



Contact Dentist Guide

Helping you Contact your Legislator

2021

Step. By. Step.

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My Representative is: _____

My State Senator is: _____

How a Bill Becomes a Law in Pennsylvania

► *Introduction of a Bill*

When a legislator has an idea for a bill, the legislator submits the idea to the *Legislative Reference Bureau*, which is the bill drafting agency for the General Assembly. The bill is then drafted in proper legal form and filed for introduction. Bills can only be filed by members of the General Assembly. The first-named sponsor on a bill must be a Representative on a House bill, and a Senator on a Senate bill. There can be any number of co-sponsors, but the first named legislator is considered the prime sponsor.

► *Referral to Committee*

The bill is referred to a standing committee (a committee that remains in place from legislative session to session, although its membership may change), and made available to the public. In the House, the Speaker assigns each bill to a committee; in the Senate, the President Pro Tempore assigns the bills.

► *Committee Consideration*

The committee chair serves as the parliamentary head of a committee and wields significant power. The chair sets the committee's agenda and determines when, and often whether, a bill will be considered.

The committee can decide to:

- Hold a public hearing
- Report the bill as committed; no changes made to a bill's language
- Report the bill as amended; changes are made to a bill's language
- Vote not to report the bill; bill receives no further consideration
- Not consider the bill



► *Consideration of Bills*

Every bill is considered on three different days in each chamber before a vote for final passage.

► *First Consideration*

The bill is reported from committee and is considered for the first time. Bills on first consideration cannot be amended, debated, or voted on.

► *Second Consideration*

A bill on second consideration is open to both debate and amendment.

► *Fiscal Note*

Any bill, except for General Appropriation bills, which may require the use of Commonwealth funds or entail the loss of revenue, must be referred to the Appropriations Committee for a fiscal note before it can receive third consideration.

► *Third Consideration and Final Passage*

A bill on third consideration is considered in its calendar order. In the House, a bill is subject to debate only. Bills can only be amended when an amendment is necessary to make the document internally consistent, to clear up an ambiguity, correct grammar or a drafting error, or is

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necessary for statutory construction. In the House, 102 votes are required for final passage.

In the Senate, bills on third consideration may be amended, and are also subject to debate. Bills on final passage can no longer be amended, but are subject to debate. In the Senate, 26 votes are required for final passage. In the event of a tie, the Lieutenant Governor will place a vote to break the tie. Once the House and Senate pass the same version of a piece of legislation, it is sent to the Governor for further action. The Governor will first refer the legislation to the Office of General Counsel for an opinion as to the legality and constitutionality of the legislation. The Governor then has the choice to sign the legislation into law, veto the legislation, or simply do nothing.

If the legislation is vetoed, the bill is returned to the chamber of origin for possible further action. Vetoes can be overridden by a two-thirds vote from members in both the House (136 members) and the Senate (34 members).

If the Governor does not sign the legislation within 10 days, it will automatically become law. If the General Assembly has adjourned *sine die*¹, the legislation has 30 days before it automatically becomes law.

Of course, passing legislation is rarely that simple, and often legislation does not pass through both chambers without amendment. If a piece of legislation is amended by the second chamber, it has to go back to the chamber of origin for a vote of concurrence (which means they agree to the legislation in its amended form). If the two chambers cannot agree, the legislation goes to a Conference Committee, made up of members of both chambers who try to resolve the differences between the House and Senate. The committee reports to their respective members, and if the report is approved by a majority of members in both the House and Senate, it is sent to the Governor for further action.

¹ *adjourned sine die* - The end of a legislative session “without day.” These adjournments are used to indicate the final adjournment of an annual or the two-year session of a Congress.

Find Your Legislators

If you need help finding out who your state legislators are, you can use the General Assembly’s website: <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/>. From the homepage, scroll down to “Find My Legislator,” which will be located on the left-hand side under “Floor Schedule.” You are able to search for your legislators by name, district number, county or by using your address. If you are searching for your legislators by address, make sure to use your home address, and not the address of your practice. These are the legislators that you vote for.



