**The Ten Commandments.**

**

**POWER.**

**EXERT YOUR**

Ten Commandments for Influencing the General Assembly.

1. **Thou shalt Know Thy Members of the General Assembly**: Get to know the Members from your district on a personal basis. Get close enough so they know your name, who you are, particularly that you are a nurse.
2. **Thou shalt Know About Thy Members of the General Assembly**: Get to know the Member so that you won't commit a faux pas that will damage your basic cause. It is not likely that the Member will share all of your political views but know the issues that are particularly special to him or her.
3. **Thou shalt Not Limit Contacts to Crisis Situations**: Make sure that some of the contacts are just attitude-enhancing efforts. The influence you have will fall off inversely with the length of time between visits.
4. **Thou shalt Know the Members' Staff People**: All Members need help in dealing with a vast number of problems. It is the Member's staff that supply that help. Educating the staff may be as significant as educating the Member, and staffers can usually give you more time than the Members can.
5. **Thou shalt Have a Focused and Concise Message**: The Members have even less disposable time than you do, so don't overburden them with detail and don't protract the session. There may be no points to be gained by finishing on schedule, but there are definitely points to be lost by not finishing in the time you've been allotted.
6. **Thou shalt Not Commit Effrontery Toward Someone Else's Project**: Be positive about your own shtick, and do not attack another program gratuitously.
7. **Thou shalt Visit the Member in the District**: When the Members are not in Columbus politicking, they will be in their own districts politicking, and there are ways of showing them at home that there are real votes involved. Also consider volunteering a few hours of your time (or a relative's) for envelope-stuffing and making phone calls.
8. **Thou shalt get to Know Who the Key Members of the General Assembly are**: Know who they are in terms of major committee assignments and make informed liaisons with other individuals and groups in the district served by these key Members.
9. **Thou shalt Accept a Turn-Down or Set-Back Graciously**: Recognize that when the Member votes contrary to your urging, it won't be because the Member is ignorant or uninformed. Perhaps the Member's philosophical priorities are different from yours, and of course, it may be that political considerations dictate a certain vote.
10. **Thou shalt Not Do Thy Lobbying Like a Lobbyist**: Your competitors for the Member's attention and vote are professionals with megabucks at their disposal. Therefore it is not always necessary to invite the Member to lunch or rely on other blandishments. Just know your facts. Be as straight as you know how to be in making your case, and don't underestimate what the Member may already know about your issue.

(\*Original version written by Harold Hansen, US House of Representatives, Science, Space, & Technology Committee)