

CHAPTER 10

LOBBYING

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1 INTRODUCTION

As well as being hard work, lobbying can be fun and rewarding. It's hugely satisfying to convince politicians or government officials that reforms are needed.

There are all sorts of situations in which you may wish to lobby. You may, for example, be pressing supermarkets not to sell battery eggs or trying to convince a zoo not to keep polar bears. This is referred to as non-political lobbying. Most lobbying, however, is political – trying to secure improved laws or better policies.

Lobbying will be more effective if it is linked to a strong public campaign; politicians are much more likely to introduce reforms if they are wanted by the general public, not just by an animal protection organisation.

This chapter looks at lobbying to secure *new laws*. However its principles and suggested tactics apply equally to lobbying for a change in government *policy*.

There are two separate stages to lobbying for new legislation:

- 1) Trying to convince the authorities that there is a good case for changing the law.
- 2) Then, if the authorities do propose new legislation, you must lobby to ensure that the wording eventually agreed is as strong as possible.

Each stage will be elaborated upon in the sections that follow.

2 LOBBYING FOR NEW LEGISLATION – PERSUADING THE AUTHORITIES

YOUR KEY AIM AT THIS STAGE IS TO BUILD A FEELING AMONG MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND MINISTERS (AND ALSO IN THE MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC) THAT THERE IS A STRONG CASE FOR NEW LEGISLATION.

Countries vary greatly as regards who can make, or propose, new legislation. It's vital that you find out who in your country:

- Is entitled to make, or propose, new laws (referred to in this chapter as the "Power Person"), and
- Is in a position to influence that body or person.

For example, in the European Union (EU) only the European Commission can propose new legislation. However – and this is crucial – Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are able to put considerable pressure on the Commission. So, one must lobby the Commission officials directly **and also** lobby the MEPs asking them to use their influence with the Commission.

In many countries the Power Person will be a Government Minister. For example, if you are trying to win a ban on battery cages, the Power Person may well be the Agriculture Minister.

a) Lobbying the Power Person

Your lobbying should include the following steps:

- Start by writing to the Minister, or other Power Person, setting out your arguments clearly and concisely.



- In your letter ask for a meeting. A meeting is really helpful in bringing your issue to the front of someone's mind.

b) Lobbying Others with Influence

Write to, and seek meetings with, other key people who can influence the Power Person.

These include:

- **Government officials:** They are responsible for advising the Minister whether there is a good case for changing the law. They usually have more detailed knowledge than the Minister. So, your letters to, and meetings with, the officials may need to be more thorough. It's vital to develop good relations with the officials; Ministers only rarely go against their advice.
- **Members of Parliament** (referred to in this chapter as 'MPs'): Usually a Parliament will only have a main debate and vote on an issue when a new law has been proposed by the Power Person (see Stage 2 below). However, there are various ways in which MPs can help at Stage 1 to create an atmosphere among other politicians, the public and the media in which it seems increasingly crucial that the law should be reformed.

c) How Members of Parliament Can Help

You should lobby MPs who can help in various ways:

- **Letters from Members of Parliament:** Ask them to write to the Power Person, probably a Government Minister, urging him/her to propose new legislation. Letters from MPs can be highly effective.
- **Parliamentary Questions:** Often Members of Parliament are able to table Parliamentary Questions (PQs) which ask the Government:
 - for factual information, or
 - about its policy.

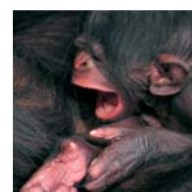
A Parliamentary Question may, for example, ask how many animal experiments were carried out last year or what plans the government has to fund research into the development of non-animal alternatives. The value of a PQ is not just the answer that is given, but crucially the fact that MPs are asking questions shows the Government that there is strong Parliamentary concern about a particular subject.

- **Resolutions:** Many Parliaments are able to agree a Resolution, also sometimes called Declarations or Motions, which expresses the Parliament's belief that reforms are needed. You can ask a Member of Parliament to table a Resolution, and then write to other MPs asking them to support it.
- **Debates:** A Member of Parliament may be able to arrange a short debate in the Parliament. This too is a good way of making the Government aware of Parliamentary concerns.



d) Tips for Working with Members of Parliament

- If an MP agrees to help, you should offer to draft the letter (to the Minister), Parliamentary Question or Resolution for them as MPs often do not have the time or the detailed knowledge to do this themselves.
- It's important to build up a relationship with MPs in which they **trust** you. This can only be done over time. Trust will develop if MPs gradually realise that your information is accurate (accuracy is very important) and that your case is well argued.
- You do not need to have a lot of friendly MPs. Sometimes just one or two really supportive MPs can help you make good progress, partly because they may persuade their colleagues to support you.
- Do not say that one political party is better than the others. You need to be able to work well with politicians from all the parties.



e) Key Points for Meetings and Letters

The science: refer to any scientific research that supports your arguments.