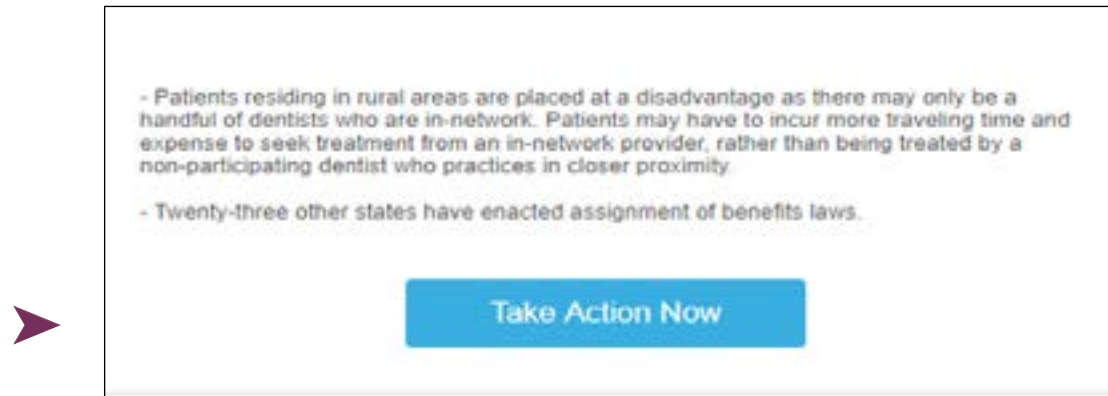
Even though you may or may not be able to vote for the legislators in the district where your practice is located, it is important to know who they are, because their constituents are the patients you serve in your practice every day.

Once your legislators have been found, you can click on their names to view a short bio of the legislator, including contact information, committee assignments and sponsored legislation.

PDA Action Alerts: Using *PDA Advocacy Software* to Reach Out to Your Legislators

From time to time, we will communicate with members about important legislative issues impacting dentistry using SoftEdge, our advocacy software. These alerts will come to you in the form of an email, which will automatically direct you to send a message to your state Representative or Senator regarding PDA issues.

When PDA has an important issue... click the “Take Action Now” button to be directed to send a message to your legislator.”



After you click the “Take Action Now” button, you will be directed to the alert on the issue PDA is requesting that you take action on.

A screenshot of a legislative alert page. At the top, a dark blue banner reads "Assignment of Benefits Moving Through the House". Below this, the text says: "Contact your Representative IMMEDIATELY to Request Support for SB 373, printer's number 1287". It then lists "Good News: SB 373 passed out of the House Insurance Committee in June." and "Bad News: The Committee amended SB 373, essentially changing the legislation to require dual signature, and prohibiting dentists from...". To the right is the PDA logo, which consists of the letters "PDA" in a stylized font with a triangle to the left, and "Pennsylvania Dental Association" below it.

Each action alert will include a summary of the issue, talking points to use when talking with your legislators, and a pre-formatted letter that you can send directly to them. The letters may be customized to include comments related to the particular issue. By scrolling down to the bottom of the alert, you can enter in your contact information, add any additional comments you would like your legislators to know, and send the letter. The software will use the contact information that you enter to populate the letter with the information for your legislators and will send it directly to them. The software will automatically send your letter to the correct legislator, depending on if the bill is in the House or Senate, or in Committee.

Please be sure to enter your home address so that you are connected to the right legislator.

Contact Information

Prefix (required) ▼

First Name (required)

Last Name (required)

Email (required)

Mobile or Home Phone (required)

Address (required)
ex: 123 Main St

City (required)

State (required) ▼

Zip (required)


Remember Me

SEND

PRINT AND MAIL

PREVIEW

Message

 Pennsylvania State Representative

Subject: Vote "yes" on SB 373 Assignment of Benefits Printers Number 1287

As a dentist living in your district and one of 5,500 members of the Pennsylvania Dental Association (PDA), I am writing to respectfully request that you support SB 373, as passed by the Senate in January with the printer number 1287. I ask that you do not support SB 373 as amended by the House Insurance Committee in June. SB 373 as amended is currently assigned to the House Appropriations Committee, and has been placed on the House calendar for September.

