

# Senator Lisa Brown's 10 Tips for Working with Your Legislature

- 1. It's not enough to be Right.** You need to understand the political process, access the power, and engage the personal relationships.
- 2. Do whatever you are comfortable with on the advocacy continuum, but DO IT!**
- 3. Your actions are multiplied when you are involved with organizations who are involved in the process.**
- 4. Understand the process.** See that your work is focused on the right people at the right times; e.g. Committee Chairs. Think through the whole bill process, to the Governor's desk and back to the start to figure out how you are going to get there.
- 5. Follow the Money.** Who influences the key decision makers? Who gets to them?
- 6. Make your meeting productive.** Introduce self and issue as briefly as possible – use a one-pager. Be specific – tell them what you want and what you want THEM to do. Ask for something measurable. If there is a downside for them, tell them.
- 7. There are 2 currencies in the legislature – 1) a person's Integrity and 2) Information.** Interest is in preventing the worst case scenario and in getting the most good for the most parties. Where are others on the issue?
- 8. Don't Burn Bridges.**
- 9. Use staff in creative ways to get your message out.** Personal staff, committee staff, caucus staff - use them to get to the decision-maker.
- 10. Use creative ways to get the message across.** e.g., Thanking them for what they did last year as an entrée for a new issue. Can you legitimately tie your issue to something else you know is important to them?