

# **Essentials of Effective Legislative Advocacy**



# **Essential No. 1**

**Be a Registered Voter  
Vote at every opportunity**



# Voter Eligibility Standards

- **Must be a United States Citizen**
- **Must be a Kentucky Resident (it takes 28 days to establish residence in Kentucky)**
- **Must be at least 18 years old before the general election**
- **Must NOT be a convicted felon**
- **Must NOT have been judged mentally incompetent**
- **Must NOT claim to be able to vote outside Kentucky**



# How to Register to Vote

- Contact your County Clerk and secure a voter registration card, or: visit [www.elect.ky.gov](http://www.elect.ky.gov)
- Have the following information ready
  - Social Security Number
  - Date of Birth
  - Telephone Number
  - Address
- Choose a Party Affiliation.
  - Democrat
  - Republican
  - Other
    - *Please note, in Kentucky you can only vote in the primary election under the party you register under*



# **Essential No. 2**

**Know Your Elected Officials**



# Your Elected Officials in Washington

- **President, Joe Biden**
- **Senators:**
  - Mitch McConnell
  - Rand Paul
- **Representatives**
  - Kentucky has 6 congressional representatives



# Your Elected Officials in Frankfort

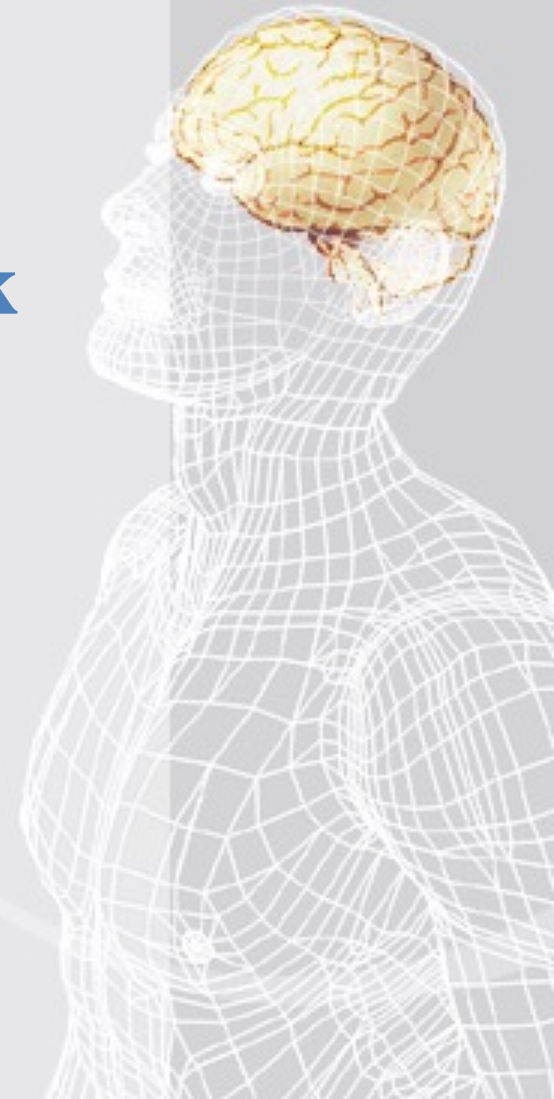
- **Governor, Andy Beshear**
- **Senator, Kentucky has 38 Senate Districts**
- **Representative, Kentucky has 100 House Districts**





# How do I Know Who My Legislators are?

- Go to Project Vote Smart at [www.votesmart.org](http://www.votesmart.org)
- or, Call your local County Clerk





# Some more things you need to know

- **Their contact information:**
  - Telephone Number
  - Mailing Address
  - E-mail Address
  - Web Site Address
- **Committees/Chairmanships**
  - In both Washington and in Frankfort, each elected Representative and Senator will serve on a standing committee. They may serve on that committee as the chairman you need to know this.



# How do I find this out?

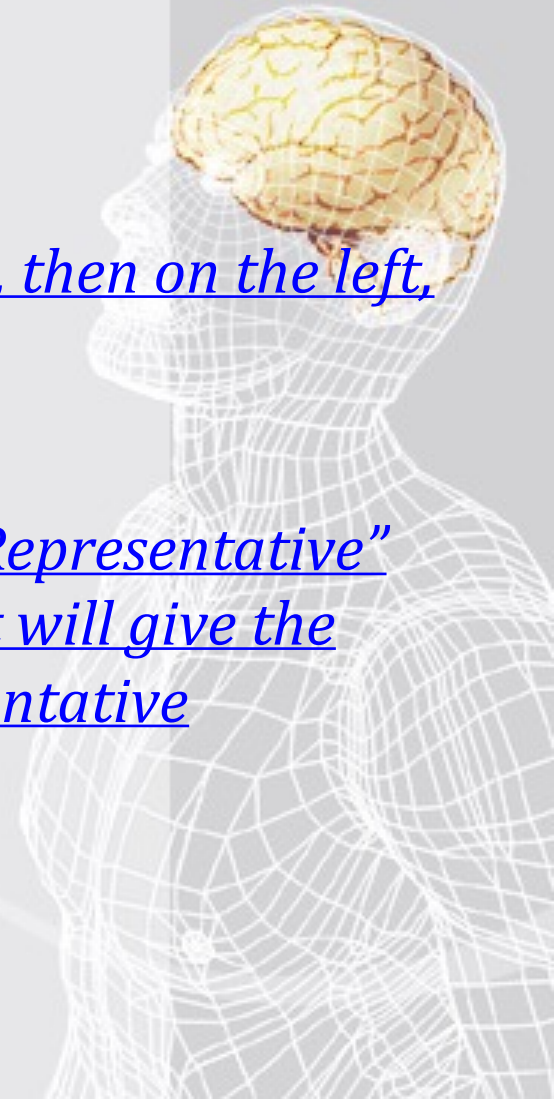
- **In Washington**

- **Senators**

- [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) click on Committees, then on the left, click on assignments

