



YMCA New Jersey Youth and Government Lobby Corps Manual 2024

A Program of the Greater Philadelphia YMCA

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Lobby Corps and Lobbyist's Role at Conference

The primary role of a lobbyist in the NJ YAG program is to enhance the overall Youth and Government experience by representing organizations and aiding other delegates. Lobbyists will be responsible for communicating with delegates both in and outside of committee.

Instead of authoring bills themselves, lobbyists speak upon legislative bills as representatives for various organizations of their choosing -- organizations such as the NRA, Planned Parenthood, the Sierra Club, and more. Lobbyists will be assigned bills to analyze through the eyes of their client prior to conference, which they will follow throughout the weekend. While lobbyists are expected to be well-prepared and sufficiently researched on their pre-assigned bills, they will also be given the opportunity to spontaneously advocate for or against bills of their choice through the perspective of firms of their choice. The main challenge of the lobbyist in legislative committees is to represent opinions with which they may not necessarily agree, while balancing both passion and poise in order to enhance debate for all delegates.

In specialized committees at conference, lobbyists will perform other roles more suited to the nature of the committee in question. These opportunities include speaking on cases presented in the courts as *amici curiae* ("friend of the court"), and defending bills brought forth to the Governor's Cabinet.

One important lobbyist responsibility is Think Tank, in which legislative delegates will be able to connect with lobbyists to receive constructive advice and feedback. Lobbyists will provide resources to the bill authors and prepare them to field potential arguments in committee and chamber. This is a beneficial resource for all members of conference - lobbyists and bill authors alike.

The lobbyists will split time between lobbying for bills and Think Tank at the discretion of the Lobby Firm President. Lobbyists are given great amounts of freedom throughout conference, including controlling where they are, who they represent, and which opportunities they choose to take. As with all delegates, they are expected to behave professionally and with respect for all officers, delegates, and staff. As members of the Lobby Corps, it is expected that each lobbyist will carry themselves with maturity and commitment; at the same time, lobbyists have a unique opportunity to take advantage of YAG in ways that no other delegate does. All lobbyists must continually check-in with the Lobby Firm President and staff members supervising their activities. The Lobby officer and the staff member must know where the lobbyist is at all times.

Lobby Corps Mission Statement

A lobbyist aims to respectfully advocate for the passage or defeat of legislation. A lobbyist must vocalize their client's position in an effort to change the opinion and vote of the legislative delegates. Lobbyists are the voice of non-governmental stakeholders within the Youth and Government Program. Above all, a lobbyist will enhance the debate and experience of all delegates at conference and passionately defend the values of their respective clients. At the same time, lobbyists are expected to uphold the YMCA's core values of respect, caring, honesty, and responsibility.

Lobbyist's Duties

Prior to the Pre-Legislative Conference...

- Complete Lobbyist Application and receive acceptance

During the Pre-Legislative Conference...

- Propose edits and improvements for a sample bill during a Lobby Corps-wide Think Tank appointment simulation
- Undergo lobbyist training and practice session

Prior to Conference...

- Receive assigned bills and complete Pre-Conference Assignment
 - Analyze bills and practice lobbying research and procedure
- Communicate with bill authors in a Pre-Conference ~~Think Tank~~ setting
- ~~Optional~~: prepare for participation in specialized committees

During Conference...

- Conduct Think Tank appointments with bill authors- 45% of conference
 - Friday and possibly Saturday morning
 - Take legislative delegates under your wing
 - Provide debate advice and research to delegates
 - Form personal connections with delegates, offer to speak on their bills, and provide emotional support throughout conference
- Legislative Relations- 70% of conference
 - Saturday morning/afternoon/evening and Sunday
 - Make yourself available to authors interested in having their bill advocated by a lobbyist, or find bills to advocate for or against
 - Speak either in favor of or against assigned bill
 - Closely follow the live Bill Docket feed in order to keep track of bills
- Specialized Committee Relations - 10% of conference
 - *Judicial* - Lobbyists will serve as *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") to give statements that provide pertinent information on the general issues presented by the court cases.