The Committee essentially changed the legislation to require dual signature and prohibit dentists from balance billing when they do accept the assigned benefit directly. It also extends the effective date from 60 to 240 days. PDA does not support this amendment as it further complicates an already complicated billing process. Requiring

Additionally, you can respond to action alerts directly from the PDA website. From the PDA website home page, you will want to select the "Advocacy" tab, and then select "PDA Action Alerts" from the drop down menu.

PDA
Pennsylvania Dental Association

HOME MEMBERSHIP **ADVOCACY** RESOURCES &

Special Noti

The Pennsylvania Dep...
the Affordable Care Ac...
provisions which requ...
enrollees to enroll with...
CHIP providers the san...

- PDA's Goals
- Bills Introduced This Session
- State Board of Dentistry
- PAADAC
- Legislative Checkup Week
- How Laws Impacting Dentistry
- Grassroots Network
- Access to Care
- Contact Us
- PDA Action Alerts**

Because action alerts are members only content, you will then be prompted to login into the PDA website if you have not already done so.

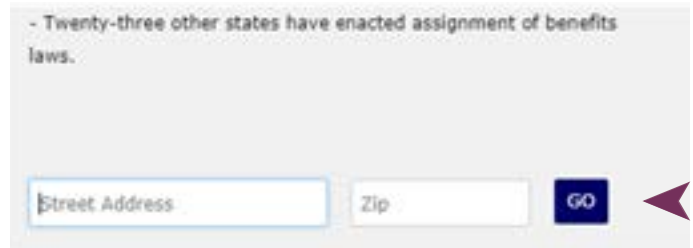
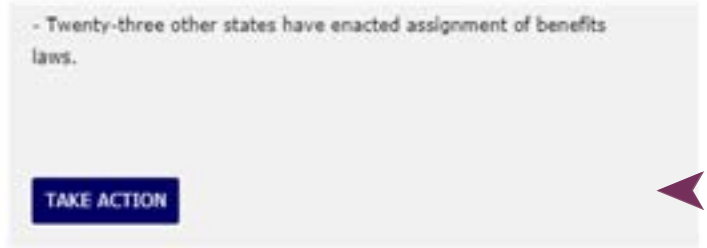
After logging into the PDA website, you will be directed to PDA Action Alert page. The process of sending a message to your legislator through the website is similar to sending a message from the advocacy software. Each action alert will still include a summary of the issue, talking points to use when talk to your legislator, and a pre-formatted letter that you can send directly to your legislator.

First, scroll down to the bottom of the action alert and click on the “take action” button.

This will then prompt you to enter in your *home street address and zip code*. The website will use this information to address and send your letter to the correct legislator.

Enter your contact information into the “contact information” box, add any additional comments you would like your legislator to know to the pre-formatted letter, and click “send” to send the message to your legislator.

Having PDA members contact their legislators on key issues is pertinent to our success as an organization. Although PDA leadership and staff members will often meet and communicate with legislators regarding issues, legislators ultimately want to hear from their constituents, and a legislator’s vote on a particular issue may be impacted by hearing from PDA member dentists. Remember, legislators are not dentists (with few exceptions) and it is up to you to educate them.



Getting to know your legislator does not need to be a time consuming or frightening experience. Politicians pride themselves on being approachable, conversational, and in tune with their constituents needs; especially since their constituents vote on whether to keep them come election time. The relationship between legislator and constituent is an integral part of the democratic process, and if a legislator is unaware of their constituents' needs, they cannot be properly represented.

First and foremost, register to vote if you are not already registered, and then vote! You will be taken much more seriously if you are registered to, and actually vote.



How do I register to vote?