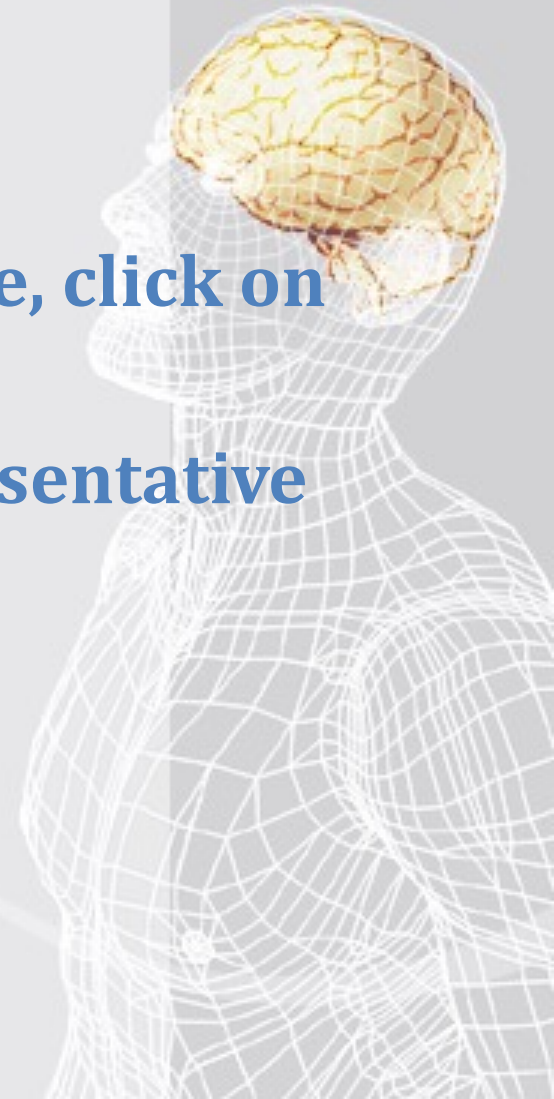
- **Representative**

- [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) click on “Find Your Representative” then choose Kentucky from the map. It will give the committee assignment of each representative



# How do I find this out?

- In Frankfort
  - Go to [www.lrc.ky.gov](http://www.lrc.ky.gov)
  - On the left side of the Home page, click on “Who’s My Legislator”
  - Click either for senator or representative and go to their page



# **Why is this Important?**

**A particular piece of legislation  
may be referred to their committee  
and they can help get the  
legislation out of committee**