- *Governor's Cabinet* - Lobbyists will argue various bills in the Cabinet when the Cabinet requests an outside opinion. Opportunities to argue these bills are spontaneous throughout conference.
- *Jr. Legislators* - Jr. Legislators will be shadowing lobbyists for parts of conference in order to see how the Lobby Corps works. In addition, lobbyists will hold a Think Tank to discuss the bills of Jr. Legislators.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Lobbyists are given a great amount of freedom throughout conference. Because of this, it is essential that the rules and regulations of the Lobby Corps are followed. Any discipline problems will be reported directly to a delegate's advisor. Any procedural infractions will be handled by Program Staff. The rules and regulations are as follows:

Behavioral Regulations

- Lobbyists may not wander in the hotel or annex at any time. Lobbyists must be lobbying or be in the Lobby Corps Room in the Hotel.
- All Lobbyists must arrive and return to the Lobby Corps room on time.
- Lobbyists are expected to uphold the 4-Core Values of the YMCA at all times as they interact with staff and fellow delegates.
- Lobbyists must notify *both* the Lobby Firm President (officer) and any/all staff assigned to the Lobby Corp of their location *and* any intent to move to a different location – AT ALL TIMES. A lobbyist may not change their location without notifying the above persons. This notification can be accomplished via electronic means, at the discretion of the officer/staff. Any violation of this regulation may result in loss of lobbying privileges!

Lobbying Procedures

- During Committee and Chamber sessions, lobbyists have the same speaking rights as all other delegates. They may speak on a bill and speak with authors or other delegates, as long as they do so respectfully and when standing in the back of the room.
- Lobbyists must leave the room during voting procedures.
- Parliamentary Procedure is primarily the same between lobbyists and legislative delegates. The lobbyist introduction is as follows:
 - Name
 - Delegation
 - Representing (client)
 - Thank you sir/madam chair

- Lobbyists may bring a maximum of two students into the hallway to speak with them
 - This meeting may not last longer than 5 minutes
 - If permission is not granted, lobbyists may not ask students to leave.
 - Lobbyists must ask delegates if they are willing to leave the room. Delegates may decline and if so the lobbyist must respect that request.

The following is prohibited:

I. Bribery

A lobbyist may not use unofficial bribery to make gains in passing or failing a bill. This includes but is not limited to payment, the distribution of food or drink, and promises of removing delegates from chambers for extended periods of time. A lobbyist may use his or her persuasive power to influence delegates to vote on a bill. For example, a lobbyist may speak to legislative delegates about the merits of a bill, but may not use a quid-pro-quo or knowingly make a false statement in order to incentivize votes.

A lobbyist caught using unofficial forms of Bribery will be subject to removal from the Lobby Corps. Remember: if you think it's bribery, it most likely is.

II. Disruption

A Lobbyist may not disrupt the chamber floor. If a lobbyist needs to retrieve a delegate, he or she will do so quietly and respectfully. A lobbyist may view the chamber from the wings. Any form of disruption (e.g. written signs) when viewing chambers will not be tolerated. A lobbyist may respectfully signal to delegates for the purpose of temporarily removing them from chambers.

A Lobbyist may enter committee sessions and proceed to speak on bills. A lobbyist must wait to be called on by the chair. A lobbyist may respectfully remove delegates from committee at the discretion of the chair. A lobbyist will conduct all business outside of committee.

III. Freedoms

A lobbyist is granted an exorbitant amount of freedom. There is no strict schedule to adhere to, aside from scheduled check-in times. With this freedom, a lobbyist will not abuse privileges given to him or her. The Lobby Corps thrives on a mutual respect between the administration, the lobbyists, and the delegates; therefore, all freedoms are subject to removal if abused.

A lobbyist will be respectful of the hotel when traveling between locations. A lobbyist may not remove a delegate from sessions or chamber to discuss outside topics. A lobbyist will use all of his or her time constructively. Although it is not necessary, a lobbyist should remember that the conference doesn't end when chamber is out of session. Meals and downtime are fair and acceptable places to lobby for bills, but are in no way recommended nor required.

LIST OF POTENTIAL CLIENTS

A large part of a lobbyist's role at conference is to represent various firms and organizations. Lobbyists have the unique opportunity to choose any organization to represent at any time, so long as it is approved by conference officers and staff. While many other organizations exist, and lobbyists are encouraged to do their own outside research, the following firms are a helpful (but not an all-inclusive) list of organizations that lobbyists can choose from:

Business Concerns

Environmental Protection Agency (Liberal) The mission of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment. To ensure that all Americans are protected from significant risks to human health and the environment where they live, learn and work, the EPA takes national efforts to reduce environmental risk based on the best available scientific information.

Monsanto (Conservative) Monsanto is a sustainable agriculture company focused on empowering farmers, while also conserving natural resources. Monsanto works towards increasing agricultural production within the United States to keep pace with population growth, and thus are large proponents of GMOs or genetically modified organisms. Monsanto has gone to great lengths to prevent the government from regulating GMOs in any form, and generally opposes agricultural regulation on all fronts.