It is important to remember that legislators are not dentists (with few exceptions). They do not understand the intricacies of the dental profession, and it is your responsibility to educate them. Your involvement in PDA's grassroots network is vital; the "united front" of organized dentistry enables PDA to secure the interests of your profession.

The number of legislative and regulatory proposals introduced each year is staggering, well into the thousands. Many of these proposals originate from legislators heavily influenced by powerful lobbies. Consider the political power of the teacher's union, the trial lawyers, or the insurance industry. Their influence on legislators is possible through the hard work and dedication of their members.

PDA encourages you to take the time to educate your colleagues on the importance of political activism in making Pennsylvania a better state in which to practice dentistry. PDA appreciates your involvement in its grassroots network.

A political action committee (PAC) is an entity that combines contributions from members and donates the funds to candidates who share its interests, and help to advance its legislative agenda. By joining the Pennsylvania Dental Association Political Action Committee (PADPAC), your personal financial contribution plays a pivotal role in ensuring the practice of dentistry is represented by legislators who will fight for the profession and for high quality dental care.

PADPAC is a voluntary, non-profit group run by and for dentists. As a bipartisan PAC, PADPAC is made up of dentists, their spouses and anyone from all over Pennsylvania who is dedicated to supporting legislators who value the profession of dentistry. Operating under both state and federal laws and regulations, PADPAC is always watching the voting record of every member of the House and Senate. Working with the American Dental Political Action Committee (ADPAC), PADPAC promotes the highest quality dental health of Pennsylvania and our nation, while shaping the future of dentistry.

PADPAC's board is comprised of three members who have discretion over the distribution of PADPAC funds. The PADPAC board includes one at-large-member, the chair of the PDA Government Relations Committee and one trustee from the PDA Board of Trustees.

Dentists are invariably rated among the most ethical professionals. We need to showcase that hard won respect to tell your side of the story. Why are your issues important to people of Pennsylvania and the General Assembly? You must remember that the righteousness of your cause does not compel others to take action on your behalf. You have to make the contact and do the work so they become aware of your issue, among the hundreds of others, and showcase why your issue is deserving of their support and action. PDA and PADPAC can help you tell your story and pass the laws we need to make dentistry more rewarding and less frustrating.

If you have any questions about making a contribution to PADPAC, please contact PDA government relations staff at (800) 223-0016. You can also contribute online by visiting www.padental.org/padpac.

Federal laws require that PACs report the name, address, occupation and employer of each individual who contributes \$200 or more in a calendar year. Federal laws also require a record of whether a contribution is considered to be “hard” or “soft.” Personal contributions or “hard dollars,” can be used to support state legislative candidates. Corporate contributions, or “soft dollars,” can be used only for PAC administrative expenses. A maximum of \$40 of your hard dollar contribution will be sent to the ADPAC. There is no minimum amount you must contribute to PADPAC; PADPAC contributions are not eligible deductions from federal income taxes.

Contribution Levels:

President’s Club \$2500+

Liberty Club \$1000+

Capital Club \$500+

Keystone Club \$200+

Century Club \$120+

New Dentist (1-5 years post graduation) \$60

Student \$5

ADPAC

ADPAC operates similarly to PADPAC, just at the federal level. ADPAC gives dentists a voice in the public policy arena on behalf of your practice, patients and profession, and is our most powerful resource to make a difference in Washington. It is important to keep in mind that laws affect all of us every day, and ADPAC plays a critical role in advocating for our issues at the federal level, working toward positive results for our interests.

ADA has advocates called Action Team Leaders (ATLs), which are a group of ADA member dentists who maintain a political presence in

their congressional district. ATLs respond to ADA action alerts, meet with their congressional representatives, deliver campaign checks, attend political events, receive grassroots training and advocate on behalf of their patients, profession and practice.

Congress will make decisions that impact your patients and your practice. That’s a fact. By being active in ADPAC’s grassroots program, you will have a direct role in protecting and shaping the dental profession.