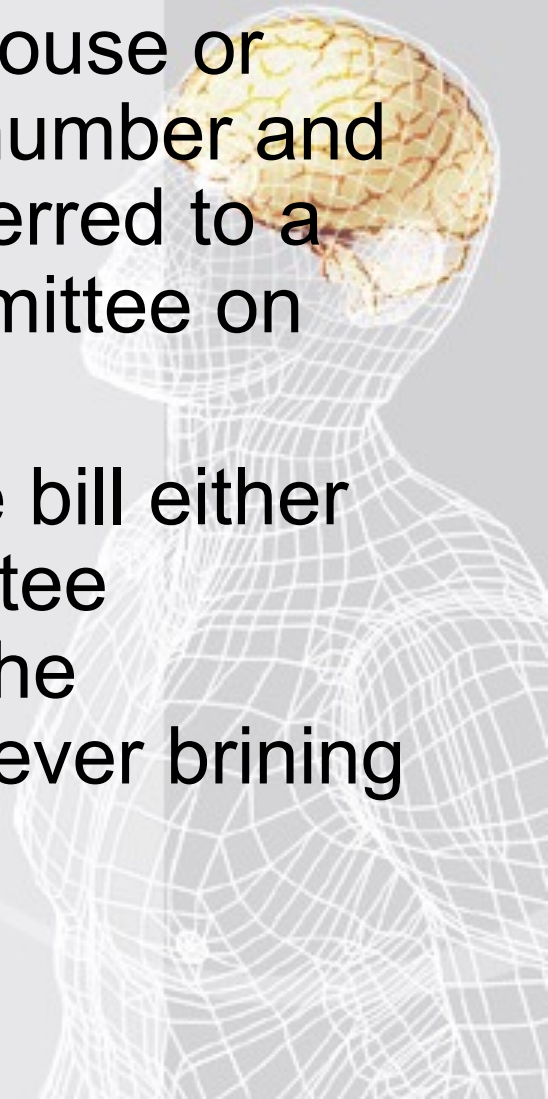


# How a Bill becomes Law



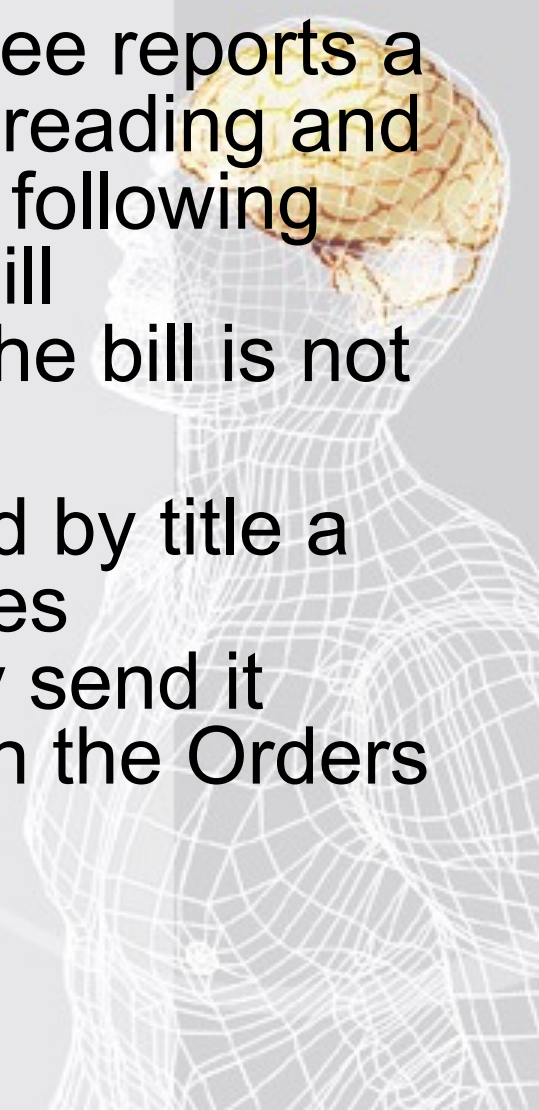
# How a Bill Becomes Law

1. A bill may be introduced in the House or Senate. Each bill is assigned a number and is given a title. After that, it is referred to a standing committee by the Committee on Committees
2. The Committee will report on the bill either favorable, favorable with committee substitute or unfavorable. Also, the committee may “kill” the bill by never bringing it up for a committee vote.



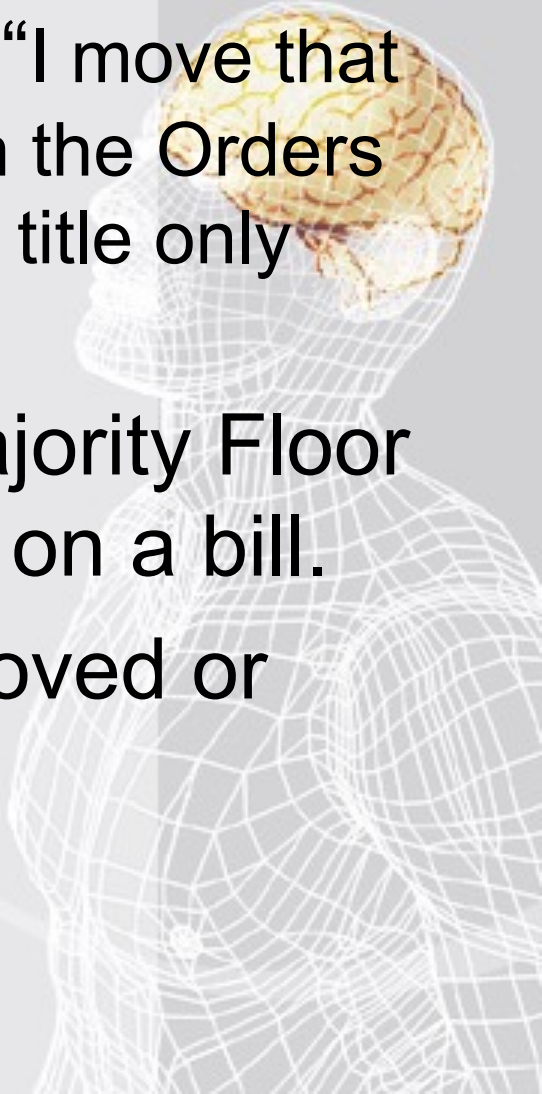


# How a Bill Becomes Law

- 3. First Reading:** When a committee reports a bill favorably, the bill has its first reading and is placed in the Calendar for the following day. If the committee reports a bill unfavorably or without opinion, the bill is not likely to go any further.
  - 4. Second Reading:** the bill is read by title a second time and sent to the Rules Committee. This committee may send it back to a committee or place it in the Orders of the Day for a specific day
- 



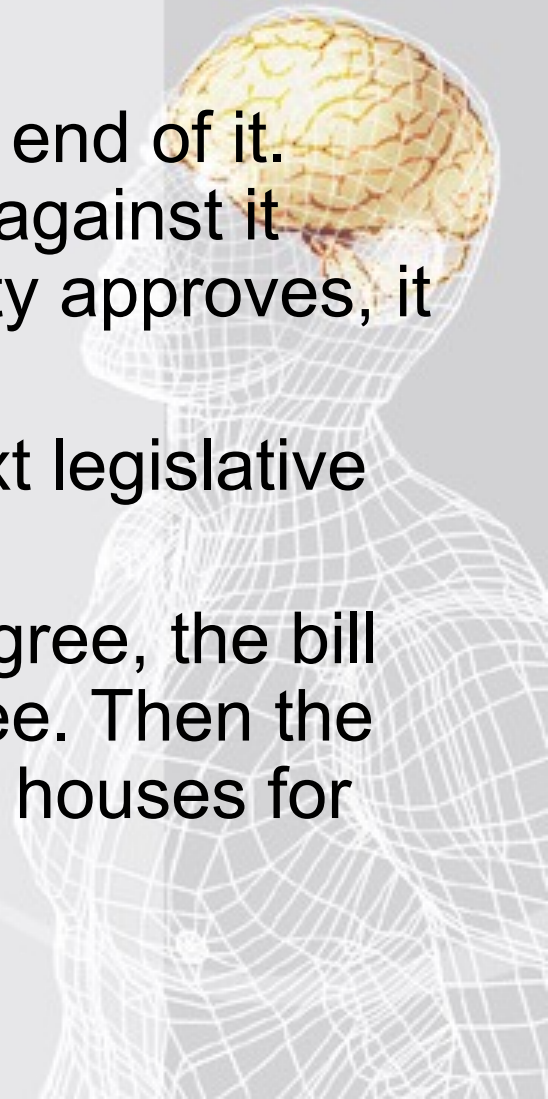
# How a Bill Becomes Law

- 5. Third Reading and Passage:** “I move that \_\_\_\_\_ Bill # be taken from its place in the Orders of the Day, read for the third time by title only and placed upon its passage.”
- This motions is made by the Majority Floor Leader and begins floor debate on a bill.
  - The bill may be amended, approved or defeated.
- 

# How a Bill Becomes Law

## 6. The Vote

- If a bill is defeated, that is usually the end of it. However, if two members who voted against it request reconsideration and a majority approves, it may gain new life.
- If a bill passes, it is sent on to the next legislative body where the process is repeated.
- If the House and Senate's bill don't agree, the bill is then sent to a conference committee. Then the compromised bill is sent back to both houses for approval.



