

Strategic Plan for Enacting Law in Your State

1. Timing

- a. Simple – start early. Start the process well before your state’s legislative session, 6 months ahead of time, minimum. For next year’s legislative session, which likely starts in January, now is not too soon to pursue legislative change.

2. Outreach

- a. Form a coalition of other interested parties. Mostly, it will likely be other language service providers, but don’t limit yourself. Establish who will be responsible for all of the various tasks that associated with pursuing legislative change.
 - i. Who will be the main communicator and organizer?
 - ii. Who will be responsible for working with the lobbyist group?
 - iii. Who will handle collecting payment for lobbyists and other expenses?
 - iv. Who will host meetings?
- b. Reach out to the unions and other relevant groups (state agencies, etc.) to present the narrative that represents the agenda you’re pursuing in as positive a way as possible. As much as possible, you want to avoid potential negative reactions and any objections from groups affected by any proposed legislation. If you can educate them early on, there’s less chance of misunderstanding and negative “knee jerk” reactions by workers who presume that anything good for agencies is bad for workers. Have a dialogue with them and talk the issue out to your best ability. Do everything you can to head off opposition “at the pass”, so to speak.

3. Find the right help

- a. Find a lobbyist. You can start here by talking to your attorneys, especially employment law experts to see if they know a well-connected lobbyist to represent your coalition. If you know any congressmen or women or state senators, reach out to them to find out who they know that is effective at this work.
- b. If you have time and unlimited resources, consider engaging with a PR firm early on to bring your issue to light and help with the education piece.

4. Develop Collateral Materials

- a. Gather as much evidence as you can to support your case early, as well. Whether it's case law or individual findings showing success in defense against improper audits. Put together an "FAQ" document addressing all potential concerns you've heard of, and can think of.
 - i. This content will be helpful for addressing the concerns of contractors and other agencies that may not know much about the issue.
- b. Develop a "one pager" informational marketing piece that can be used to quickly bring legislators and influencers up-to-speed.
- c. Capture personal stories from your coalition members. Those can be very important when it comes time to testify in front of the legislature, or to help legislators, privately, to better understand the issue.

5. Legislator relationships

- a. All politics is local, and all politics is about relationships. Again, early on, develop relationships with legislators.
- b. Find out who your representatives are, and invite them out for coffee in your district to talk about your issue. It would be great if you could get more than one to meet at the same time, if that's possible. They need to know the economic drivers in their district, the issues you're facing, and how action on their part will help not only you, but other groups in the state.