



Mr. Radio Goes to Washington: Teaming up to Pass the Local Community Radio Act

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**Cheryl A. Leanza
A Learned Hand, LLC**



Introduction

- Cheryl A. Leanza

- President, ALH
- Policy Advisor, United Church of Christ, OC Inc.
- Board member, Prometheus Radio Project
- Task Force Co-Chair, Media and Telecom Task Force, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

- My perspective: DC Policy person, lawyer, who welcomes and appreciates the art of community organizing.



Why We Won

- Stayed the course over a long period of time.
- Legislation's content was (relatively) easy to sell to many audiences.
- Good coalition skills and relationships, solid basic infrastructure.
- Understood our target audiences: Congress, communities.



Legislative Content

- People might be able to get a radio station if they helped support the bill.
- The legislation was simple – give technical decisions back to technical agency.
- Conceded potentially sympathetic issues early – like protecting reading for the blind.
- Could tailor other aspects of the bill to particular audiences.
 - Public safety, media diversity, etc.

● ● ● | Winning Coalition =
Relationships + Diversity +
Infrastructure

Relationships + Diversity:

- Trust built over many years.
- Appreciated ***all*** the skills and perspectives.
- Some allies will help in small ways, but each contributor helps to achieve the goal.
- Clear, trusted lead organization.



Infrastructure = Communication and Records

- Who called who and when. What was the last communication? What information do you have about the districts. Where is the article from their state/location? Who is the contact?
- Used Google docs, great Prometheus internal wiki.
- Careful consideration of regular calls with broader allies, how much information is too much, too little.

Sample record-keeping



Breaking Senate Holds on the LCRA

folks who got the USCCB letter on 8/18: hatch, roberts, thune, bunning, barrasso, Ensign, demint, sessions, johannes, wicke

Target Senators and quick status

Pending Senators [Hannah and Selina collaborating to get meetings/calls]:

- John Barrasso - WY -- IS HOLDING!!! Katherine is re-calling after Hannah called. left voicemail 9/29. HJS not in on 9/28... (8/18 - F (telcom) not in this week, left message)
- Crapo - ID - not holding according to politico, 10/12
- Shelby AL - NOT HOLDING ACCORDING TO POLITICO, 10/12 hasn't responded to recheck in sept.
- Roberts KS - HASN'T RESPONDED TO POLITICO CALL. 10/12 hasn't responded to recheck
- Enzi? Daum told Cheryl to recheck with him?

Needs a call to double check/follow up on USCCB letter:

- Jim Bunning - KY -- NOT HOLDING -- ROCK STARS AND GRASSROOTS FOLKS CALLED AND GOT CONFIRMATION.... F Hannah re-emailed to check that background was received, 10/1. Staffer said that the senator wasn't holding though not sure i believe he Katherine sent letter, Selina followed up with a phone call from USCC. Office has a new telcom person, Kara Haas. She is out on vacati 7/15 - PRP met and is probably not holding - FP constituent call put in - 7/11

Possible Supplemental Supporters [Selina and Hannah working on getting meetings to ask for their help with holds]:

- Sam Brownback - KS -- not holding, will help if they can post 9/27 meet (has been a supporter in the past, getting meeting 9/22) Telcom darin_guries@brownback.senate 202-224-6521
- Cochran - MS - not holding, will help if they can post 9/27 meet -- former co-sponsor -- (9/23 -- MEETING BOOKED, 4.30 pm mon prassroots letter in from emergency manager of newton county.) (9/22) hannah emailed steven wall and emily brunini. who she met with i

COLOR CODES: Blue -- left message, no new status. Yellow -- confirmed not holding. White -- no confirmed new contact with office yet. Pink -- confirmed holding. Green -- spoke to them but not confirmed holding or not.			
Status	Most recent	Who	Ally
PETRI LEFT MESSAGE 11/19 --- Confirmed not them 9/27 in meeting with Andy Long	27-Sep	Hannah, Katherine, Cheryl	Petri
CHRIS REPORT: NOT HOLDING 11/19.....Officially not holding according to rock stars My Morning Jacket (10-27)	27-Oct	Casey Rae Hunter	FMC
CHANCE REPORTS NOT HOLDING 11/23..... Not Holding, said to Chance on 9/29 -- Myriah Jordan is new staffer.	29-Sep	Chance	Chance
KAMILLA REPORT: Not Holding, 11/19. "Though Chambliss' staff has been called by the NAB. But staffer was friendly, I don't think he's guilty." Told Katherine not holding. 9/28	28-Sep	Katherine	Kamilla
PETRI LEFT MSG 11/19..... was earlier			Petri
PETRI LEFT MSG 11/19 Not holding, will try to help if they can post 9/27 meet	27-Sep	Petri	Petri
MAGGIE OF PROMETHEUS REPORTS LIKELY NOT HOLDING 11/19..... "Collins: "Lorinda Harris says that while she has heard that there are anonymous holds on the bill she does not believe that Sen. Collins is responsible for one of them. She also said that at this point she does not know whether the senator will vote for or against the bill. She says that Collins' vote will depend on language that is currently being negotiated by the NFCB/Prometheus and the NAB." Thanks to Maggie!"..... IS NOT HOLDING,		Chance, link through Snowe/F	



Target Audience: Congress

- Congress is its own culture. Learn about it as a curious anthropologist.
- Know what influences each political target and what is happening overall in Congress.
- Timing, windows of opportunity, process.
- Develop ties to allies with expertise to guide you.



Position your issue relative to the big Congressional picture

Range of options to dictate your strategy:

- REALLY BIG — President takes a position, people will take some heat for it. Need to really have a very big operation, money, industry on your side.
- Under the radar — You are going to do a lot of good, but you are not going to fall on your sword over every minor issue.
- One powerful champion-- Sneaks it into something bigger, so minor that it can get done quietly and quickly.
- LCRA positioned as a bipartisan, small, smart thing to get done. Still had to face industry opposition.



Where to get information

- The Hill, Roll Call, National Journal, CQ, Politico, Congress at Your Fingertips.
- General media. What is in the headlines right now?
- Local contacts with political connections – people in unions, local government, civic institutions.
- Politician web sites – particularly campaign web sites.
- Open Congress, OpenSecrets, Center for Responsive Politics.



Congress (and your
Congressional guide) are
people too.

- Keeping confidences when they are shared.
- Respecting the people who explain what they can and can't do.
- Some people will help in unexpected ways.
- Staff cannot dictate outcomes to their bosses.
- Staff have different skills and strengths.



Thank You!

Cheryl A. Leanza

A Learned Hand, LLC
Media Policy Consulting



cleanza@alhmail.com

www.alearnedhand.com

202-904-2168