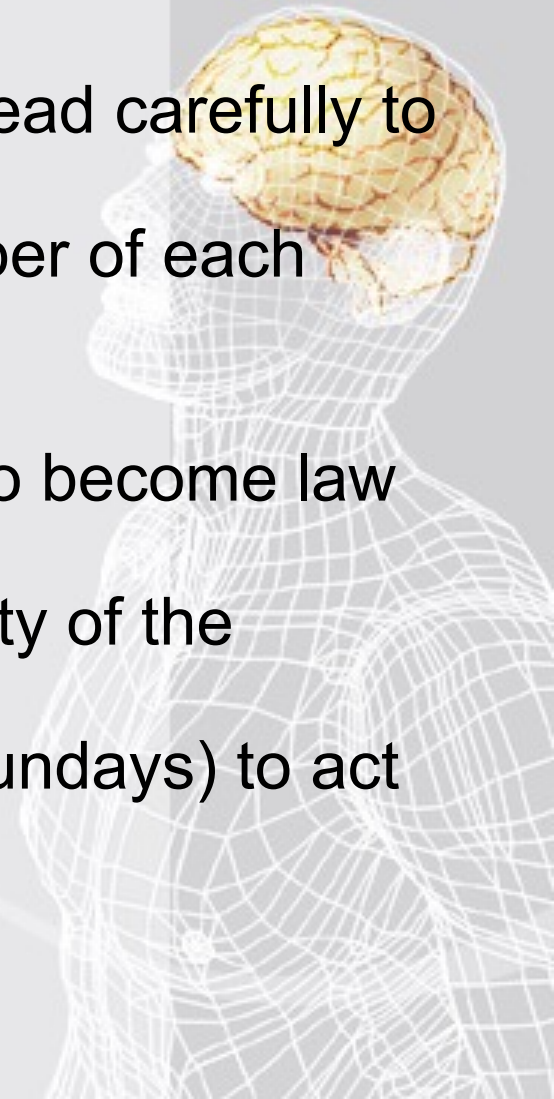
# How a Bill Becomes Law

## 7. Enrollment

- After passage by both houses, a bill is read carefully to make sure the wording is correct.
- The bill is signed by the presiding member of each house and sent to the Governor.

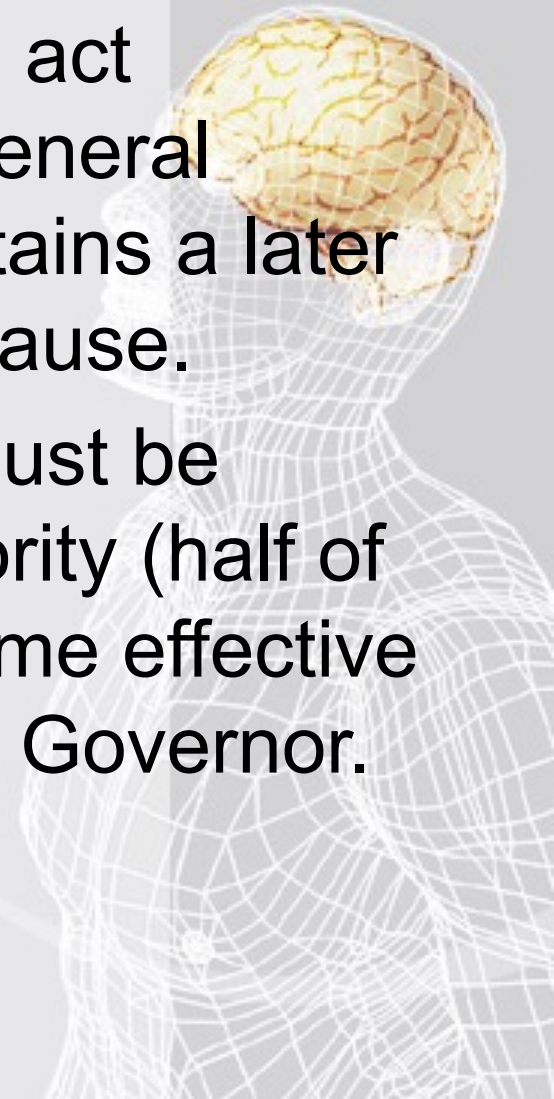
## 8. Governor's Action

- The Governor may sign a bill, permit it to become law with signing it, or veto it.
- The veto may be overridden by a majority of the members of the House and Senate.
- The governor has 10 days (excluding Sundays) to act on a bill after it has been received.