Politicians (Ministers, Government officials and Members of Parliament) place much more trust in scientific research that shows that a practice is inhumane than in statements by an animal protection organisation. For example, it was very helpful, when lobbying for an EU ban on battery cages, to be able to say that the EU's Scientific Veterinary Committee had concluded that the battery cage "has inherent severe disadvantages for the welfare of hens".

Economics: you must try to win the economic argument.

Politicians are reluctant to ban a practice if they believe that it will be expensive to do so. You must, if possible, show that your proposal will not lead to an increase in costs, or even that it will result in savings in the long term.

Suppose that you are trying to win a ban on sow stalls also known as 'gestation crates'. You will have real difficulties if your opponents manage to convince politicians that the alternatives will lead to increased costs for farmers and higher meat prices for consumers. You must show that changing to group housing of sows or keeping them free-range will lead to only a very small increase in costs or even reduced costs.

You must show that there are viable alternatives.

Politicians are also reluctant to ban a practice if they feel there are no practicable alternatives. For example, politicians will be unwilling to ban animal toxicity testing unless you can convince them that non-animal methods are just as effective.

Anticipate your opponents' arguments.

Before a meeting, try to anticipate your opponents' arguments **and have good convincing points to make in response to them.** For example, a politician may say that farmers have told him or her that battery cages are good because they prevent the feather-pecking that can occur in perchery and free-range systems. You must be able to show that feather-pecking can be avoided in these systems by keeping the hens in good conditions. Or farmers may assert that chickens kept outdoors have higher mortality rates than indoor chickens. You must argue that in a well-run free-range farm mortality can be as low as in cages.



What are your key points?

Decide on the key points that you wish to make. The person you are meeting may make other points and you perhaps will need to respond to them, but you must try to ensure that you don't leave without making your own points. If you are clear what your main points are, you will be aware when the meeting has moved away from them and you should try to steer it back.



Be focused.

If your main aim is to secure a ban on the keeping of primates as pets, don't, in a letter or meeting about this, also talk about industrial farming or animal experiments.

Letters should not be too long.

Generally keep letters as short as possible. Two pages at most.

Be polite.

Your points may be radical, for example you may want a ban on battery cages, but your tone should be polite and reasonable.

f) Other Lobbying Activities

In addition to those that we have already looked at, there are a number of other actions you could usefully take:

Supporter letters or cards: Ask your supporters to write to the Minister and Members of Parliament. Politicians are much more likely to act if they feel that your issue has broad public support. Your supporters could either send a letter – you should tell them the main points to make, or you could produce a postcard with a printed message which they can sign.

Petition: Organise a petition addressed to the Power Person. Once you have sufficient signatures, arrange to present it to the Power Person. The petition may be more effective if it is presented by a celebrity or a sympathetic Member of Parliament.

Maintain contact with politicians: You must find ways of reminding politicians of your concerns. From time to time write to the Minister, Government officials and sympathetic Members of Parliament to inform them of significant developments. For example tell them about a new scientific study that is helpful to your issue or an opinion poll that shows most of the public share your belief that a particular practice should be banned.

Scientific and economic briefing or report: Prepare a briefing or report that summarises the main scientific research on your issue to show that your aim is supported by the science. Send this to relevant politicians. The briefing or report should also deal with the economic arguments and show that the reform you seek would not lead to an increase in costs or only to a small increase.

Photos and films: Send photos and films (video or DVD) to relevant politicians. These will illustrate your concerns more powerfully than words alone.

g) Planning Your Lobbying Activities

Be aware that persuading the Power Person to propose or make new legislation can be a long process taking months, even years. We don't want to dishearten you, but it can take a long time to persuade a Government to introduce laws that are seen as harming the vested interests of farmers, drug companies or hunters. **But with tenacity and patience, you really can be successful.**

Lobbying has led to a ban on hunting in Britain and to EU bans on battery cages (from 2012) and the sale of cosmetics tested on animals (from 2008). Sow stalls (also known as gestation crates) have been outlawed in the Philippines, Florida (from 2008) and the EU (from 2013).

The force feeding of geese and ducks for foie gras production has been banned in California (from 2012) and in Israel. Lobbying in Israel has also led to a ban on the dehorning of cattle without anaesthesia. Lobbying in the US resulted in a prohibition on the manufacture and import of dog and cat fur products.

