Make Impactful Public Health Policy Change: Experience the legislative process from the inside of the Maryland General Assembly

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2019 PHASE Symposium
Agenda

• Introduction
• Background
  • MD General Assembly
  • How a bill becomes law
  • District 12
• Legislative Fellowship
• Main Takeaways
Introduction

“Medicine is a social science, and politics is nothing else but medicine on a large scale”

-Rudolf Virchow
Maryland General Assembly

• “Enacts laws necessary for the welfare of the State’s Citizens and certain laws dealing with counties and special taxing districts;
• Proposes amendments to the Maryland Constitution, which must be ratified by the voters during the general election;
• Meets in regular session for 90 days each year beginning the second Wednesday in January to act on more than 2500 pieces of legislation and the State’s annual capital and operating budgets; [and]
• Meets in special session when called by the Governor or when a majority of each house petitions the Governor.”
How a Bill Becomes Law in MD

1. Introduced by a legislator
2. Assigned to committee
3. Public Hearing
4. Amendments and floor votes
5. Process repeats in second chamber
6. Final vote in original chamber
   a. Conference Committee
7. Governor’s desk
8. Veto override
The Progress of a Bill

Senator Clarence Lam

- Elected to MD Senate in 2018
  - Previously served as a Delegate from District 12
  - Education, Health, Environmental Affairs Committee
  - Howard County delegation co-chair
- Hopkins Connection
  - Bloomberg faculty (and MPH graduate)
  - Director of preventive medicine residency program
  - Practices at JH APL
- Previous legislative fellow work
  - Henry Waxman (DC)
  - Dan Morhaim (MD)
District 12
Legislative Fellowship

• Worked as a legislative fellow in Annapolis during the 2019 session
  • Senator Clarence Lam’s office
  • Worked on ~10 different bills

• Main Tasks
  • Background research on bills
  • Stakeholder engagement
  • Testimony/advocacy
  • Tracking bill progress
  • Constituent correspondence
Highlighted Bills

• Naloxone discrimination (SB 312)
• Electric vehicle charging infrastructure (SB 987)
• Dental service organizations (SB 371)
• Chemical bans (SB 82)
Highlighted Bills

• **Naloxone discrimination (SB 312)**
  • Electric vehicle charging infrastructure (SB 987)
  • Dental service organizations (SB 371)
  • Chemical bans (SB 82)
Naloxone Discrimination (SB 312)

Bill Overview
• Prevents life insurers from denying coverage to individuals who carry naloxone

My Role
• Testified in front of Senate finance committee

Bill Status
• Failed to leave committee
Nurse Denied Life Insurance Because She Carries Naloxone

December 13, 2018 · 5:00 AM ET
Heard on Morning Edition

From 90.9 wbur
BOSTON'S NPR® NEWS STATION

Highlighted Bills

• Naloxone discrimination (SB 312)
• Electric vehicle charging infrastructure (SB 987)
• Dental service organizations (SB 371)
• Chemical bans (SB 82)
EV Charging Infrastructure (SB 987)

**Bill Overview**
- Requires new buildings to construct electric vehicle charging infrastructure

**My Role**
- Created a network of supporters and assembled written testimony

**Bill Status**
- Failed to leave committee
Highlighted Bills

- Naloxone discrimination (SB 312)
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure (SB 987)
- Dental service organizations (SB 371)
- Chemical bans (SB 82)
Dental Service Orgs (SB 371)

Bill Overview

• Requires dental practices to be fully owned by dentists (not service organizations)

My Role

• Advised Sen. Lam about potential effects of law on Medicaid population

Bill Status

• Blowback from constituents, withdrawn from House
Highlighted Bills

• Naloxone discrimination (SB 312)
• Electric vehicle charging infrastructure (SB 987)
• Dental service organizations (SB 371)
• Chemical bans (SB 82)
Chemical Bans (SB 82)

**Bill Overview**

- Bans two industrial chemicals (NMP and DCM) which have been shown to be dangerous to humans

**My Role**

- Included impacts on bee populations in advocacy materials

**Bill Status**

- Passed Senate
Dear Senator,

Please help us protect the bees in Maryland. We want to see SB 270 pass out of committee and a 2019 vote in the Senate.

- Carolyn
Main Takeaways

• State level politics is critical
  • Does not just depend on who sits in the governor’s mansion

• Once per week is not enough

• Public health needs to assume a larger role in legislative politics
Thank you!