

Ohio Library Council Legislative Day 2011 March 24, 2011

PREPARING FOR LEGISLATIVE DAY

The annual Ohio Library Council Legislative Day 2011 will be Thurs., March 24. The OLC has sent letters to all legislators advising them that library representatives will be calling them to arrange appointments.

It is anticipated that Governor Kasich will release his proposed State Biennium Budget on March 15. The OLC will review the budget documents and send out a summary of the impact of the budget proposal. The OLC Government Relations Committee will meet on March 16. Shortly thereafter, Lynda Murray will present a webcast to review all of the issues that should be addressed on Legislative Day.

Even though complete information about the budget proposal is not yet available, now is the time for library representatives to begin to prepare. The following tips and guideline are provided to help make Legislative Day as beneficial as possible for you and your legislators:

- Prepare key points to make when meeting with your legislators and/ or the legislative aides. You need to focus on three important messages: **1) the cuts that libraries have already sustained; 2) the importance and popularity of public libraries; and 3) the importance public libraries will have in the shift to e-government.** To support these three messages, please review the Talking Points that OLC has provided.
- Coordinate legislative visits with area libraries. THIS IS CRITICAL. Legislators are swamped with visits, meetings and hearings. Combining visits with other libraries is a better use of everyone's time and can mean a bigger impact on the legislator. It is a good way to demonstrate collaboration. If you're uncertain what libraries are in your district, contact your Legislative Network person by checking out the Advocacy section of the OLC website.
- Contact your legislator to make an appointment for March 24. This may be difficult. Many legislators are already over-booked. Let Lynda Murray know if you cannot get an appointment.
- Inform your legislator of information or resources available through your library, which can assist them in their committee assignments. Also, offer assistance in answering constituent questions.
- Review the list of services. It is always surprising to me that some legislators don't know all of the things that their libraries do. We have provided a list of services that you might find useful in helping to develop a list you can leave with your legislators.
- This year, the OLC's lobbying efforts are focused on the role that libraries play in their community in education (especially early literacy) and restoring the economy. You may want to consider bringing a local business leader with you to your legislative appointments.
- Take a camera to your meeting. Take a picture of those attending with the legislator and make sure to send it to your local press and include it in your newsletter and on your website.
- **WEAR RED!**