

Connecting The Dots



**Presented by: Lisa Elijah &
Julie Howell**



Welcome & Webinar Process

- Today's webinar will be recorded and available for viewing on PVA.org
- Closed Captioning is available. Click the CC button in the meeting controls bar at the bottom of your screen to turn it on.
- If you have a question, please type it in the Q&A box. Questions will be answered at the end of the program.



Introductions

- Lisa Elijah – Grassroots Advocacy Manager, Air Force Veteran, PVA member
- Julie Howell – Associate Legislative Director, Army Veteran



Series Overview

- The 5 W's & an H: Who, what, where, why, when and how
 - Fundamentals of Government
 - The Legislative Process
 - Understanding the Issues & Becoming a Change Agent
 - Who is Advocating & Who With (Stakeholders of Advocacy)
 - **The Art of Advocacy – Connecting the Dots**



Agenda

- Three branches of government
- Bicameral legislature
- Committees
- Legislative process
- Funding and the budget
- Advocacy
- Legitimacy through life experiences
- Crafting your story
- Making the ask
- Guest speaker



United States CONSTITUTION



LEGISLATIVE

CONGRESS



EXECUTIVE



JUDICIAL



Federal, State & Local

- State government is modeled after the federal government in makeup
- Local government must be granted power by the state
- Generally two tiers:
 - Counties
 - Municipal governments



Understanding the Chambers & Purposes

- The Legislative Branch – Congress
 - House of Representatives
 - 435 elected officials serving 2-year terms
 - Initiate revenue, impeachment
 - Senate
 - 100 elected officials serving 6-year terms
 - Confirmation of appointments and treaty ratification