US Oil & Gas Association (Conservative) Since 1917, the United States Oil and Gas Association has promoted the well-being of the oil and natural gas industries in the United States. The USOGA represents companies involved in the refining, transportation, production, marketing, and use of oil and natural gas products. The primary goal of the USOGA is to address government regulation and taxation of oil and natural gas, supporting legislation that allows for free expansion of the oil and gas industries. The USOGA generally supports legislative actions promoting the sustenance of the domestic petroleum industry, thus advocating against alternative energy sources and use of foreign oil and gas products.

Citizens Against Government Waste (Conservative) CAGW works towards reducing inefficiency and mismanagement in the federal government. CAGW generally supports measures such as welfare reform and wasteful spending cuts in order to shrink the size of the federal government. CAGW advocates for trickle-down economic policies and tax cuts, as well as the reduction of federal spending and loans. In addition, CAGW promotes transparency in the federal government, especially in terms of its financial actions.

The National Association of Manufacturers (Conservative) NAM is the largest manufacturing association in the United States, representing Americans who contribute \$2.09 trillion to the US economy annually. While the NAM supports the legalization of workers and providing healthcare to workers, the organization currently supports the interests of coal and oil over alternative energy sources. NAM currently denies climate change as a legitimate issue, and also opposes trade agreements which give foreign companies too much say in US markets.

National Federation of Independent Businesses (Liberal) NFIB, as the leading advocate for small business owners, seeks to defend the right of small business owners to run their businesses without undue government interference and to advance public policies that promote their success. Furthermore, this organization is dedicated to leveling the playing field with Big Business, Big Government, and Big Labor in areas such as taxes, healthcare, and regulations.

The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (Liberal) The AFL-CIO is seen as the umbrella federation for U.S. unions, with 56 unions representing 12.5 million working men and women. By working to ensure that all people who work receive the rewards of their work—decent paychecks and benefits, safe jobs, respect and fair treatment, the AFL-CIO prioritizes making the voices of working people heard in all facets of the government.

Government Affairs

National Rifle Association (Conservative) Formed in 1871, the NRA has been promoting freedom to own and utilize firearms for generations, for both recreational and defense purposes. The NRA works to educate law enforcement, hunters, and gun enthusiasts about gun safety and proper use of firearms. The NRA is also a large proponent for the protection of the 2nd Amendment right to bear arms. The NRA's primary goals include expanding firearm rights for all citizens and providing educational tools for gun owners to improve firearm safety.

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence (Liberal) With its mission being to “create a safer America for all of us that will lead to a dramatic reduction in gun

deaths and injuries,” the Brady organization encourages policies that keep guns out of the wrong hands. Some of these policies include, but are not limited to, background checks being applied to all gun sales, stopping the 5 percent of gun dealers that supply 90 percent of all crime guns, and increasing the awareness of the real dangers of guns in the home.

National Police Accountability Project (Liberal) The National Police Accountability Project (NPAP) is an organization dedicated to protecting the human and civil rights of individuals in their encounters with law enforcement. One of the central missions of NPAP is to promote the accountability of law enforcement officers and their employers for violations of the Constitution or laws of the United States.

American Civil Liberties Union (Liberal) For nearly 100 years, the ACLU has been working in courts, legislatures, and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the Constitution and the laws of the United States guarantee everyone in this country. The ACLU takes up the toughest civil liberties cases and issues to defend all people from government abuse and overreach.

League of Conservation Voters (Liberal) The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) works to turn environmental values into national, state and local priorities. The LCV, in collaboration with advocates for sound environmental laws and policies, holds elected officials accountable for their votes and actions, and elects pro-environment candidates who will champion the LCV’s priority issues.

Citizens United (Conservative) Citizens United is an organization committed against the overextension of federal government, and the restoration of the power of the people. The organization takes an active stance on the expansion of free enterprise, traditional family values, and national security. Citizens United’s most famous action was their role in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, allowing private companies to create political advertisements separate from political campaigns. Citizens United spreads its message through large scale advertising efforts and the release of documentaries concerning their conservative ideals.

NJ State Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association (Conservative) The NJSPBA is an organization of law enforcement officials in New Jersey for the purpose of legally defending its members. The NJSPBA advocates for increasing budgets in the law enforcement system, and the righteousness of all people involved in NJ law enforcement. The NJSPBA opposes various police accountability measures, due to privacy concerns, and the reduction of law enforcement budgets on both the state and local levels.