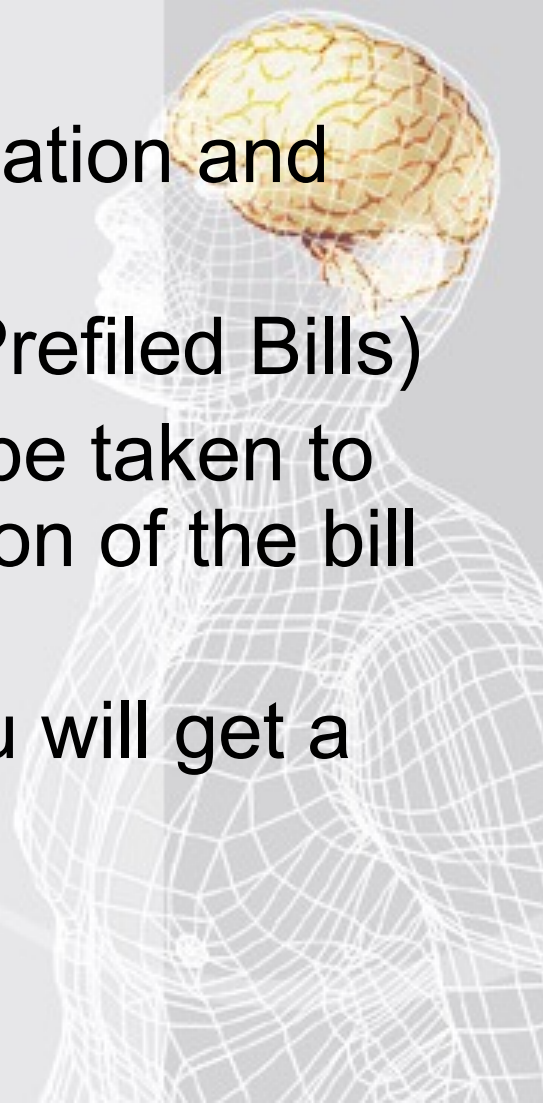
# Becoming Law

- The Constitution specifies that an act becomes law 90 days after the General Assembly adjourns, unless it contains a later effective date or an emergency clause.
- Bills with an emergency clause must be approved by a constitutional majority (half of the members plus one) and become effective immediately upon approval of the Governor.



# How to Follow a Bill

- Go to: <http://www.lrc.state.ky.us/>
- In the left margin, click on: “Legislation and Legislative Record”
- Click on 2009 Regular Session (Prefiled Bills)
- Click on the number of the bill to be taken to a page that gives a brief description of the bill and its sponsor.
- By clicking on the bill number, you will get a link to the full wording of the bill.



# How to Effectively Communicate with your Legislator

The Do's and Don'ts  
Writing Effective Letters  
Calling and E-Mail





# The Do's and Don't of Effective Advocacy

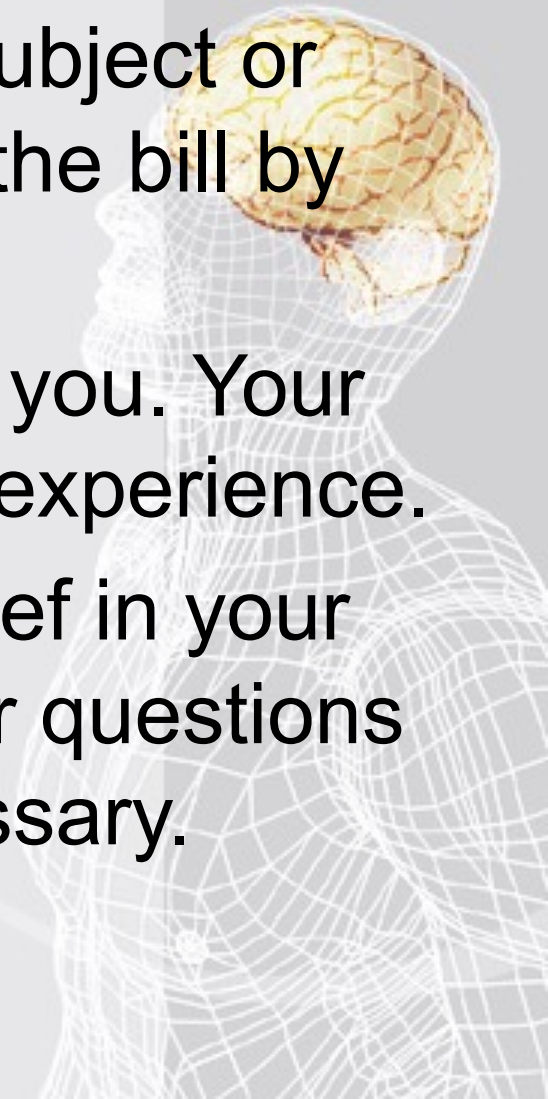
- Do: Get to know your State and Federal Representatives
- Do: Remember that personal communications are the most effective, i.e., in-person contacts, telephone calls and personal letters (not form letters)
- Do: Be sure your legislator knows whom, or what group you are representing when you contact them about an issue.





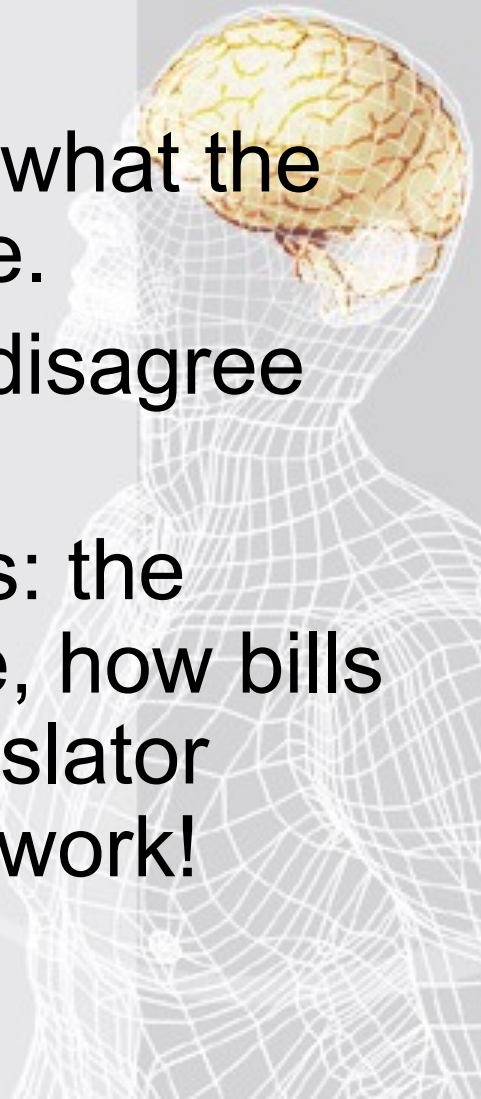
# More Do's

- Give a brief description of the subject or bill that interests you – not just the bill by number.
- Explain how an issue concerns you. Your best evidence is your personal experience.
- Be polite, be specific and be brief in your communication. Offer to answer questions or get more information if necessary.



