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**NC Conservation Network**  
**Tip Sheet #5: Lobby Tips for Environmental Organizations**  
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**Lobby Tips for Environmental Organizations**

They are almost here! In just over a week (Tuesday, May 13), legislators from across NC will reconvene to start the 2008 *short session* of the General Assembly. Are you ready?

While there are fewer environmental bills to advocate for (or against) in a short session, it is still important to make sure you – and your members – are ready to stand up for protections for our environment and public health. Below are some of our lobby tips (in order of effectiveness) for environmental organizations. We recommend you use these tips as inspiration for how to activate your members, volunteers, and activists to lobby their elected officials for your organizations' causes.

**Tips for mobilizing your members**

*Please note that many of these tactics will work better if you plan your campaign in advance of the Legislative Session.*

Tip #1: **Build relationships with your elected officials** and help your key volunteers and activists to create relationships as well.

Tip #2: **Visit with your legislator in their home district.** What's more effective than meeting with a person face-to-face? Not only will meeting with your legislator in their home district help connect you to his/her turf, but your legislator is also likely to have fewer interruptions than s/he would in Raleigh. For tips on visiting with legislators (in their home district or in Raleigh), click [here](#).

Tip #3: **Visit with your legislator in Raleigh.** Taking the time to visit with your legislator in Raleigh will let your legislator know that you are serious about the cause you are lobbying for. For tips on lobbying your legislators in Raleigh, [Click here](#).

Tip #4: **Call your legislator.** Second only to a visit, is making a phone call. So few individuals take the time to actually pick up the phone any more that this tactic can go far. For tips on calling your legislator, click [here](#).

Tip #5: **Write (or type) a letter.** If immediate action is not necessary, take the time to hand-write or type a letter to mail to your legislator. In the age of email, this tactic will also show that you care enough about the issue that you are willing to take the time to compose your thoughts. For tips on writing to your legislator (whether a formal letter or email), click [here](#).

Tip #6: **Send an individualized email.** When you need a quick turn around and/or your organization is mobilizing hundreds of individuals to take action on an issue, email is often the best. Rather than asking folks to send a cookie-cutter email, encourage them to take a few minutes to write their own. You should feel free to provide talking points, but ask that they add their own subject line and chose the points that are important to them.

Tip #7: **Send a cookie-cutter letter (email, fax, or mail).** While they are convenient for constituents and for mobilizing your members to take action; they are constantly overlooked by Legislators and their assistants. And, even less effective than cookie-cutter emails, are emails sent by your members that have the same subject line. However, this tactic is worth considering when your issue is coming down to the wire.

**Other tips:**

Tip #8: **Individualized postcards.** In planning your campaign, consider a postcard action. Having individuals from a wide geographical area carrying the same message can be effective. This is especially useful if you can then divide the postcards up to deliver a stack to individual legislators from their own constituents.

Tip #9: **Petitions.** While not as effective as individual postcards, petitions can save you time and money. Consider petitions in your campaign planning if you know your organization will be attending a lot of festivals and events that are attended by the public.

**Resources to share with your volunteers and activists:**

\*Find out who your representatives are, by clicking [here](#).

\*Click [here](#) to find out how a law is made.

\*Follow these links for more information on the [NC House](#), [NC Senate](#), or the [NC General Assembly](#).

If you have any ideas for future Tip Sheets, please [email](#) Nicole Stewart, NC Conservation Network.