Social Issues

Family Research Council (Conservative) The Family Research Council was founded in 1983 in order to preserve marriage and family as the foundation of society. The FRC generally believes in religious liberty and the traditional image of marriage and family, coinciding with their Judeo-Christian worldview. Due to their religious values, the FRC are firm advocates against LGBT rights and contraceptive freedoms. The FRC actively promotes abstinence prior to marriage, opposing HPV vaccination as a requirement for school attendance and supporting abstinence-only sexual education in schools. The FRC usually involves itself in issues of sexual freedom, the legality of medical procedures, and the rights of the LGBT community.

American Atheists (Liberal) Since 1963, American Atheists has been the premier organization fighting for the civil liberties of atheists and the total, absolute separation of government and religion. American Atheists was born out of the *Murray v. Curlett* case of 1959, which challenged prayer recitation in the public schools. Today, American Atheists is dedicated to working for the civil rights of atheists, promoting separation of state and church, and providing information about atheism.

Catholic Church (Conservative) For centuries, the Catholic Church has remained influential throughout the world, with 1.254 billion members worldwide, and is currently led by Pope Francis. The core beliefs of the Church involve the promotion of social justice and care for the poor, sick and disabled. The Church is currently the largest non-government provider of education and medical services in the world, managing 26% of healthcare facilities worldwide, including hospitals, orphanages, and pharmacies. The Catholic Church has established a clear opposition to controversial issues such as access to contraception methods and LGBT rights, while supporting an expansion of international aid. While the Church has had issues with sexual abuse involving minors in the past, Pope Francis has recently released statements to help prevent further cases of abuse.

National Organization for Women (Liberal) The National Organization for Women (NOW) is dedicated to its multi-issue and multi-strategy approach to women's rights. NOW is the largest organization of feminist activists in the United States, seeking to address issues such as reproductive rights, violence against women, economic justice, and LGBT rights among several others.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons (Liberal) The vision of the NAACP is to ensure a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race. This association seeks to remove all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes and oversee enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights.

Freedom's Watch (Conservative) Freedom's Watch advocates for protecting privacy rights, free speech, civil liberties, and the use of foreign products. Strongly opposing socialism and terrorism, Freedom's Watch concerns itself with supporting interventionist foreign policy. In recent years, Freedom's Watch has supported the Iraq War and various other anti-terrorism measures in the Middle East. Thus, Freedom's Watch supports legislation which heightens national security measures and prevents further violent attacks from foreign groups.

National Education Association (In favor of common core) (Conservative) The NEA is an organization made up of educational professionals which works to provide public schools for all students throughout America. The NEA believes in equal educational opportunity for all Americans, regardless of social status. The NEA supports increases in educational funding and inclusion for all students. However, the NEA opposes the No Child Left Behind Act, disliking its emphasis on standardized testing, and promotes education reform at the state level rather than at the federal level.

Public Health

American Legion (Conservative) The American Legion was incorporated into Congress in 1919 and is dedicated to helping and advocating for veterans. The firm supports increased funding for veteran's program, religious freedom, and the safety of active duty troops. In the past, the Legion has been in fierce opposition of openly gay men serving in the military and the removal of religious symbolism from government buildings, explaining how the structures are representative of American heritage. The American Legion firmly believes in the protection of American values, and continues to defend these values in the face of governmental opposition.

The Heritage Foundation (Conservative) Since its founding in 1973, the Heritage Foundation has been a research and educational institution dedicated to creating conservative policy. The Heritage Foundation holds a strong belief in traditional American values, including freedom of religion and equal economic opportunity. The firm places great emphasis on foreign policy and economic opportunity. The Heritage Foundation dictates that America should have a strong line of defense, reinforced borders, and everyone should be responsible for their own economic status.

Planned Parenthood (Liberal) As "America's most trusted provider of reproductive health care," Planned Parenthood provides vital reproductive health care, sex education, and information to millions of women, men, and young people worldwide. Additionally, Planned Parenthood has promoted a commonsense approach to women's health and well-being, based on respect for each individual's right to make informed, independent decisions about health, sex, and family planning.

Death with Dignity (Liberal) The Death with Dignity organization expands the freedom of all qualified terminally ill Americans to make their own end-of-life decisions, including how they die. In doing so, this organization provides information, education, and support about Death with Dignity as an end-of-life option to patients, family members, legislators, and the interested public, and mounts legal defense of physician-assisted dying legislation.