Contacting Your Legislator

If you’d like to talk with your legislator about legislation, the ideal place to do that is in their (and your) district. The legislator will be less pressed for time, have no votes to run off to, and won’t have scores of lobbyists coming and going. A more relaxed pace is conducive to a deeper discussion that leads to a better understanding. Offer to take them to lunch and talk with them about the importance of your issue, not just to you and your profession, but their constituents as a whole. You’ve forgotten more about the topics important to you and dentistry than they will ever know.

Do you know who your legislators are? You can look them up at [here](#). Make sure to use your *home address* when searching for your legislators.

The rule of thumb is you can’t talk about campaign contributions in government buildings but you can anywhere else. For example, you can’t talk about campaign contributions in the state Capitol or in a legislator’s district office, but you can discuss the topic at fundraisers and other venues. If you see your elected official at the grocery store, football game or in the park feel free to talk about anything you like.



One of the best things you can do for yourself and your profession is to offer to be a resource for your local, state and federal legislators. Most legislators' knowledge on a topic is mile long and an inch deep. They know the area of their profession but since the Pennsylvania General Assembly touches almost every topic under the sun they simply cannot be an expert on all issues. That's where you come in. You can answer policy questions and give real world answers to technical issues that the legislator doesn't know.

You can also give input into the impact of pending laws and regulations. Legislation has been changed because a constituent has indicated the law was a bad idea or needed to be improved. You are helping them rather than asking them for help with an issue. This immediately distinguishes you from everyone else. It also establishes the relationship before you make a request.

Regardless of whether you are meeting with your legislator in their office or writing them a letter, contacting your legislator is crucial to advancing the advocacy efforts of PDA. Legislators want to hear from their constituents, and communication from PDA members can influence how the legislator votes on an issue.

When an issue arises, PDA will draft talking points and/or letter templates for members to send to their legislators. It is important to stick to these talking points when communicating on PDA's behalf. Here is some helpful information for communicating with your legislator.

Visiting Your Legislators Office

• **Make an appointment**

Legislators are busy and if you drop in without an appointment, you may not be able to meet with your legislator, or you may have to wait. If your legislator is forced to postpone something they need to finish, it may create negative feelings instead of good will.

• **Introduce yourself**

Even if you have met several times before, don't put your legislator in the awkward position of having to ask your name or of trying to bluff their way through without addressing you by name. Understand that your legislator meets with many people and may not remember you until your relationship is solidified.

• **Get to the point**

It is okay to make small talk, but legislators are busy and it is important not to waste time. Quickly tell your legislator that you are representing PDA and clearly articulate PDA's talking points on the issue.

• **Be direct**

Discuss PDA issues when they are being voted on in the legislator's chamber. It is much better to visit your legislator frequently with one issue at a time rather than occasionally with a list of requests. Be specific with your legislator, give them bill numbers.

• **Be courteous**

Elected officials are to be treated with respect and courtesy, regarding of whether or not they agree with PDA's position on a particular issue. Your legislator may not be an expert in dental related issues, educate them, but do not be argumentative or abrasive.

• **Leave Materials**

Remember to leave your contact information, along with simple talking points or other written materials on the issue for your legislator. Do not dump volumes of materials on the legislator or their staff.

• **Thank your legislator**

Regardless of the stance the legislator takes on PDA's issue, always follow up with a thank you! Remember that legislators are busy and when you visit your legislator's office, you may be meeting with a staff member. Be kind and courteous to your legislator's staff. They often have the ear of their bosses and can influence which issues receive consideration.

Calling Your Legislator

• **Know the status**

Know where the bill currently stands in the legislative process. If it is in a committee, find out whether your legislator is a member of that committee.

• **Ask to speak to your legislator**

Ask to speak with your legislator directly, but understand that if the legislator is busy, you may talk with a staff member. State that you are calling on behalf of PDA and clearly articulate PDA's talking points on the issue. Be specific; know the bill number, its sponsor and its general purpose. Make a request as to how you would like your legislator to vote.

