Make a Difference. Make a Phone Call.

Here are simple tips on effective grassroots lobbying by phone. As session gets underway, you will no doubt have several opportunities to make phone calls to your legislators. Your first call however, will be not be about the issues, but will be the start of a successful relationship with your legislator.

In the month following elections, make a call to each of your legislators. Congratulate them on their election. Not an election year? Call to thank them for their efforts during the most recent session of the General Assembly. Consider hosting a community event and invite your legislator to speak with you and your community leaders.

Making an Effective Phone Call

• You may be speaking to an assistant, not the legislator. Write down the name of who you speak to so you can refer back in follow-up conversations. The legislator’s assistants are people you will be talking to often. Value that relationship.

• Clearly state what you want from the phone call. You are calling simply to register your opinion on a pending issue. Let the assistant or legislator know you are a local government official, calling about an impact on the citizens of your town.

• Introduce yourself and share your hometown, making it clear you are a constituent. State your specific credentials – share that you are a mayor, town manager, local professional, etc.

• Say why you are calling. If you are calling about specific pending legislation, give the bill number and issue. Be brief. You are calling to urge support or opposition of a specific bill or issue because your citizens are impacted.

• It is critical for legislators to know that you know this is something their constituents will/will not like. Let them know you are connected to their constituents.

• Pause for a reply, but be ready to continue without feedback. Whomever you are speaking with is probably taking notes and will want to give the correct message. It is okay to have them read it back to you.

• Provide a phone number where you can be reached for follow-up questions or feedback if necessary.

• Offer to make an appointment to talk face to face either in Raleigh or in their district. Be available.

• Thank the assistant for sharing the message.