Advocacy in The Missouri General Assembly, 2005

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Overview

- The New General Assembly
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Alternative Engagement Strategies
- Conclusion
## The New General Assembly, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Senate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>66 (40%)</td>
<td>11 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>97 (60%)</td>
<td>22 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>128 (79%)</td>
<td>27 (82%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35 (21%)</td>
<td>6 (18%)</td>
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<td>Average Tenure</td>
<td>2.3 Years</td>
<td>1.8 Years</td>
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Average Tenure, Missouri General Assembly, 1911-2005
Environmental Challenges

- Agenda driven majority
- Campaign rather than governing focus
- Turnover/inexperience
- Basic values frequently differ from those of advocates
- Low level of knowledge about your issues
- Budget!
Environmental Challenges

- Legislative process forces decisions
  - Hundreds of important decisions/each session
  - Regardless of quality & amount of information
- Legislators often unable to connect specific voting decisions to specific outcomes
  - At the time
  - Or even after the fact
Organizational Challenges

- Traditional lobbying strategy
  - Problem → solution
  - Preferred solution “locked in”
  - Persuasion/advocacy
- New environment requires new strategies
Opportunities

- Great informational needs
- Opportunity to develop new relationships
- Reach out to other groups
- Chance for creative solutions
Possible Engagement Strategies

- Broaden approach
  - Year round
  - Use interim fully
- Engage those w/ differing values
- Develop educational strategy
  - Concepts and facts
- Focus and Priorities
  - Can’t do everything
  - Target highly critical issues
Possible Engagement Strategies

- Identify pragmatists
- Involve legislators in consensus building
- Meet them half way
  - Remain open to solutions that:
    - Fit legislators’ values
    - Address problems
- Remember staff
Conclusion

- Recognize the two insular cultures
  - Yours
  - That of most legislators
- Many solutions not just one
- Develop broad legislative and public engagement strategy
- Education, education, education
Conclusion

- The whole enchilada
  - Progress is success even if not complete success
- “Reformers are only mornin’ glories”
- Patience, persistence