Remember that legislators are busy and when you call your legislator's office, you may be talking with a staff member. Be kind and courteous to your legislator's staff. They often have the ear of their bosses and can influence which issues receive consideration.

Writing Your Legislator

PDA will often draft template letters for our members to use when contacting their legislators. If you opt to use a template letter, you can personalize it with your experiences as a dentist, as they relate to the issue. You may decide to draft your own letter. If you choose to write your own, please follow these tips.

• **Introduce yourself**

Tell the legislator who you are and that you are a constituent dentist; a simple statement such as "I am a dentist who resides in your district." Include your full name and address in the letter.

• **Be specific**

Clearly identify the particular legislation about which you are writing (i.e. "I am writing in support of Senate Bill 123."). Legislation is amended often, so it is important to identify specific provisions or the version you are writing about.

• **State your case**

Share PDA's talking points clearly and concisely.

Include what the legislation means to you as a dentist and to your patients. Provide reasons as to why PDA's position warrants support.

• **Keep it brief**

Make sure to include facts, but do not waste space. Try to limit your letter to one page in length.

Planning a Dental Office Visit

Planning a legislative visit to your office, or other dental offices in your district, can be an effective way to educate legislators on both achievements of and challenges facing organized dentistry. It can also serve as an opportunity help legislators to make a connection between who you are and what your needs are. Here are some tips for planning a dental office visit:

- Get to know the representative first, if possible. Freshman representatives will be eager to meet with you since they need broad-based constituent support for re-election.
- Provide information about dentistry or free dental hygiene products. Remember to include enough for staff members.
- When talking with your legislator offer to show them dental offices in your district. Extend the invitation to staff members, as well.
- Be sure to call your legislator's local office to remind them of the dental tour. Be specific about the reason for the tour (e.g. "To show Rep. Smith how different specialty practices comply with new OSHA regulations").
- Try to arrange for you legislator to tour three dental offices (include a general dental practice and a couple of specialty practices). Try to vary the age of the practice and facilities; PDA can help choose the practices to be involved. Practices should be located within the legislator's district to cut down on travel time.



- Carefully plan the logistics. Hold a brief session with the host/tour leaders and other dentists who will be showing their offices. Agree on points to be made and discuss any potential problems (e.g. building will be locked, limited parking, presence of patients). Decide on the specific equipment or personnel to highlight during the tour. The host practices should be prepared to discuss specific information such as overhead, capital investment, etc.

- End the tour in a spacious office or other location in order to review the tour. Be aware of the legislator’s schedule and do not exceed the time allotted.

Hosting a Meet and Greet

A legislative reception or “meet and greet” can be one way to educate legislators on issues of importance to organized dentistry. “Meet and greets” provide an opportunity to develop or strengthen relationships with legislators and talk about key issues in an informal setting, which can lead to more formal discussions later on. Here are some tips for planning a “meet and greet” with legislators:

- Call the legislator’s office and ask whether he/she might be willing to attend an informal gathering (e.g. breakfast, reception) to listen to the concerns of dentists in the district.
- After the legislator agrees to meet with the group, work with the office scheduler to arrange a date, time, location and any special requirements your legislator may have.
- Send the invitation well in advance. Follow up calls should be made to those individuals who do not respond to the written invitation. Prepare an agenda for the event.
- On the day of the event, ensure that everything is properly set up ahead of time at the event location.
- Offer to pay for the legislator’s meal and drinks if necessary.
- Send thank-you letters to legislators and other attendees.

Hosting a Fundraiser

Please be aware that if you decide to hold a fundraiser for a candidate running for office, there are federal and state regulations that must be taken into consideration. The following points are not comprehensive; if you are interested in hosting a fundraiser, additional information is available to you through the PDA government relations department.

- In Pennsylvania state elections, there is no limit placed on campaign contributions, however there are limits on contributions to federal candidates.
- You are permitted to spend up to \$1,000 (\$2,000 if spouse is included) to cover the cost of invitations, food and beverages.
- Any contribution exceeding \$100 must be made by check or money order.
- In federal elections, anonymous contributions are limited to \$50 per person. Cash contributions are limited to \$100 per person.
- Individual contributions in excess of \$200 can only be given if the contributor leaves his/her name, address, occupation and name of employer. This is so the candidate can give accurate reports to the Federal Election Commission.