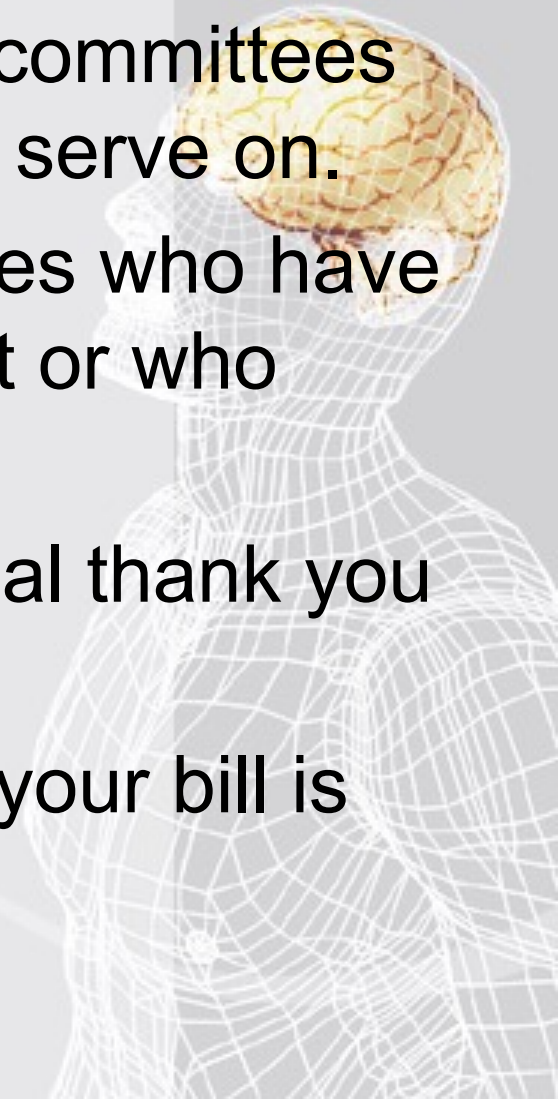
# The Do's

- Be positive and friendly
- Be a good listener and hear out what the legislator has to say on the issue.
- Respect the legislator's right to disagree and to vote against your issue.
- Know how the bill process works: the committee system, the timetable, how bills come for a vote, etc. Let the legislator know you have done your homework!



# Do

- Know which committees and subcommittees your representative and senators serve on.
- Follow up by supporting candidates who have worked for your issues in the past or who indicate who will in the future.
- Follow up your visit with a personal thank you note for their time
- Remember to say “Thank You” if your bill is passed



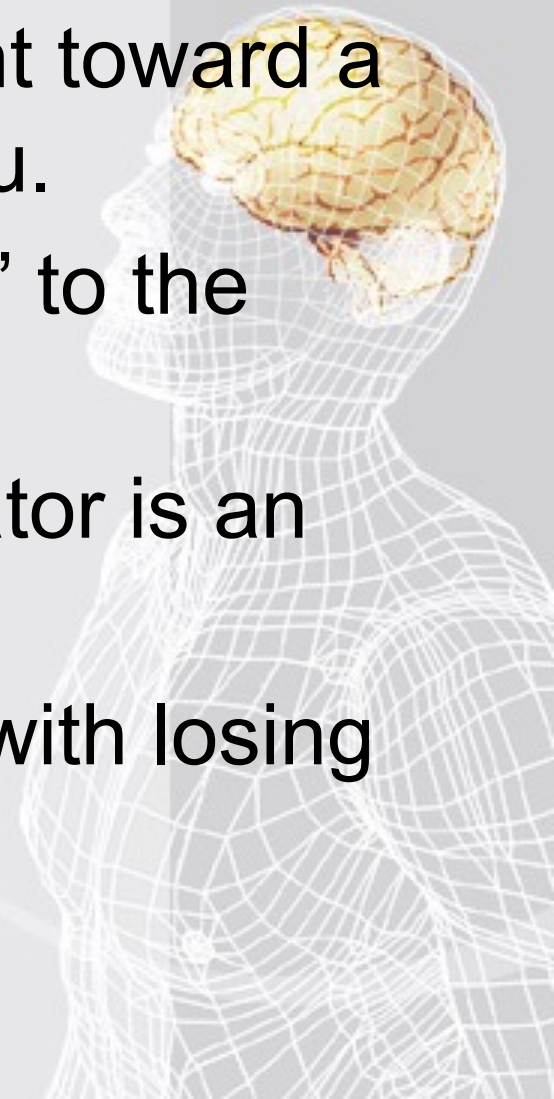
# The Don'ts

- Don't be pushy
- Don't be sarcastic, critical or threatening,
- Don't visit too long.
- Don't be misleading about the facts, the extent of the issue or the opposition to your position.
- Don't try to tell your legislator how to vote on a bill.