You will need to use a wide range of tactics in order to keep your lobbying fresh and alive over a lengthy period. That is why we have suggested a variety of tactics such as letters; meetings; Parliamentary Questions, Resolutions and Debates; letters from Members of Parliament and your supporters to the Power Person; petitions; scientific and economic reports.

At the start of your lobbying, estimate how long it will take to persuade the Power Person. Then prepare a timetable for your lobbying activities. This should aim to place regular pressure on the Power Person and other relevant politicians. Avoid using all your lobbying tools at once. Instead, ensure that you are able to exert continuing pressure over a lengthy period.



3

ENSURING STRONG LEGISLATION

So far we have been considering the process of persuading a Minister (or other Power Person) to make, or propose, new legislation. We will now look at what you need to do once you have been successful in convincing the Minister that legal reforms are needed.

Sometimes the Minister is able to make a new law without getting the agreement of others. Usually, however, the Minister will only be able to **propose** new legislation. This means that the Minister will publish draft legislation, which then has to be agreed by another body or bodies such as the Parliament. The draft legislation may have to go through several stages before becoming law.

We will now look at the steps you need to take to ensure that the proposed legislation goes through the various law-making stages without being weakened; indeed hopefully it will be strengthened during this process.

First, you must find out what stages proposed legislation has to go through in your country before it is approved as a law. These stages will vary from country to country.

In many countries once the Power Person has proposed a new law, it then has to be agreed by the Parliament. Often a Committee of Members of Parliament will produce a detailed report about the proposed law. Then, on the basis of that report, the proposal will be voted on by the full Parliament. Some Parliamentary stages involve examination of the proposed law's principles; others entail a detailed line-by-line consideration.

It is important that you are clear about:

- The various stages that the proposed law must pass through, and
- The timetable for those stages.

This will enable you to target the right people with your lobbying at the right time.

You must lobby Members of Parliament and other decision makers, such as the Minister and Government officials, to try to:

- Strengthen the proposed law where it is weak
- Defend good parts of the proposal from attack by your opponents. For example, if your opponents are arguing against a proposed ban on the keeping of wild-caught birds as pets, you must stress that using such birds as pets imposes severe welfare problems on them and may be driving some species to extinction.

When lobbying to ensure that a proposed law is as strong as possible when it is finalised, you should use all these tactics:

- Write letters
- Request meetings
- Ensure that your arguments are clear and concise
- Stress that scientific research supports you
- Explain that your proposal will not be economically harmful
- Show why your opponents' arguments are not valid.



NON-POLITICAL LOBBYING

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The principles and thinking outlined in this chapter can also be applied to lobbying outside the political arena, for example lobbying:

- A supermarket not to sell factory farmed meat
- A fast-food chain to only use free-range eggs
- A zoo not to keep elephants or polar bears
- A shop not to stock fur
- A restaurant not to serve foie gras
- A farmers' organisation to move away from industrial farming.

This kind of lobbying has led to one UK supermarket, Waitrose, refusing to sell battery eggs and to another, Marks and Spencer, only selling free-range eggs. Moreover, all supermarkets in the Netherlands have committed themselves to stopping the sale of battery eggs. Turning to fast-food chains, in the UK McDonald's only uses free-range eggs. In the US McDonald's has prohibited the forced moulting of laying hens as well as requiring battery hens to be given more space than the US industry average and insisting that its meat suppliers observe certain slaughter standards.

CASE STUDY: WINNING THE EU BAN ON SOW STALLS

5

This case study looks at Compassion in World Farming's (CIWF) successful campaign to get a ban on sow stalls in the European Union (EU).

In the EU three institutions are involved in making new legislation:

- 1) the **European Commission** which proposes new legislation
- 2) the **European Parliament**
- 3) the **Council** which is composed of Ministers from each EU Member State.

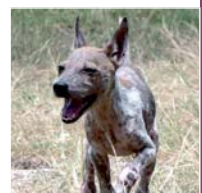
1997: The EU's Scientific Veterinary Committee (SVC) publishes a Report on the Welfare of Intensively Kept Pigs. This is very helpful – it condemns sow stalls, concluding that they cause 'serious welfare problems'.

CIWF is now in a strong position as its key aim has been supported by a major scientific report. CIWF's objective is to persuade the Commission, which is the only body that can propose new legislation, to propose a ban on sow stalls as a ban is clearly justified by the scientific evidence.