NORML (Liberal) The mission of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) is to move public opinion sufficiently to legalize the responsible use of marijuana by adults, and to serve as an advocate for consumers to assure they have access to high quality marijuana that is safe, convenient and affordable. Since its founding in 1970, NORML has provided a voice in the public policy debate for those Americans who oppose marijuana prohibition and favor an end to the practice of arresting marijuana smokers.

Tobacco Industry (Conservative) The Tobacco Industry, as the name implies, is made up of tobacco manufacturers in the United States, which is led by Philip Morris International, R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, and Lorillard Tobacco Co. Formerly known as the Tobacco Institute, the firm has been sued on various occasions in recent history for withholding health information about tobacco products, and supports the de-regulation of tobacco based products and the abolition of trade agreements to prevent foreign tobacco corporations from infiltrating American markets.

Action on Smoking & Health (Liberal) Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) seeks to end the worldwide disease, damage and death caused by tobacco. In order to accomplish these goals, ASH takes action to educate the public and decision makers, track the tobacco industry, and work for sensible public policies at the local, national and global levels.

Guide for Assignment Due Before Conference

The assignments due *before* conference are two-fold. All lobbyists are expected to review all submitted bills and, within one week of the bill submission deadline, are expected to select bills to support/oppose. For each bill, whether they wish to support or oppose it, the lobbyist is expected to prepare a Pre-Conference Position Paper. A list of the bills selected by each lobbyist must be forwarded to the Lobby Corp President, along with the “client” whom the lobbyist will be representing. This list must be submitted no later than 4 days after the bill submission date. Failure to timely submit this list will result in the Lobby Corp President randomly assigning bills to lobbyists. Pre-Conference Position Papers must be submitted to the Lobby Corp President no later than 6:00 pm, 3 days (Tuesday) before conference. The Lobby Corp President will determine the minimum number of bills that each lobbyist will select/represent/lobby for.

Think Tank

Lobbyists spend much of their time at conference helping bill authors with debate and bill feedback. Please contact the bill authors (contact information given on spreadsheet containing assigned bills) through email, text, or phone call and provide them with Think Tank style feedback. You are highly encouraged to have discussions with the bill author, as opposed to writing debate feedback and never keeping up contact. Then, write a brief reflection (200 words maximum) about your experience.

- *Provide advice based on how to debate, rather than how to revise the bill. Your reflection should include how the experience benefited you and the bill author.*

Lobbying

As a lobbyist, it is your duty to represent *your clients' beliefs* to the best of your ability as you speak on your assigned pieces of legislation. Please view the bill submission website, which can be located on the Legislative page of the conference website. You can explore the list of bills and select bills based on your own interest. Respond to the following questions for your selected bill.

Summarize the bill in no more than 4 sentences

- *There is no need to include statistics for this task.*
- *Simply summarize the actions and intent of this bill.*

Select a client to represent this bill. A client list can be found on the Lobby Corps Manual. Briefly explain your client's aim as an organization, how it relates to the selected bill, and how it would stand on the bill (250 words max)

- *Responding to this question is an opportunity to summarize and familiarize yourself with your client's aims and values.*
- *While the client descriptions section provided in the Lobby Corps Manual is a great resource in responding to this question, please make an effort to research further into your client beyond what is provided in the Lobby Corps Manual and please provide a link to any further research. You may also use a client not included on the list, with Lobby Corp President prior approval.*
- *Be sure to mention what particular sections of your assigned bill have relevance to the topics and issues associated with your client's mission.*
- *Think about any specific programs or actions your client has taken that highlight the bill's relation to their objectives.*

Write a lobbyist speech as a representative of your client on this bill. You are encouraged to include facts, statistics, and statements from your client. This does not have to be perfect; the purpose of this is to ensure that lobbyists are prepared and well equipped to represent a client. You may do one of the following:

- **Write the speech (500 words max)**
- **Upload a video of yourself giving the speech and place the link to the video here**
- *Take this opportunity to formulate the points that you would like to bring up on the chamber floor as your assigned bill is being presented.*
- *Refrain from representing your own personal beliefs. Rather, as the representative of your client, please adhere to your client's values and objectives.*
- *Think through what arguments opponents of the bill may say as a guiding point for formulating arguments. A great strategy is to imagine how you would refute the most likely points of opposition your bill would face, taking the vantage point of the other side.*

We look forward to working with you at Pre-Leg and Conference!