

Advocacy in The Missouri General Assembly, 2005

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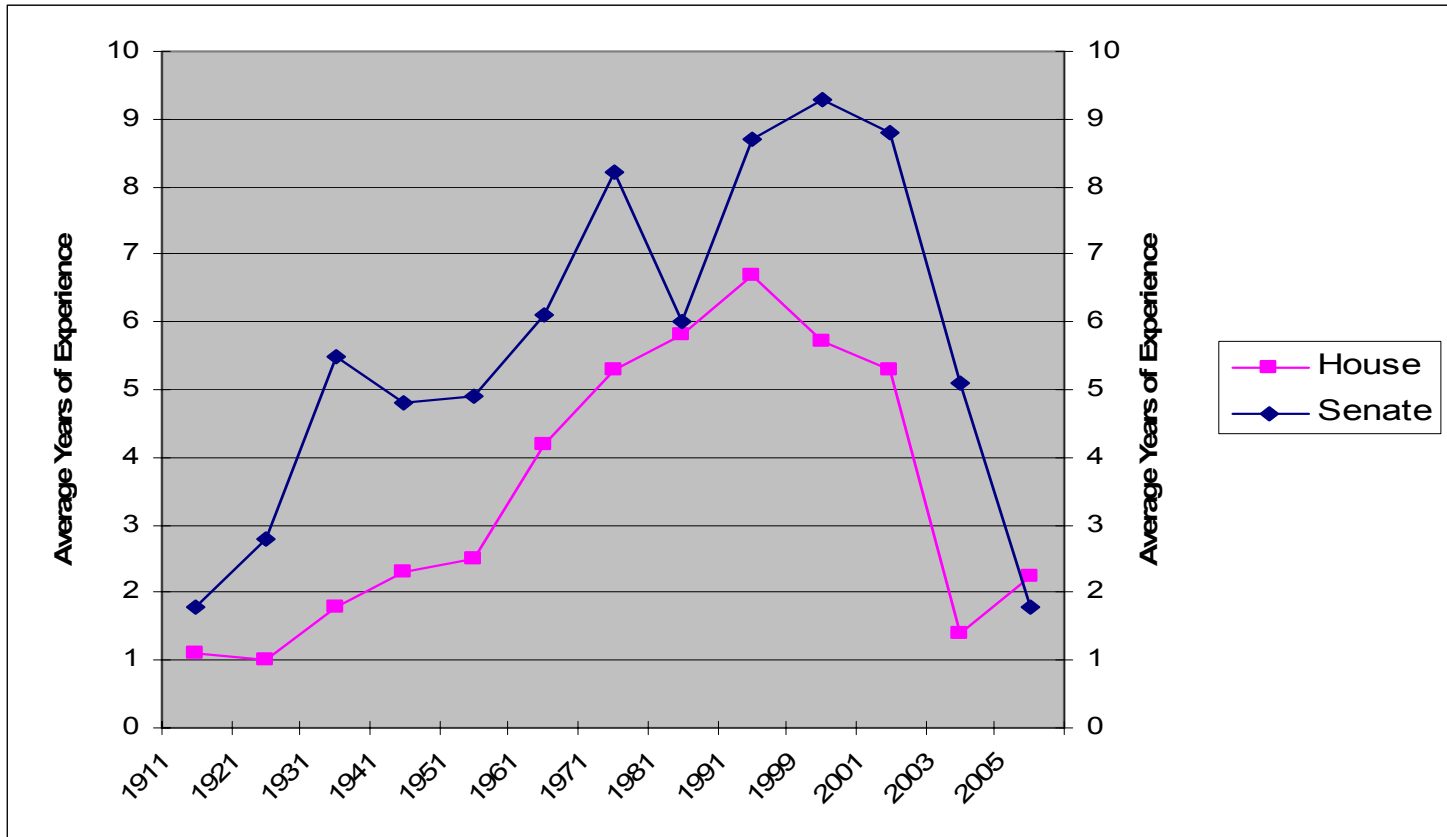
Overview

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

The New General Assembly, 2005

| | House | Senate |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| Democrats | 66 (40%) | 11 (33%) |
| Republicans | 97 (60%) | 22 (66%) |
| Male | 128 (79%) | 27 (82%) |
| Female | 35 (21%) | 6 (18%) |
| Average Tenure | 2.3 Years | 1.8 Years |

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