Correct Forms of Address

United States Senators:

The Honorable (full name)
United States Senate
(Office Location)
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (last name)

State Senators:

The Honorable (full name)
(Office Location)
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Senator (last name)

Committee Chairs:

The Honorable (full name), Chair
(Name of Committee)
(Office Location)
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Senator or Representative (last name)

Members of the US House of Representatives:

The Honorable (full name)
U.S. House of Representatives
(Office Location)
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative (last name)

State Representatives:

The Honorable (full name)
(Office Location)
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Representative (last name)

Governor of Pennsylvania:

The Honorable (full name)
Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor (last name)



Be an amazing PDA Contact Dentist

It is important to work with other members in your district to keep the dental community informed and ready to mobilize when the legislature and regulatory bodies act on dental issues. One way members can become involved is to be a PDA contact dentist. Contact dentists may already have a relationship with a particular legislator, or may just be willing to reach out to their legislator regarding PDA issues.

Every legislator should have a PDA contact dentist who can commit to the following:

- Serve as a resource for legislators regarding oral health issues and be willing to answer any question a legislator may have.
- Respond promptly when PDA sends out “Action Alerts” asking members to contact their legislators regarding a specific issue.
- Keeping colleagues informed about government activities.
- Encourage colleagues to get involved in the grassroots network.
- Attend fundraisers on behalf of PDA when your schedule permits.
- Be willing to host a meet and greet, dental office visit or visit a legislator’s office.
- You can keep informed on the latest legislative or regulatory activity simply by accessing the PDA website (www.padental.org) or by reading the Government Relations updates in the *PA Dental Journal*.

There are many ways to motivate your colleagues into becoming active members in PDA’s grassroots network. Here are a few tips:

- Form legislative teams that will respond to PDA action alerts, with you as the primary contact. The number of voices heard will definitely impact how a legislator votes!
- Devote a portion of your district and local meetings to discussing government issues.
- Invite your legislator to a district or local dental meeting.
- Ask for assistance in planning a political event.
- Open the lines of communication so that others may find out about instances like local fundraisers, or letter writing campaigns on specific issues.

Signing on as a PDA contact dentist is as simple as calling the PDA government relations staff at (800) 223-0016.

Quick Tips - Talking with your Legislator

Here is a helpful list of tips for meeting or communicating with your legislator:

- **Make an appointment before planning to visit your legislator.**
They are busy and may not have the time to meet with you if you show up unexpectedly.
- **Make sure to get to the point quickly.**
Be reasonable with your expectations of the amount of time your legislator can devote to the PDA's issues.
- **Introduce yourself as a dentist and PDA member when meeting with your legislator regarding PDA issues.** Do not discuss non-PDA issues when meeting with your legislator on behalf of PDA.
- **Be sensitive to your legislator's party affiliation.** Always try to remain non-partisan.
- **Your legislator may not be an expert in dental related issues, but treat him/her as an intelligent citizen.**
It is important to establish a relationship of mutual trust. Continual contact establishes a reputation of reliability and credibility.
- **Accurately represent PDA's position to your legislator.**
Do not attempt to answer any question you do not know the answer to. Simply state that you will send them the information at a later time and always follow up with any information you have promised to send.
- **Offer to be a resource on dental and oral health issues.**
Leave your business card with your legislators and their staff.
- **When attending a meeting with other PDA members or staff, it is important to maintain a united front.**
- **Be very specific with your legislator. Use bill numbers when possible, and clearly state PDA's position on the bill.** Give the legislator any relevant information sent by PDA when writing or visiting.
- **Remain respectful, professional and courteous when talking with your legislator.** Do not be argumentative or abrasive, and do not blame your legislator for all things that go wrong in government.
- **Send a follow-up thank you to your legislator, regardless of the position they take on the issue.**
Your legislator may vote against PDA's position on one bill, but may support PDA's position on another. Do not hold grudges as you will need your legislator's votes on other PDA issues.
- **Be kind and courteous to your legislator's staff.**
They often have the ear of their bosses and can influence which issues receive consideration.
- **Do not discuss issues when handing your legislator a personal campaign contribution, and do not discuss fundraisers when meeting to discuss issues. It's illegal!** Keep in mind that you cannot hand your legislator a contribution on government property. It's illegal!
- **Use correct forms of address when writing to or speaking with your legislator.**
Include PDA contact information in any correspondence with your legislators and their staff.
- **When using form letters, personalize them by including your own experiences as a dentist.** However, try to limit letters to one page in length.
- **Show your legislator how voting in favor of PDA's position will help their constituents.** Stay informed of what other issues your legislator is working on in your district.

