



Public Policy CookBook

“The Ingredients for Influencing Public Policy”

PURPOSE:

To expand California’s woman-owned businesses’ voice in Sacramento in order to ensure that we are not only being heard, but that we are influencing and changing public policy for California’s small businesses.



NAWBO-CA Public Policy

2014-2015

NAWBO-CA has an affiliate relationship with the California State Small Business Association (CSBA). The California Small Business Association is a volunteer-driven, nonprofit, non-partisan organization that makes its mission to provide small business with a meaningful voice in state and federal governments. NAWBO-CA sees this partnership as a critical relationship in its efforts to educate our members about key legislative issues affecting small businesses throughout the State of CA.

CSBA Legislative Council annually polls their full membership to learn more about their needs and concerns. The Council then meets to prioritize the issues, establish strategies and allocate resources to carry out the objectives of the members. The issues have been established as listed below. CSBA position papers are available upon request.

The link <http://www.csba.com/advocacy/issues/> lists the issues and a follow up link provides a summary table that describes the position of CSBA; the origin of the bill and whether it is in committee or on the floor; the second house consideration and whether it is in committee or on the floor; and the governor's action on the bill. The table is very useful.

SPECIAL PUBLIC POLICY NOTE FOR CHAPTERS:

NAWBO-CA is a non-partisan organization. We seek to advocate for our members on issues that are business related and generally will look for support from other business related organizations. Should members of your chapter or your chapter have a legislative issue that you would like a letter of support from NAWBO-CA, please note the process:

- ❖ Draft a letter regarding the bill or legislative matter and describe how the bill will impact our membership or small businesses in general
- ❖ Note action taken by your chapter (Please note: Your chapter should take action on the matter before the matter is forwarded to the NAWBO-CA Board for consideration)



- ❖ NAWBO-CA will seek to find out the position of other statewide business associations to ensure that we have a strong position. CSBA will be one of our key resources for tracking the bill, along with our internal resources.
- ❖ With reasonable assurance of the like-minded positions of CSBA and other statewide business associations, the matter will be presented to the Board and presented to all chapters for a vote. With a majority support of the Board and chapters, a letter with our position will be drafted under the signature of the NAWBO-CA President and sent to legislative representatives, as well as the Governor.
- ❖ With Board and chapter support, NAWBO-CA will also draft a letter and urge each chapter to send a letter of support, so that the nine chapters across the state can go on record outlining their position.
 - **Special Note:** Chapter letters should be sent to bill sponsors, as well as to local legislators within your communities.

NOTE:

The process to engage statewide support on a legislative matter has a number of layers and will require a proper amount of lead time. It is important that the Public Policy Chair educate chapter members that NAWBO-CA is committed to advocating for its members on legislative matters, but must follow the steps provided above in order to do so. Ideally, matters can be discussed at the Board meeting and President's call on the third Tuesday of each month to facilitate the greatest efficiency.



CSBA ADOPTED SMALL BUSINESS ISSUES

The California Small Business Association, through a thorough process of discussions with business owners, board members and legislators, annually identify issues of greatest concern to California Small Businesses and prioritize those issues as key focal areas. The following issues are those CSBA have identified:

CSBA position papers are available upon request.

- ❖ #1 Workers' Comp & Other Insurance
- ❖ #2 Regulation, Paperwork & Tort Reform
- ❖ #3 Energy & Environment
- ❖ #3B Water & Ag
- ❖ #4 Access to Credit & Capital
- ❖ #5 Labor and Employee Benefits
- ❖ #6 Tax & Budget including Pension Reform
- ❖ #7 Access to Affordable Health Care
- ❖ #8 Workforce Skills & Education
- ❖ #9 Procurement & Infrastructure
- ❖ #10 Technology & Telecom

The CSBA has prepared issues papers on each of these areas. Should someone be interested in any of the topics, they may contact CSBA direct.

KEY LEGISLATIVE ISSUES - NAWBO-CA

Over the years, NAWBO-CA has sought to educate its members on public policy matters in the following areas:

- Procurement Issues, especially efforts on Universal Certification
- Tax & Budget Issues
- Worker's Compensation Reform and Other Insurance
- Access to Affordable Health
- Access to Capital
- Women serving on California Boards

The CSBA website link <http://www.csba.com/advocacy/issues/> provides position papers on bills in these areas, and other top CSBA issues. In their position papers, they will note support, oppose, watch, or no position. These summaries will provide NAWBO members with a great tool for educating its chapters on issues of greatest concern in your region.



Scheduling the Meeting

1. List the Representatives you hope to visit during the trip.

- Look up your representatives at <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>
- Remember to include both the Assembly members and Senators representing your area.
- Consider identifying representatives who serve on committees, such as the committees on small business, appropriations, and budget, which will have the most impact on legislation

2. Contact the representatives scheduler

- Explain your visit to Sacramento. Describe the “Propel Your Business Conference and Public Policy Summit” as being NAWBO California's premier annual event that brings business owners and state legislators together! This conference provides an excellent opportunity for our NAWBO members to learn about key issues, learn how to grow their businesses through educational panel discussions and keynote speakers and to meet and greet their Representatives.
- Ask for a brief appointment, no more than 10-15 minutes
- Please confirm the desired date and the available time slots for your appointments. For example, request a 15 minute time slot for the afternoon of April 28th between 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. If you schedule appointments half an hour apart this will give you adequate time to spend 15 minutes with your representative and still have adequate time to get to your next appointment. Suggested time slots are 2:00 pm, 2:30 pm, 3:00 pm, 3:30 pm and 4:00 pm.
- Let them know of your desire to meet with the representative to discuss NAWBO and issues that affect businesses of all sizes and industries



- Ask to speak with the staff person who handles business issues if your representative is not available. If there is not such a staff person, ask for the chief of staff or legislative director. Arrange an appointment with this person if you cannot meet with the member. Make a note of the staff person's name and their responsibility. Developing a rapport with the staff person can be very beneficial for future contacts.
- Maintain a record of your contact people of their office for future reference and please provide a list to the NAWBO-CA Administrator of your confirmed meetings at state@nawbo-ca.org.

