

# IDENTIFYING A BILL SPONSOR

**Abstract:** The sponsor of your legislation should be its highest ranking supporter. Co-sponsors can agree to sign onto the legislation but may or may not actively champion the legislation. Your sponsor must be its champion. However, ideally you will have several supporters in the legislature and will have the ability to choose the lead sponsor among several good options. Perhaps several could sponsor it collectively. In many situations, however, you will need to search for a sponsor. The guide below walks through the steps for that.

## LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR

Considerations for who to pick for your legislative sponsor

Consideration	Yes/No and Notes
Is your sponsor on the committee that your bill will be heard or a member of the subcommittee for which your bill will have to pass through?	
Is your sponsor in the majority party? Is your sponsor an outlier or a maverick in their party or a consensus player?	
Is your sponsor able to get bipartisan support? Would bipartisan support be helpful?	
Communication/Responsiveness - If other groups or organizations have worked with this sponsor before how would they rate their responsiveness and communication? Are they open to meeting regularly to discuss the legislation?	
Advocating with leadership and colleagues to support the bill - Does the sponsor work hard on their bills? Do they garner co-sponsors to support their legislation, and do they have a rapport with Senate and Assembly leadership as well as key committee chairs?	
Are their staff members responsive to your needs and requests?	
Champion - Is your sponsor willing to sign onto op-eds, and appear at press conferences and rallies for your legislation?	
Efficacy - Is your sponsor effective at enacting bills into law? Review how many bills your potential sponsor has introduced versus how many have been passed.	
How many bills is your sponsor currently introducing (If it is a large number, you may want to consider whether or not they will have the bandwidth to champion your issue effectively)?	

**METHODS TO GET YOUR LEGISLATIVE SPONSOR**

**TO AGREE TO INTRODUCE YOUR LEGISLATION:**

- » Schedule a formal meeting to make a formal request
- » If you are working with a coalition, consider bringing coalition members with you
- » If you can find constituents of that legislator who support the bill, bring them as well

**PREPARING FOR YOUR MEETING WITH**

**A POSSIBLE BILL SPONSOR:**

- » Bring a bill summary with you and address the intent of the bill
- » At the meeting, thank them for their past leadership and introduce the legislation to them
- » Be clear about what you are asking for
- » Give context - why this legislation and why now (show urgency)
- » Personalize the ask - "You are the perfect sponsor for this bill because \_\_\_\_\_"
- » Be enthusiastic and confident
- » Be prepared to answer questions they might have

**THOUGHTFUL TIPS!**

- Lay it on thick about why this legislation is important
- Be persistent by following up and having other groups/affiliates set meetings to ask about sponsoring the legislation but don't cross the line into annoying
- Check viability ahead of time with the committee chair and leadership
- If you have a relationship with legislative leadership or the committee chair ask them who they think would be a good sponsor for the legislation
- Make sure to know the timeline of when legislation can be introduced
- Check with legislative staff before to find out if there is anything you should know before approaching
- Know the opposing arguments and have responses ready

**Having considered the options, document your next steps here for identifying a sponsor.**

Step	Action	Date
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

