

Hot Tips for Getting Legislation Passed



Build good relationships with your legislators. They will help you with your bill along the way.

Work with the bill's sponsor to find out what specific work needs to be done to help the bill through the process.

Never think your work is done just because things are going well.

Keep up a steady effort of messages and meetings.

There is more than one way to contact your legislator... phone, email, mail or visit in person. Use 'em all!

Always focus on the positive.

Remember to say "Thank You" often!

Never give up!!!

Live a day in our shoes...

- You need help getting out of bed in the morning.
- It takes you two and a half hours to get ready for work each day.
- You can only get to work by waiting an hour (or more) for a bus.
- If it is raining, you show up to work soaking wet.
- You need employment support to find work and to ensure that you keep your job.
- After work, you wait another hour (or more) for the bus to pick you up.
- You need help to buy your groceries and pay your bills.
- You live on \$564 per month.
- If you have more than \$2,000 in assets, your SSI and Medicaid will be affected.
- Medicaid is your only health care option.
- People who have never met you make decisions about your life.



Self Advocates in Leadership
*A statewide coalition on
developmental disabilities*

% Emily Rogers
10550 Lake City Way NE #A
Seattle, WA 98125

Phone: 1-206-364-6337, ext. 125
Email: ucandoit@arcofkingcounty.org

5/04

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

for People with
Disabilities



The Success of
“Respectful Language”
Legislation
in Washington State



Self Advocates in Leadership
*A statewide coalition on
developmental disabilities*

How we got RESPECT in Washington State


We started with an idea...



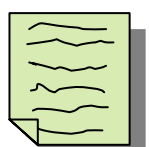
We wanted state laws and rules to stop labeling us as “disabled” “crippled” or “handicapped.”




We found a Senator to sponsor our bill.




The Senator asked a staff person from a policy committee to work with us to draft the legislation, using our words.



The bill was put into a form that was ready for “signatures” from the sponsor and other legislators who wanted to co-sign.



We took the sign up sheet to legislators, and “dropped” it in the “hopper” at the Code Reviser’s office, where it got a bill number — SB 6241.



We asked a member of the House to sponsor the same bill, called “companion legislation.” This gave our bill a better chance of survival in case the Senate bill ran into trouble.



We repeated the same actions in the House by collecting signatures and a bill number for the House bill (HB 2663).

Then... we “worked” the bill.



We made phone calls.



We emailed messages.



We met with our legislators in person.



We testified at hearings.

The House bill moved fast.



The House bill passed through the House before the Senate bill passed the Senate. As a result, Senate leadership chose to let the Senate bill die.



We “worked” the House bill to move it out of the Senate policy committee.



We “worked” the Senate Rules committee, asking to “pull” the bill to the floor for a full vote.

HB 2663 was pulled to the floor with just five days left before the final cut-off date.

We “worked the doors.”



We asked our members to call Senate leadership to urge them to move the bill to the floor.



We “worked the doors” of the Senate by sending in notes to specific Senators, asking for their help.

A glitch arose.



Arguments over a bigger issue stopped the Senate floor action, and HB 2663 died because it was not moved for a vote before the official cut-off.

We did not give up.



We asked Senate leadership to exempt the bill from cut-off. Then, we wrote thank you notes to all legislators who supported the bill.

Four hours remaining...



Four hours before midnight and the close of session, HB 2663 was moved on the Senate floor. It passed unanimously!

Respectful Language is no longer an idea — *it's the law!*