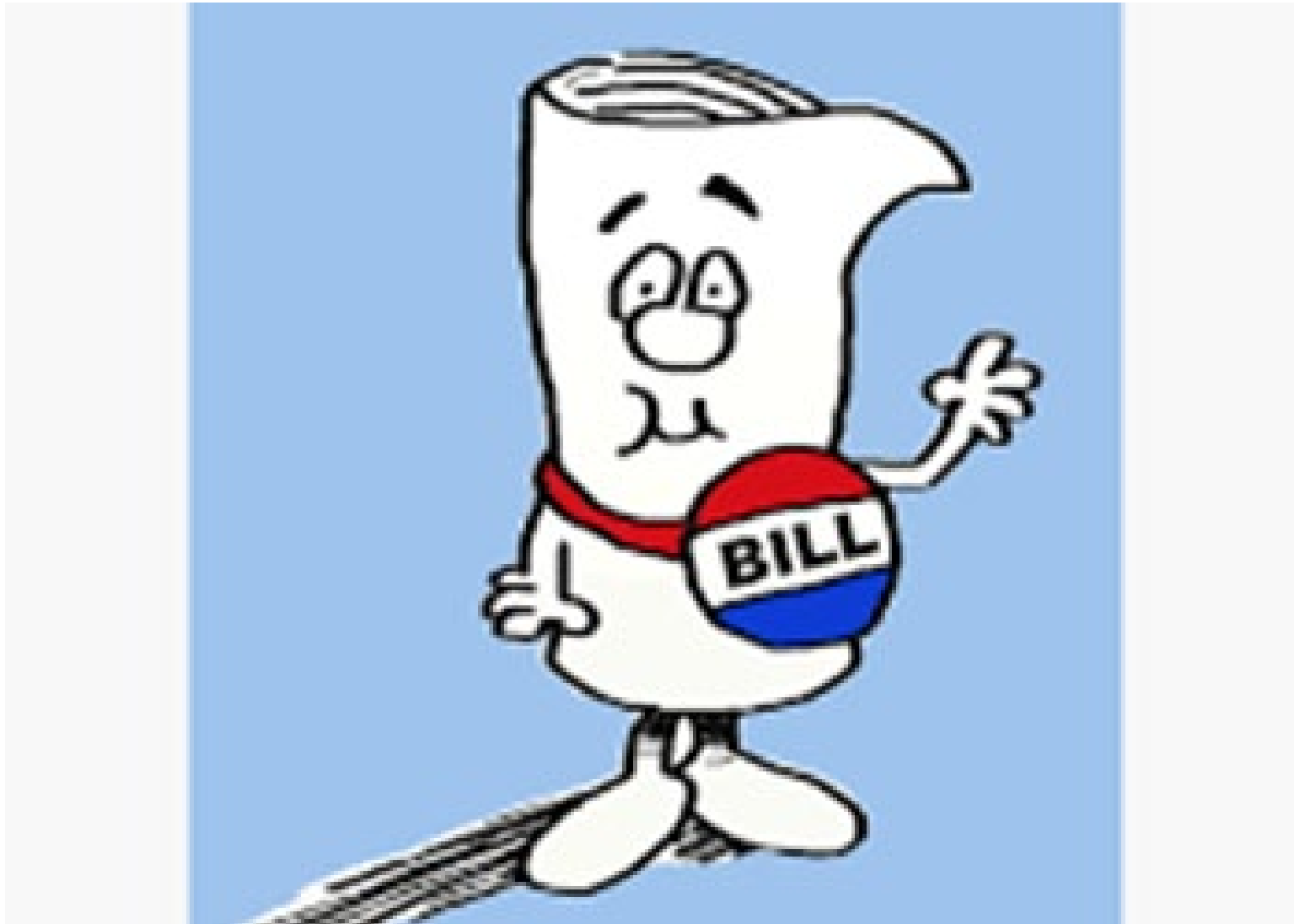
Understanding Committees

A committee is a group of members appointed to investigate, debate, and report on legislation

Asking the Right People

- Read the bill and any background documents
- Check out which committee(s) the bill was referred to and the bill's history
- Look up the bill's sponsor and any cosponsors
- Visit committee websites for information about any hearings or markups





The Legislative Process

HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE

"Congress shall have Power...To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper"
 U.S. Constitution Article 1 Section 8

H. R. 301 [110]
 House Of Representatives # in which bill was received Congressional Session

CBO or Congressional Budget office is a non-partisan office charged with checking and creating budget estimates.

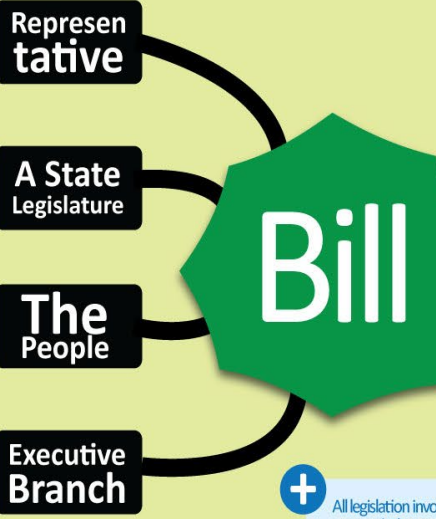
A bill originating in the Senate must go through HOR approval before going to the President.

SEN has 100 members and 16 standing committees.

Filibuster: A Senator or group of Senators deliver speeches and "hold" the floor indefinitely, hoping the prolonged debate will prevent passage of a bill. A filibuster can only be ended if a motion to end it is carried by 60 votes (a super majority).

A Reconciliation bill is part of the budget process and allows Congress to make changes in law to conform with budget levels set in the budget resolution. It has become an alternative way to pass contentious legislation in the Senate because it only requires a simple majority to pass.⁵

A Lobbyist is an activist paid by an interest group to promote their position in the legislature. He/She can also work to change public opinion through advertising and other media outlets.



THE INDEPENDENT BUDGET

Veterans Agenda for the 118th Congress



Costs, Funding & the Budget

Two Major Spending Areas:

- Discretionary Spending
- Mandatory Spending

Federal Budget

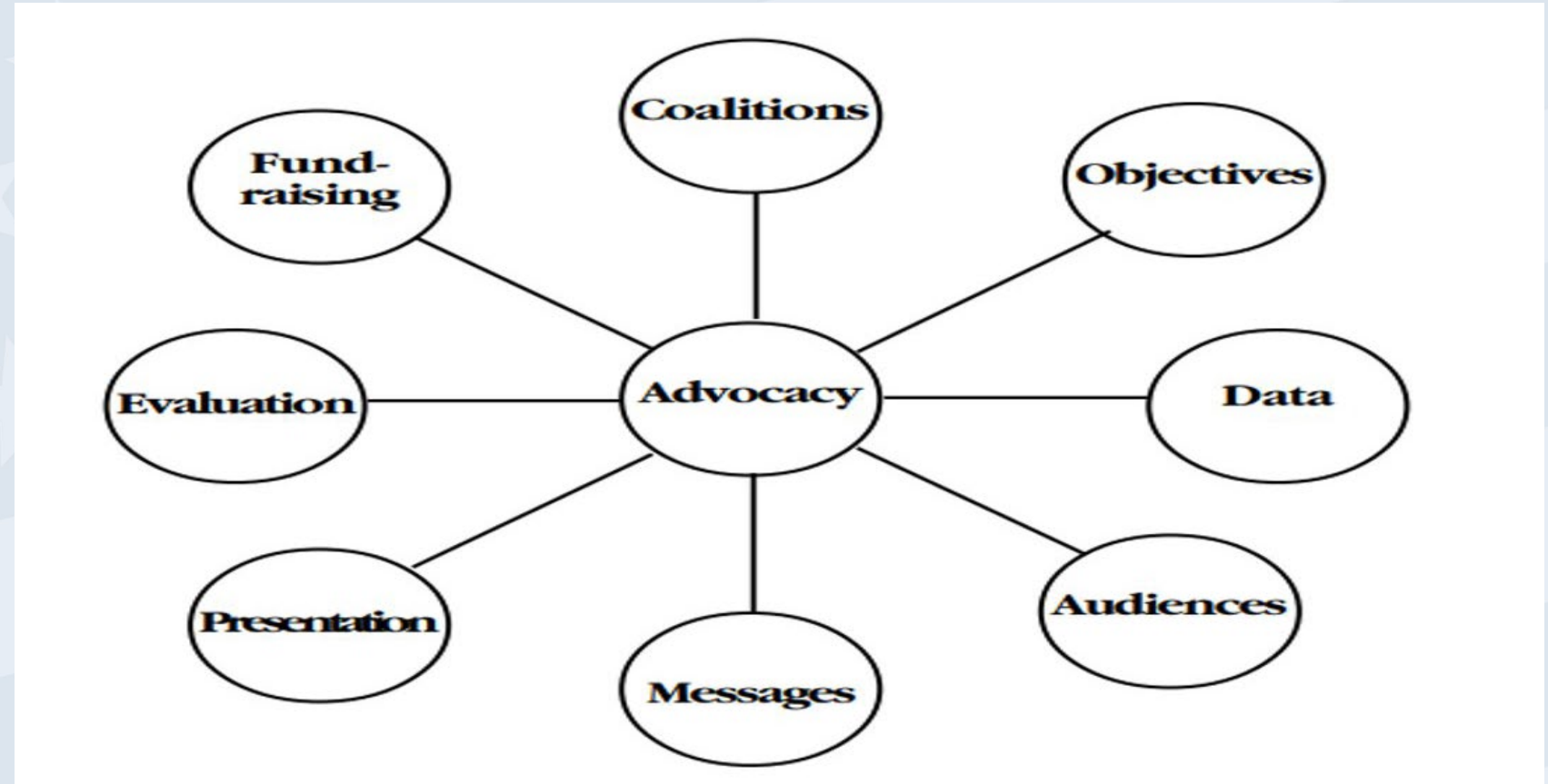
- Runs October 1-
September 30

Independent Budget (IB)

- PVA, DAV, VFW

Basic Elements of Advocacy

- Objectives
- Data
- Audiences
- Messages
- Presentation
- Evaluation
- Fundraising
- Coalitions