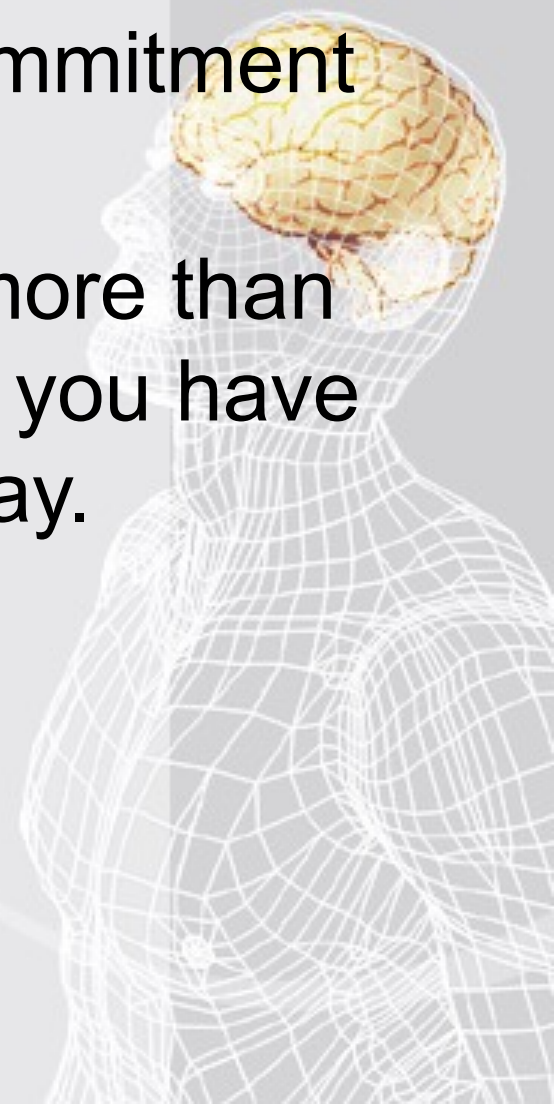
# The Don'ts

- Don't show anger or resentment toward a legislator who votes against you.
- Don't forget to say, "Thank You" to the legislator, or policy-maker.
- Don't assume that every legislator is an expert on every issue.
- Don't ever threaten legislators with losing your vote.



# Don't

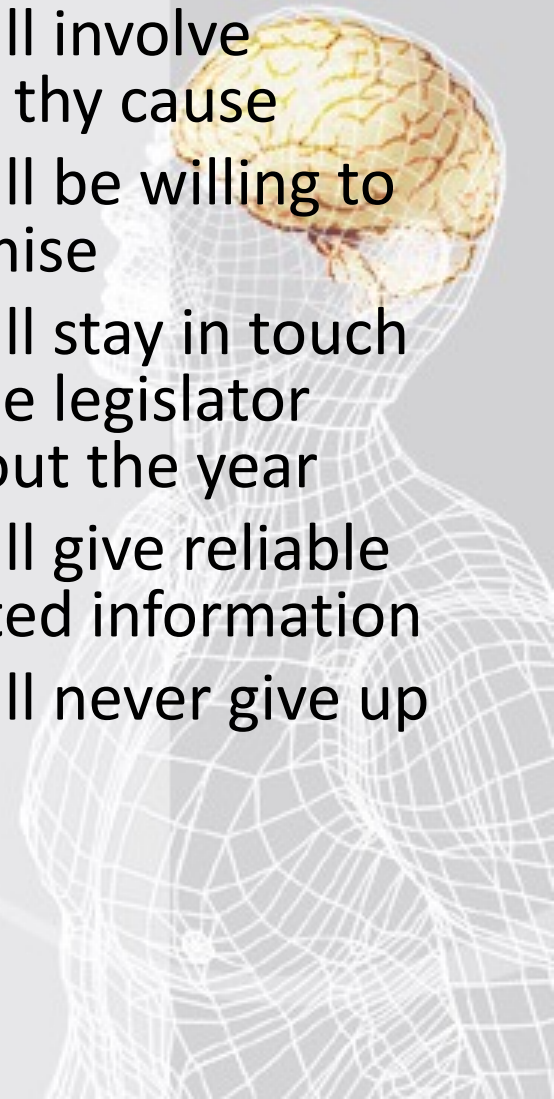
- Don't expect an on-the-spot commitment to your issue.
- Don't visit the same legislator more than once on the same issue unless you have something new or different to say.





# Ten Commandments of Advocacy

- I. Thou Shall Register and Vote
- II. Thou shall know thine Representative, Senator, Governor and staff
- III. Thou shall know thy issue well
- IV. Thou shall be truthful to thy Legislator
- V. Thou shall build partnerships and coalitions
- VI. Thou shall involve others in thy cause
- VII. Thou shall be willing to compromise
- VIII. Thou shall stay in touch with thine legislator throughout the year
- IX. Thou shall give reliable and trusted information
- X. Thou shall never give up





# The Most Important Commandment

- THOU SHALL TREAT THE LEGISLATOR OR POLICY-MAKER AS THOU WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED!



# Writing Effective Letters

- Addressing the Letter Properly  
House of Representatives

The Honorable John Doe  
Kentucky House of Representatives  
Capitol Annex  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Or

