important nugget you want the elected official to remember about your cause? Do not cloud that issue with a lot of flowery window dressing. He/she should have no question on what you are trying to communicate. Example: “The loss of Act 101 funding would significantly impact p successful recycling and composting programs in our district. Please support reauthorization of the funding.”

Top ranking communications with elected officials: Spontaneous letters from constituents, office visits from consultants, articles in state/district newspapers, telephone calls from opinion leaders, research services, and telephone calls from constituents. Do not rely solely on your state and/or national organization to carry your water. **All politics are local; your elected officials want to hear from their constituents.** Second to accuracy, elected officials want to know that the issue is important to the people that vote in their elections.

Your letter to the elected official: Use personal letterhead, restrict correspondence to one page, communicate in your own words, ask the elected official to reply with their position on your issue, do not use a threatening tone, do not overstate your influence, be certain the letter arrives ahead of the vote and always say thank you. Personal letters mean much more than mass-produced propaganda, particularly when the elected official can trace the correspondence to a constituent. You have more clout than you might think!

Threats do not work on you; do not think they help your cause either. **Even if the elected official does not agree with your position, be polite and say thank you.** You will probably have the occasion to need them again. There is no value to burning bridges.

Don't be partisan. Your political affiliation is only valid at the poll. Your challenge is to work as best as you can with the person currently in office. Keep in mind that recycling has been a non-partisan issue in Pennsylvania.

Portions of this section were taken from an article published by the Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profit Organizations (PANO) and are reprinted here with permission. Visit www.pano.org for the dates and locations of “Building a Relationship With Your Elected Official” workshops and other valuable information.

News Updates

PROP's ongoing efforts to sustain interest in long term support of recycling in Pennsylvania are focusing on educating legislators on the economic and environmental benefits of recycling, composting, waste reduction and proper disposal. There is no better way to accomplish this goal than by improving the exchange of information with your legislator. Add legislators and/or their staffs to your mailing lists for news updates or newsletters. Though many legislators may not actually read your updates, staffers or legislative research offices might take a look at them. Even the presence of your logo in their mailboxes increases visibility and general awareness of the issues. When you send the first newsletter or news release, be sure to let the legislator know why you have included him or her on your mailing list. The more your legislator hears good news about recycling in his or her legislative district, the more likely he or she will be to vote favorably on the subject in the future.

Letters and E-Mails

Letters and e-mails can be another effective way to improve communications with your legislator. The tone of your letter may be very formal or quite informal, depending on your relationship with the legislator. Many recycling professionals have come to know some legislators, especially Representatives on a first name basis and may have the liberty of communicating with them in an informal basis. When in doubt, always take the more formal approach, so as not to offend the elected official.

Consider dropping a line to the elected official every time you have a notable conversation. It is beneficial to follow up with a written response to confirm and reinforce what you said in your discussion. It also gives the legislator something to place in his file for future reference on the subject.

These kinds of follow-ups may also be sometimes well suited to an e-mail response. But know your legislator. Some do not use e-mail as extensively as others and it's important to recognize that. Do not be afraid to ask the receptionist, secretary or staffer what makes the most sense for their boss. Staff correspondence is frequently best addressed by e-mail. Just use your e-mail with discretion. If an issue is likely to generate high volumes of e-mail, much of it is never read. Similarly, if you send correspondence too frequently you run the risk of being victimized by a quick finger to the delete button before your message is ever read.

Meetings and Events

Meet with your legislator whenever the opportunity presents itself. Many have local office hours and encourage constituents to visit with them. Like your written correspondence, approach the meeting with the degree of formality that seems most appropriate. Be brief and to the point and remember to emphasize the local ramifications.

Don't be afraid to invite legislators to events that you organize. Open houses, award ceremonies, presentations, cleanups, and similar events are often attractive to them. While they may frequently decline, you may be occasionally surprised. Politicians like to show their constituents that they are paying attention and recycling and cleanup efforts are always positive events and seldom controversial. Be sure to recognize them when they do make it and follow-up with a thank you note

Building Support Through Local Constituents

PROP and other statewide organizations play an important role in advocacy and lobbying but are only a part of a complete legislative outreach effort. The old saying that "all politics are local" holds very true when dealing with the state legislature. Each of us need to build a broad base of local support, empowering many of our local politicians, government staff, grassroots organizations, businesses and individuals to be advocates of recycling.

Though much of this section focuses on empowering local government, it is also important to get businesses and recycling advocates involved. Keep publicizing the positives that have come from your recycling efforts and encourage advocates to speak out to both local and state government officials. The recently completed study by the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) showed that recycling has had a significant impact on the economy of the state and everyone needs to hear that message.

Local and State Government Connections

Local governments have great power in the state of Pennsylvania. Remember, too, that the recycling requirements of Act 101 fall squarely on the shoulders of local municipalities and that they should be a loud voice to the legislature. Each of us must try to encourage others to speak for recycling.

- Talk with other local government officials, especially elected officials.
- Build on already established relationships. If a local government official talks with a legislator often, ask him or her to mention recycling issues when the opportunity presents itself.
- Stress the implications of the lapsing of Act 101 funding to local governments. Curbside recycling becomes an unfunded mandate if funding is not restored.

Educating Local Officials

An important part of this effort is educating local government officials. In much the same way we encouraged you to communicate with your legislators, we hope that you will enhance communication with both your elected officials and neighboring local governments. Encourage local government officials to become active and to let their state associations know that this issue is of importance. Since both elected and appointed local government officials are wearing a number of hats, it may be beneficial if you help facilitate that communication.

Getting Around the Capitol

The Capitol Complex can be a very confusing place not just politically, but geographically. Legislators and their staffs are scattered throughout a number of buildings and it can be easy for even repeat visitors to be confused by room numbers, building names and how to navigate from one place to another. It is with this in mind that we offer some visual aids to help our membership better deal with the confusion.

Security is now a greater concern in the Capitol and measures have been taken to address the issue. Visitors must use the public entrances - East Wing Entrance at the fountain on Commonwealth Avenue (also the handicapped entrance) and the Main Rotunda Entrance at Third and State Streets. On weekdays, groups of 20 or more must enter through the East Wing.

All visitors to the Capitol will be processed through metal detectors. All bags and packages will be x-rayed, and are subject to hand inspection. Personal items may be hand-inspected. Security screening may require whole body pat-down. Confiscated materials will not be returned. Items may not be delivered or left behind. Visitors exiting the Capitol must be reprocessed for return entry.