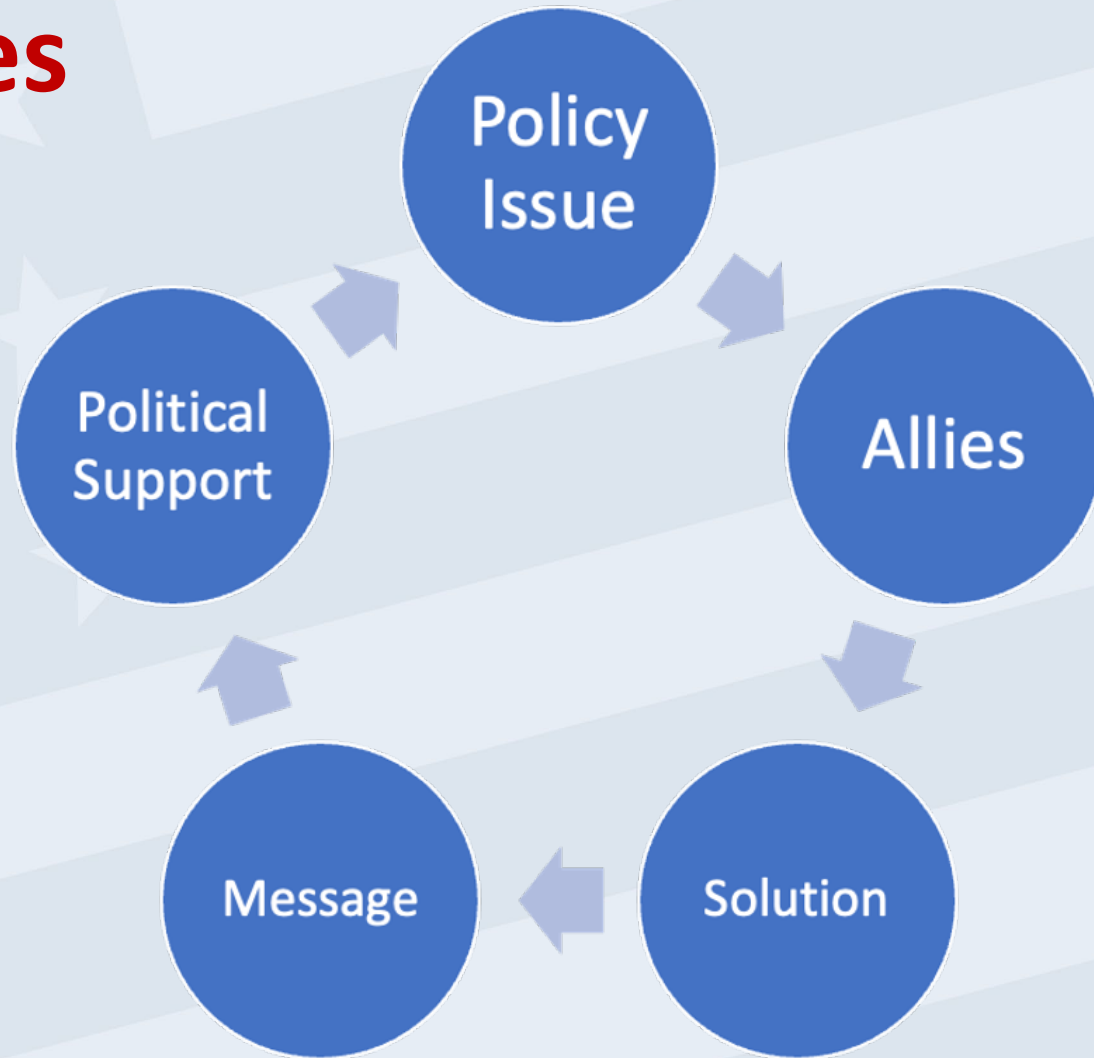


Stakeholders of Advocacy

- Stakeholders are people that are interested or concerned with an issue
 - You
 - Your Coalition
 - Elected officials and their staffs
 - Your chapter
 - Researchers
 - Pretty much anyone can be a stakeholder



Putting The Pieces Together



Legitimacy Through Life Experiences

- You are the only person to live your life and experience
- The experiences you've had make you an expert
- Congressional offices and staff need to hear your stories
- How you navigate spaces is critical for identifying barriers*



Crafting Your Story

- Review the materials that have been shared with you.
- Take your experience, data, talking points and connect the dots! Weave it all together!
- Be mindful of time and be prepared to synthesize your message.
- Be honest, do not make up statistics, do not lie or exaggerate.
- Its ok to not have an answer!
- Most importantly, be authentic



**Carl Blake
(US Army Ret.)**

**Chief Executive
Officer;
PVA**

**US Army,
West Point**



In Closing

- Federal, state, and local government
 - Legislative process
- Cost, funding and the budget
- Breakdown of advocacy
 - Stakeholders
 - Own your story
 - Put it all together



Q&A

We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Again, this was just an overview of certain aspects of the government.

Reach out to us any time at JulieH@PVA.org and LisaE@PVA.org.



Webinar Code

- For participants viewing the recording that would like credit for the last session, please email the code 5CT2D5 to Lisa Elijah at LisaE@PVA.org.
- That's a wrap!

