Congressional Relations: Know Your Audience

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NOAA Office of Legislative Affairs
NOAA Leadership Seminar
Airlie, Virginia
July 31, 2008
Overview

- Players
- Priorities
- Effectively communicating your message
How Congress Works

- Majority selects leadership at the beginning of each two-year Congress
- Authorization Committees provide legal basis for federal agencies to operate as well as oversight of agency programs
- Appropriations Committees approve funding each fiscal year for federal agencies. Money bills originate in House
Key NOAA Committees

- **House Science & Technology**
  - Chair—Bart Gordon (D-TN)
  - Ranking Republican—Ralph M. Hall (R-TX)

- **Subcommittee on Energy and Environment**
  - Chair—Nicholas V. Lampson (D-TX)
  - Ranking Member—Bob Inglis (R-SC)

- **Issues** — NWS, OAR Research, NESDIS
Key NOAA Committees

- **House Natural Resources**
  - Chair Nick Rahall (D-WV)
  - Ranking Member Don Young (R-AK)

- **Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans**
  - Chair Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU)
  - Ranking Member Henry E. Brown Jr. (R-SC)

- Issues – NMFS, NOS
Key NOAA Committees

- Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation
  - Chair—Daniel K. Inouye (D-HI)
  - Ranking Republican—Ted Stevens (R-AK)

- Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard
  - Chair—Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
  - Ranking Member—Olympia J. Snowe (R-ME)
Key NOAA Committees

- **House Appropriations**
  - Chair—David R. Obey (D-WI)
  - Ranking Republican—Jerry Lewis (R-CA)

- **CJS Subcommittee**
  - Chair—Alan B. Mollahan (D-WV),
  - Ranking—Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ)
Key NOAA Committees

- **Senate Appropriations**
  - Chair—Robert C. Byrd (D-WV)
  - Ranking Republican—Thad Cochran (R-MS)

- **CJS Subcommittee**
  - Chair—Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)
  - Ranking Republican—Richard C. Shelby (R-AL)
Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA)

- Coordinate NOAA contacts with Congress and be responsible for the planning, direction, and coordination of legislative programs of concern to the Office of the Under Secretary.

- Serve as the official liaison between the Agency and Congress.

- Keep senior NOAA and Department of Commerce officials informed of congressional information and activities.
OLA Activities

- Develop, coordinate, and implement NOAA’s legislative strategy
- Identify and track legislation of interest to NOAA
- Coordinate and communicate Administration’s position on issues of interest to NOAA
- Manage NOAA’s participation in congressional hearings
OLA Activities (cont.)

- Respond to all congressional inquiries in a timely manner
- Brief Members of Congress and their staff
- Ensure good communication and coordination within Line, Program, and Staff offices
- Coordinate with the Department of Commerce
Sample of Accomplishments

- **NOAA’s Legislative Successes**
  1. Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act
  2. Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act
  3. Tsunami Warning and Education Act

- **NOAA’s Congressional Activities**
  - 51 Congressional Hearings
  - 900 Briefings to Members and Staff
  - 20,000 Communications between OLA and Congress
    - Phone calls, inquires, requests, emails, etc.
  - Trips, Outreach and Education
NOAA Legislative Priorities for the 110th Congress

- National Offshore Aquaculture Act
- NOAA Organic Act
- Hydrographic Services Improvement Act (HSIA) Reauthorization
- Coral Reef Conservation Act (CRCA) Reauthorization
- Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) Reauthorization
- National Sea Grant College Program Authorization Act
- National Marine Sanctuaries Act (NMSA) Reauthorization
- Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) Reauthorization
- NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps Act (NCOCA)
Communicating Your Message

- OLA is here to help manage and facilitate the discussion
  - Resources available to serve as examples
  - Pre-brief to provide background on staff, members, other issues

- Be clear and concise

- Develop the relationship
Types of Communication

- **Hearings**
  - Formal testimony
  - Oral statement
  - Q&A’s
  - Witness preparation
  - Questions for the Record

- **Briefings**
  - Flexible location
  - Top point(s)
  - Ask
  - Follow-up

- **Grants**
  - Hill notification for all grants
  - Member interest in programs, projects
Thank You.

For more information visit
http://www.legislative.noaa.gov/index.html