

CAMPAIGN CHRONICLES

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The CENTER FOR TOBACCO POLICY & ORGANIZING

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WORKING ON TOBACCO CONTROL POLICIES

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SPECIAL EDITION NEWSLETTER: Elected Officials

Educating Legislators Locally Week of September 18-22

With any elected official it is important to always keep building and strengthening your relationship. They are busy and have a variety of important issues on their minds. By visiting your legislator and educating them however, you remind them what an essential issue tobacco control is to their constituents and remind them that you are a resource for them on this important topic.

The fall is an excellent opportunity to strengthen and build ongoing relationships with your state legislators and their district staff. Officially, the 2005-06 legislative session ends on August 31 which means your elected officials are back in their districts meeting with constituents. The Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing is sponsoring Local Legislative District Days to encourage and assist you in visiting your legislator's district offices and remind them of the all the good work you are doing in your (and their) communities.

Because we recognize that not everyone can come to Sacramento for Capitol Information & Education Days, District Days is a great opportunity to involve coalition folks or key opinion leaders who are involved in your tobacco control work.

The goal of District Days is to have everyone across the state schedule visits with their legislators during the week of September 18-22. As you remind your legislator of the all the work you are doing in their community you'll be part of a coordinated wave of information and education about the importance of tobacco control around the state.

We hope that you and your coalition members will get involved in the Second Annual Local Legislative District Days!

TCS policy does not allow its contractors to utilize Prop 99 funds for lobbying purposes.

CAPITOL I&E DAYS A SUCCESS

Because of term limits in the State Legislature very few legislators know about Prop 99 and the great work done around the state and in their district on tobacco control issues. Capitol Information & Education (I&E) Days are a perfect opportunity to educate legislators of the importance of your local tobacco control program and the tobacco control issues impacting your (and their) community.

On April 19-20, 2006 the Center for Tobacco Policy & Organizing joined with TCS, the Priority Population Partnerships and Local Lead Agencies to host the eleventh annual Capitol Tobacco I&E Days. The 77 participants from around the state met with 82 state legislators and did 20 drop-in visits, educating legislators about the successes of California's Tobacco Control Program and the challenges that remain ahead.

The most anticipated and successful aspects of the two-day event were the prominent speakers from the State Capitol. Assembly Majority Leader Dario Frommer fired everyone up by reminding us how much of a presence and a problem the tobacco industry remains in California. The day also featured political insight on the Capitol from Senator Deborah Ortiz's Press Secretary, Hallye Jordan. Assemblymember Juan Vargas was a huge hit and told very personal stories about his experiences with tobacco. The first day also included trainings and role plays designed to prepare attendees for their legislative meetings.

On the evening of April 19 the Priority Population Partnerships hosted an event to honor champions of tobacco control. The event, called "Honoring Our Champions, Remembering Our Heroes," included a moving tribute to the late Marco Firebaugh, who was a dedicated tobacco control advocate. The Priority Populations presented awards to five legislative champions: Assemblymembers Fran Pavley, Paul Koretz, and Juan Vargas and

Legislators Who Have Signed the Resolution Supporting the TEROC Master Plan

Senator Richard Alarcón (D-Sylmar)
Asm. Judy Chu (D-Monterey Park)
Asm. Jerome Horton (D-Inglewood)
Senator Liz Figueroa (D-Fremont)
Asm. Sally Lieber (D-Mountain View)
Asm. Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood)
Asm. Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills)
Asm. Juan Vargas (D-San Diego)



Senator Ortiz receiving an award from the Priority Population Partnerships.

■ See I&E, page 3

CREATING A "TARGETED" CAMPAIGN

Center Tips for Educating Local Elected Officials

Decision makers are the "targets" of your local policy campaign. Convincing them to support a policy is what your campaign is all about. So, naturally you plan to meet with them. But don't view your interaction with them as a one time event. You should include local decision makers in all phases of your campaign. Your strategy at every step needs to be geared towards influencing them.

In the earliest phases of planning your campaign you will be analyzing your community and its political environment. Beyond simply knowing the names of the decision makers, you need an in depth understanding of where they come from in the community, what issues they care about, who they influence and who influences them. Also, learn about how the decision makers work in a group setting and how they make decisions: who is the official leader (the chair person? the mayor?) and who is the unofficial leader (the person who had been around the longest? the council member supported by the local unions?).