3. Follow-up with a written confirmation

- Restate who you are, the number of people you expect in your party, who they are, and the purpose of the visit.
- Send an information packet with your confirmation letter. Include a copy of your chapter newsletter, recent press releases on a NAWBO member or other relevant information that may be helpful about NAWBO.



Appointment Confirmation Letter

(Appropriate Letterhead)

Date

The Honorable (Insert name)
California State Senate (Assembly)
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attn: Scheduler

Dear Senator/Assembly Member (Insert name):

This is to confirm my appointment with you for (insert time) on (insert date). Joining me will be (insert names and titles/companies).

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss the National Association of Women Business Owners, and our efforts to empower and strengthen our chapters and all California women business owners to lead and propel the California economy.

Sincerely,



An Effective Meeting with Legislators What to Expect When You Get There

- A high level of security. You will have to put all of your belongings through an e-ray machine upon entering the capitol building and go through a metal detector.
- There are many uniformed officers. Don't hesitate to ask them for assistance in finding the room you are looking for.
- If you meet with a legislative aide, you will probably be crammed into a small office or you may be placed in the member's office if they are out
- It's a pressure-sensitive environment; which is why it is so important to have your thoughts and message developed beforehand.
- You will likely be dealing with 20-somethings...but these are some of the brightest 20-somethings in the state and they are important staff members because members turn to them before they cast a vote.
- If you have a meeting scheduled with a member of the Assembly or Senator, do not be surprised or disappointed if it turns out the member is not available and you meet with his/her legislative aide instead.



During the Meeting

- Open up the meeting with a comment to establish a tie between the legislator and yourself. For example: "I'm a constituent" or "our Chapter" is located in your district, or "we have several members" in your district
- Present your business card at the beginning of the meeting. Provide both your personal business card, as well as a NAWBO business card if you have one
- Talk about the businesses in your chapter, how they contribute to the economy; how they create jobs (be prepared to highlight some of the "super star" business owners in your chapter and the number of jobs they create
- At best, you are likely to get 10-15 minutes with a legislator. However the impression you make in those 10-15 minutes could last for years
- Understand the members' staff may be interrupted during the meeting
- Be brief and keep to the points to be made. Remember, NAWBO may be the most important group in the world to you, but it is only one of several dozen currently on the legislator's plate
- Be political. Members of the Assembly and Senate want to represent the best interests of their district. Whenever possible, demonstrate the connection between what you are requesting and the interests of small businesses in the district.
- Be responsive. Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information. If you don't know the answer to a question, simply say you do not know, but that you will find out and get back to him/her. This provides an excellent opportunity to ask who on the staff you should get back to. Do not underestimate the value of development good working rapport with staff.
- Be inquisitive. Ask them about what current bills that they have on the floor which they are passionate about and what new bills are in the works. Find out what the bills are and how you may be able to support them.



AFTER THE MEETING

- Follow-up with a personal letter or email. Thank the legislator and staff members for their time. Remind them of your conversation and desired outcome and encourage them to contact you whenever they need information or support on a matter.
- Provided any follow-up information requested and any additional information you think may be helpful.
- You are in this for the long haul, to build a relationship. Make sure to follow-up with the legislator and staff at the district office.



SAMPLE LETTER TO A LEGISLATOR

May 17, 2015

Honorable Roderick Wright

Re: SB 356 – SMALL BUSINESS REGULATORY REFORM

Dear Senator Wright:

This letter is to express the National Association of Women Business Owners-Inland Empire Chapter's overwhelming support for your efforts with SB 356. We applaud your efforts to help Small Businesses reduce costs, especially during these tough economic times when all small businesses are suffering. Small businesses are the backbone of the California economy. As you know, 99 percent of all California businesses are small businesses and 52 percent of the private jobs in the State of California are created by small business owners.

We welcome and agree with the SB 356 Key Provisions, because the bill requires state agencies to analyze the economic impact of potential regulations by specifically preparing a small business economic impact statement prior to submitting a proposal and specifies the criteria that must be included. It also requires legislators actively seek out the input of small business owners during the regulatory drafting process, and:

Increases small business participation by requiring agencies to seek out small business input during the drafting process and will save the state money by avoiding the potential of multiple public comment periods.

Requires that agencies specifically consider the economic impact that any legislation would have on California's small businesses.

Promotes government accountability by clarifying the criteria for an economic impact analysis and requiring agencies to state their reasons for claiming that a regulation has no significant impact.



Requires agencies to consider less burdensome and less costly small business alternatives, and to justify a decision if they choose not to adopt a less burdensome alternative regulation for small businesses.

Empowers associations like NAWBO California and other trade groups to act on behalf of our members.

Makes other technical changes including simplification of the definition of a “small business.”

NAWBO-CA is pleased to represent the voices of more than 1.4 business owners in the state; we strongly believe that this issue is critical to support their interests.

Again, you have our strong support for SB 356 because we believe this issue directly benefits the health of our members and the future health of businesses across the State as a whole.

Sincerely,

Name
President
NAWBO-IE
President, Name xxx

Name
Public Policy Chair
NAWBO-IE
Exec. Dir., Name xxx

CC: Senator Robert Dutton
Senator Gloria Negret McLeod
Assemblywoman Norma Torres
Assemblyman Bill Emmerson
Assemblywoman Wilmer Amina Carter
Assemblyman Anthony Adams