1998 & 1999: In order to achieve this objective, CIWF writes to and has meetings with:

- The Commission urging it to propose a ban on sow stalls and stressing that the SVC Report is highly critical of stalls
- The people who can put pressure on the Commission; that is the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and the Agriculture Ministers of the EU Member States. CIWF asks the MEPs and Ministers to urge the Commission to propose a ban on stalls. CIWF continually emphasises that the scientific report condemns stalls on cruelty grounds.

Crucially, CIWF's lobbying is backed up by a strong public campaign. Supporters send a huge number of letters and postcards to the Commission.





2000: CIWF knows that it needs to give fresh energy to its lobbying which is now entering its third year. It produces:

- A detailed report that summarises all the scientific research showing that stalls cause severe welfare problems
- A short 8 page booklet. This sets out CIWF's case concisely and contains powerful colour photos showing the cruel nature of stalls and highlighting the more humane alternatives.

The report and the booklet are sent to the Commission, MEPs, Agriculture Ministers and officials in Agriculture Ministries. **The booklet is not sent out at the same time as the report, but a few weeks later** – it is important to regularly have fresh things to say to politicians.

2001: At last! In January the Commission publishes a proposed ban on sow stalls. This is a major turning point. Now it is up to the Council, which consists of the Agriculture Ministers of the EU Member States, and the Parliament to decide if the proposed ban is to become law.

CIWF's objective now becomes: to ensure that the proposed legislation is not weakened, and indeed is strengthened, while it is being considered by the Parliament and the Agriculture Ministers.

CIWF re-doubles its efforts to make sure that all decision-makers are aware of the case for banning sow stalls. It:

- Distributes a short **film** contrasting stalls and the kinder alternatives. A film highlights the cruelty of stalls more powerfully than words can
- Commissions an **Opinion Poll**, this shows that 84% of the public wants a ban on stalls. This is vital. Politicians want to know that such a ban enjoys wide public support
- Collects 700,000 signatures on a **petition**. This massive petition is presented to the President of the EU Agriculture Council
- Distributes a short 6 page booklet showing how a number of farms are making a commercial success of using humane alternatives. This too is vital – before they ban a system, politicians want to know that there is a viable alternative that can take its place.

CIWF works closely with Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) when the proposed ban is considered by the Parliament's Agriculture Committee and again when it is debated by the full Parliament:

- CIWF asks sympathetic MEPs to table an amendment to strengthen the proposal and then urges other MEPs to vote for this amendment.
- Hostile MEPs, who support the pig industry, table amendments designed to weaken the proposed ban. CIWF urges the other MEPs to vote against these amendments.

CIWF works hard throughout to rebut the pig industry's arguments. The industry asserts that:

- Sows kept in groups are aggressive to each other and that only stalls can prevent fighting. CIWF stresses that scientific research shows that aggression in groups can be prevented by good management – by eliminating competition at feeding time for example.
- keeping sows in groups is too expensive. CIWF points out that economic studies show that group housing adds very little to the cost of producing pig meat. Indeed some types of group housing are cheaper than sow stalls.

June 2001: Success! The Agriculture Ministers agree to ban sow stalls.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

Websites

Advocacy and Lobbying Tool-kit

www.ctnonprofits.org/pages/NonprofitResources/Advocacy_Lobbying_Tool-kit.asp

Amnesty International – Lobbying

www.amnesty.org.uk/action/lobbying/index.shtml

Center for Lobbying in the Public Interest

www.clpi.org/

The Democracy Center – Lobbying: the Basics

www.democracyctr.org/resources/lobbying.html

Hearts and Minds – Lobbying Resources

www.heartsandminds.org/links/lobbylinks.htm

Tips on Political Lobbying

http://ne.essortment.com/lobbyingpolitic_rrxj.htm

Books

Amnesty International Handbook

Publisher: Amnesty International UK

ISBN: 0862102057

European Lobbying Guide: A Guide on Whom and How to Lobby

Bryan Cassidy

Publisher: Thorogood

ISBN: 1854181440

Machiavelli in Brussels: The Art of Lobbying the EU

Rinus van Schendelen

Publisher: Amsterdam University Press

ISBN: 9053565736

The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide: Advocating Your Cause – and Getting Results

Bob Smucker

Publisher: Jossey Bass Wiley

ISBN: 1555423744

Politico's Guide to Political Lobbying

Charles Miller

Publisher: Politico's Publishing

ISBN: 1902301250

So You Want to Be a Lobbyist?

Guide to the World of Political Lobbying

Corinne Souza, Iain Dale

Publisher: Politico's Publishing

ISBN: 1902301005