The Honorable John Doe  
Home Street Address  
City, State, and Zip Code



# Writing Effective Letters

Addressing the letter properly  
Kentucky Senate

Senator Jane Doe  
Capitol Annex  
Frankfort, KY 40601

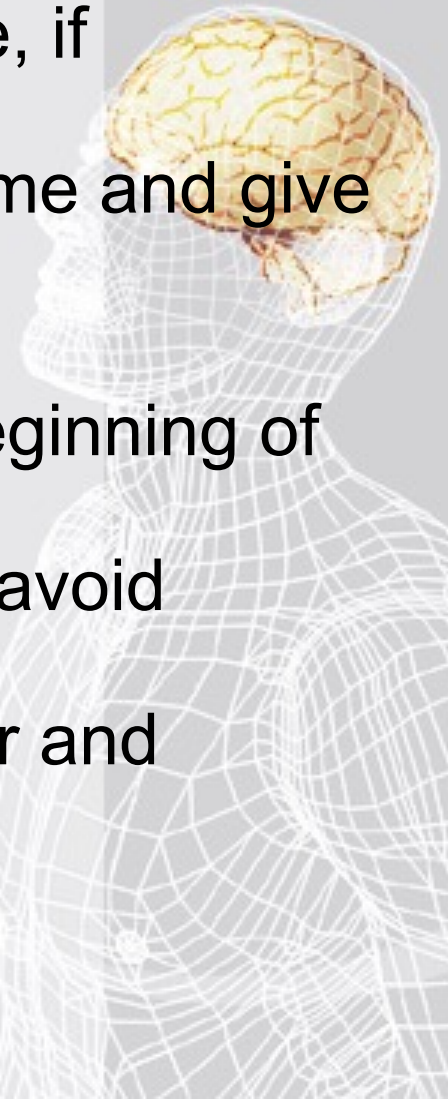
Or

Senator Jane Doe  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code



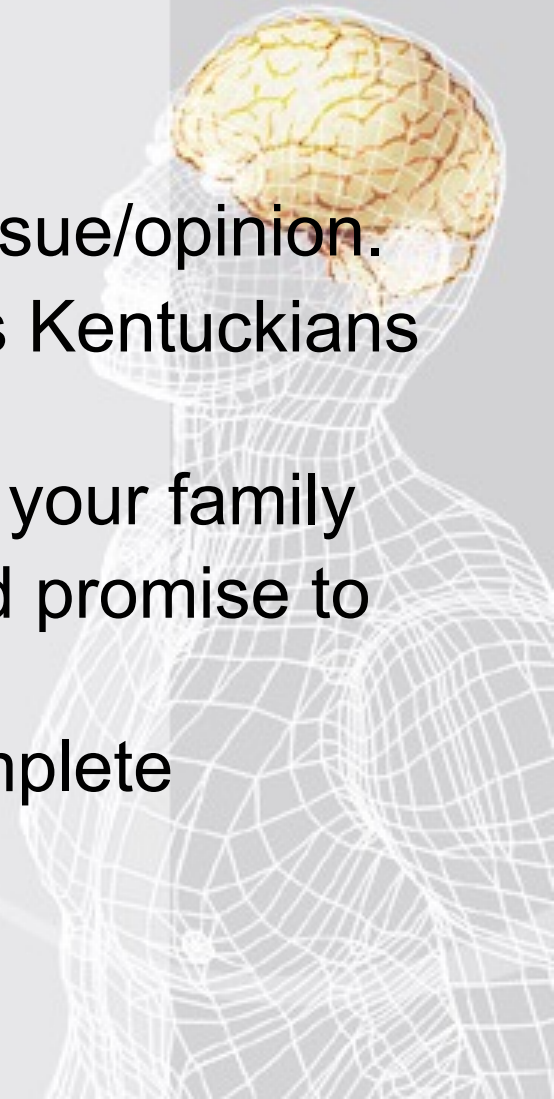
# More Hints for Effective Letters

1. Keep the letter brief and just one page, if possible.
2. Type or write legibly and sign your name and give your address.
3. Cover only one issue per letter.
4. Identify your issue or opinion at the beginning of the letter.
5. Avoid abbreviations or acronyms and avoid technical jargon.
6. Use a personal letter over a from letter and address only one legislator per letter.



# What to Include in the Letter

- I. Date
- II. Inside address
- III. Identification of yourself and your issue/opinion.
- IV. Explain briefly how the issue affects Kentuckians and give any recent facts
- V. Illustrate how the issue affects you/ your family
- VI. Ask for your legislator's support and promise to follow up for their opinion
- VII. Sign the letter and include your complete address and telephone number



# To Call Your Legislator

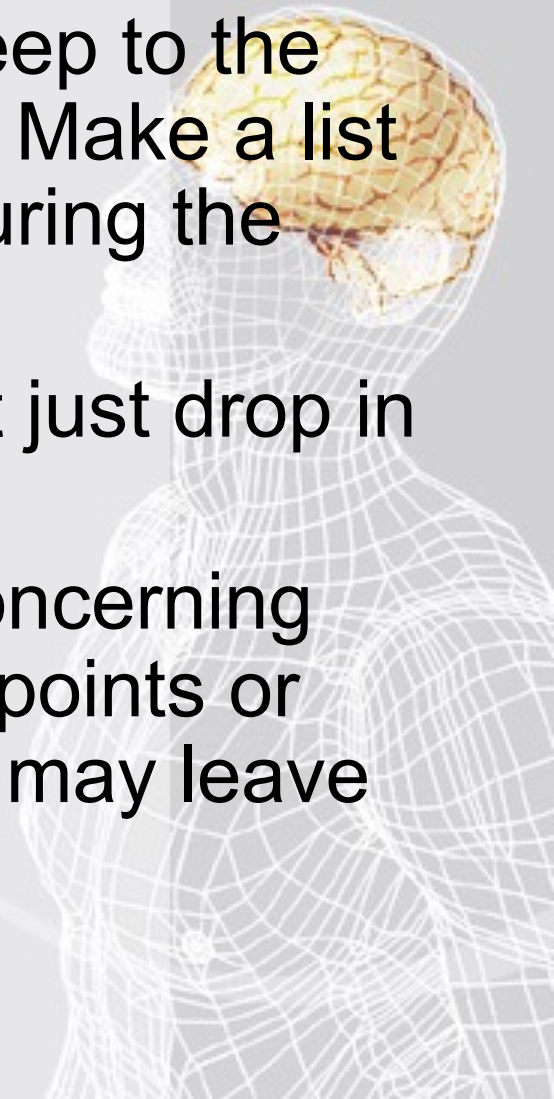
- Legislative Message Line 1-800-372-7181
- TTY Message Line 1-800-896-0305
- En Espanol 1-877-287-3134
- Bill Status Line 1-877-257-5541





# Making Effective Calls and Visits

- Plan your call or visit carefully. Keep to the point and discuss only one issue. Make a list of the points you want to cover during the visit to phone call.
- **MAKE AN APPOINTMENT!** Don't just drop in and keep the visit brief.
- Prepare a one-page fact sheet concerning your issue. Legislators like bullet points or numbered lists. If necessary, you may leave the fact sheet with the secretary.





# Effective Calls or Visits

- Avoid excess emotions such as tears or profanity. DO NOT get angry or be abusive in any way! The legislator does want to know how issues affect you personally; but they don't like being exploited or abused.
- Be brief, to the point and polite.