The Regulatory Review Process

State agencies have the authority, discretion and, to the extent necessary, the responsibility to promulgate regulations. Depending upon the circumstances, an agency may have to:

- Add, amend or repeal a regulation in order to implement legislation
- Ensure that current regulations do not conflict with recently enacted or amended federal or state regulation or statute
- Comply with a decision of a state or federal court
- Clarify an existing regulation

Promulgating regulations is a complex and lengthy process, with oversight from several offices, commissions and committees. Here is a simple overview of the process:

Proposed Regulation Stage:

After approval for form and legality by the Office of the Attorney General, an agency publishes a proposed regulation in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* for public review and comments. The Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) and Standing Committees in the House and Senate may also submit comments.

1. Proposed regulation published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*
2. Public comment period (minimum 30 days)
3. Comment period for IRRC and Committees: IRRC (maximum 30 days); Committees (any time before final-form submittal)
4. Agency review and possible amendment

Final- Form Regulation Stage:

Agencies submit regulations and response to comments to the Standing Committees and IRRC for review before publication as a final rule. Commentators also have an opportunity to review the final version.

1. Agency submits final-form version of the regulation and response (within 2 years from close of public comment period)
2. Review period for IRRC and Committees: IRRC (minimum 30 days before voting at public meeting); Committees (up to 24 hours before IRRC public meeting)
3. Office of Attorney General review
4. Final regulation published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*

In addition to regulations, agencies may issue *statements of policy* (SOP), that provide guidance on how agency personnel carry out their duties as authorized by state law. A SOP is not required to go through the regulatory review process, however simply calling a document an SOP does not necessarily make it so. If the SOP is found to be regulatory in nature, the agency may have to promulgate the SOP as a regulation or stop using it.

To learn more about the regulatory review process, visit the Independent Regulatory Review Commission's website: www.irc.state.pa.us



Useful Websites

www.padental.org: The latest information on PDA activity, including our advocacy efforts. Information on PDA's legislative priorities, action alerts, legislation introduced impacting dentistry, and PADPAC.

www.legis.state.pa.us: Information on the Pennsylvania General Assembly, including House and Senate session information, the status of pending legislation, committee hearing dates, and contact information for individual legislators.

www.dos.pa.gov/dent: Information for the State Board of Dentistry, including announcements, board laws and regulations, and general board information.

www.pabulletin.com: Information about regulations in Pennsylvania, including actions by the General Assembly, proposed and final rulemaking by state agencies, and state agency notices.

www.house.gov/: Information for the United States House of Representatives, including session information, the status of pending legislation, committee hearing dates, and contact information for representatives.

www.senate.gov/: Information for the United States Senate, including session information, the status of pending legislation, committee hearing dates, and contact information for senators.

www.congress.gov: Information on pending legislation in the US Congress, House and Senate session information, and committee hearing dates.

www.vote-smart.org/education/government: Information on the federal legislation process, including information about the separation of powers, the system of checks and balances, and the United States Constitution.

www.hhs.gov: Information for the United States Department of Health and Human Services, including news related to public health and federal health programs.