The next phase of a campaign involves recruiting new participants and broadening your coalition. One key to success in a campaign is to recruit allies who have connections to local decision makers. These can be business leaders, teachers, farmers, reporters, union leaders, clergy, personal friends of elected officials, their spouses, academics and social service or non-profit directors. Your tobacco control coalition members are your natural allies, but it is important to think beyond them to others who have access to and can influence the people you need for a policy victory. For example, if your city council member attends Rotary Club, recruiting people who are part of the Rotary Club to support or become involved in your campaign could be a good idea.

Recruitment never ends, but after you have expanded your team to include new "influentials," you will need to move on to meeting with the decision makers. If you have an idea of who will be your champion you should meet with that person first. Then you will be meeting with decision makers whose support is less certain. However, for both meetings you need to be fully prepared. Select a group of 3-5 organizational leaders, opinion leaders and others who would be influential with the decision maker you are meeting with. Take the time to prepare them to speak about the issue comfortably and prepare fact sheets and information about the urgency of the issue in the decision maker's area.

Know before the meeting what you will be requesting of the decision maker. You will want more than support from your potential champion - you will want them to introduce the ordinance, move it forward with city staff, and political advice about how to get it passed through the city council or Board of Supervisors. For a decision maker you are less sure about (a potential target) concentrate on answering their questions and securing their support.

If the official will not commit to supporting the policy (but is not clearly opposed), then the official has become the "target" of your campaign and you will need to direct (or target) your tactics towards them. Expect decision makers to disagree with you so come prepared to answer every concern they might have. If they remain unconvinced after the meeting, it's not your fault. Do not start second-guessing yourself or your goals. You now have better information on the decision maker and are in a better position to understand what allies will be necessary to help you get the decision

maker to commit and thus to help you achieve your campaign goal.

Meeting with decision makers is not the only way to convince them. Other tactics can be framed to directly influence your targets. Write opinion pieces for the

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local paper signed by people who have influence with the decision makers. Get respected organizations to send them letters. Collect signatures on a petition from the people on their street or in their neighborhood. When you are on the agenda speaking during "public comment" time select your speakers and arguments based on who your targets are. Every tactic must be evaluated as a plan to educate the target.

Decision makers are the focal point of your campaign. Everything else – allies, targets – serve the goal of educating them. When every step of the campaign is geared towards these targets you have successfully created a targeted campaign.

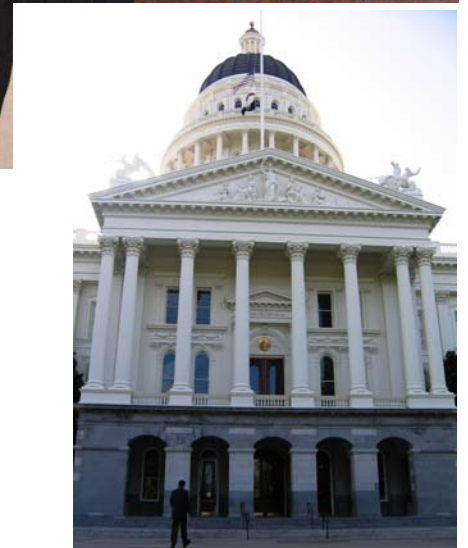
■ I&E Days, from page 1

Senators Deborah Ortiz and Wesley Chesbro. Assemblymembers Judy Chu and Mark Leno also attended and spoke about the importance of our work and their support for tobacco control efforts.

On April 20, the second day, participants gathered in a tent on the West Steps of the Capitol. The day began with a wonderful send-off speech from Kathy Dresslar, Chief of Staff for Mark Leno and a long time anti-tobacco veteran at the Capitol. Participants then headed over to the Capitol to meet with legislators. One new topic this year in meetings with legislators was a resolution, which legislators signed to show their support for the legislatively mandated TEROC Master Plan Objectives.

All in all, the event was a great success -- with participants practicing new skills and legislators learning more about our tobacco control work.

Mark your calendars now for the 2007 Capitol I&E visits, on May 8 & 9, 2007.



Photos clockwise: Representatives from the Statewide Priority Partnerships host "Meet and Greet;" Majority Leader Frommer speaking to I&E participants; California State Capitol; Memorial for Assemblymember Marco Firebaugh; Asm. Juan Vargas speaking. Pictured at center: Bob Gordon and Assemblymember Mark Leno.

Preview: New Member Orientation Week of January 15-19, 2007

With a large number of freshmen entering the Legislature in January, the New Member Orientation will be a great opportunity to meet your new official and educate them about important tobacco control issues.

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