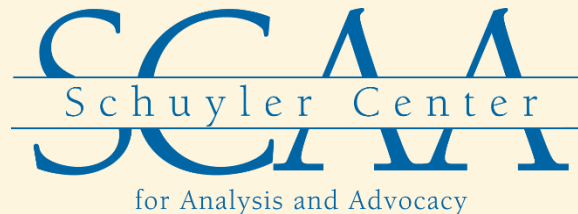


# NYS Budget and Legislative Process: Opportunities to Influence (and Improve) Public Policy

New York State Public Health Assoc. Annual Conference  
(April 2018)

Dede Hill, Director of Policy



# Schuyler Center

- Non-profit, non-partisan
- Founded in 1872
- Organized citizen brigades to visit county alms houses, then report and advocate to correct abuses and improve conditions.
- Dedicated to improving health and human services systems for all New Yorkers, especially low-income children and families



# Schuyler Center



# Gameplan for Today

- Lobbying v. Advocacy
- Opportunities to influence state public policy
  - Legislative process and timeline
  - Budget process
  - How to track a bill
  - Share success stories / challenges

# Why advocacy?



- Make policies / systems work for those intended to serve
- Amplify voice for those who cannot easily make themselves heard
- IMPACT

# But we're a 501(c)(3) non-profit. . . .

## We can't engage in advocacy – or can we?

- YES you can!
  - Advocacy
    - Yes
  - Lobbying
    - Yes (but with some limits)



# Lobbying – defined - NYS

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Any attempt to influence:

- Specific legislation
- Specific Executive Order
- Specific rule or regulation
- Ratemaking or procurement

N.Y. Legis. Law § 1-c.

# Lobbying

## ■ Direct Lobbying

- In joint budget hearing testimony: "Schuyler Center urges the Legislature to reject the Executive's proposal to consolidate and reduce public health programs and funding."

## ■ Grassroots Lobbying (Call to Action!)

- "The Executive Budget proposes to cut funding to public health programs by 20%; call your Assemblymember and Senator and urge them to reject this proposal."



# Lobbying – Federal

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One important distinction:

-Attempt to influence federal regulations is not lobbying under federal law.

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/lobbying>

# Advocacy - defined



Making the voice of stakeholders heard on issues of public policy.  
(But not urging passage /defeat of specific, pending legislation.)

- Advocacy includes:
  - Education – of public and lawmakers
  - Planting the seed
  - Asking questions

# Lobbying or Advocacy?



## Indicators of Need

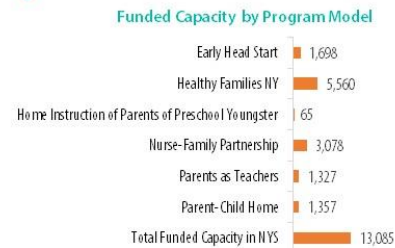
### Poverty



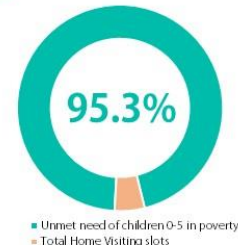
### Health and Well-Being



## Access to Home Visiting



## Unmet need



\*Data was pulled from various sources, most—but not all—from 2014 data. To see our full report, which includes snapshots of New York State and all New York counties, and for information on the data sources, please go to [www.scaany.org/policy-areas/maternal-infant-and-early-childhood](http://www.scaany.org/policy-areas/maternal-infant-and-early-childhood).

# Lobbying or Advocacy?

## Executive Budget Hits Low-Income Children



New York's kids need care, not cuts.

# Most non-profits CAN lobby!



Under federal law, 501(c)(3)s - except for churches and private foundations – can lobby so long as it does not constitute a “substantial part” of the organization’s overall activities.

<https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/measuring-lobbying-activity-expenditure-test>

# Advocacy tools

- Papers/infographics
- Site visits and case studies
- Earned media, op-eds
- Stakeholder convenings



The image shows the New York State Capitol building, a grand neoclassical structure with a prominent central portico and a wide set of steps leading up to the entrance. The building features multiple stories of arched windows and classical architectural details. The text "New York State Capitol" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# New York State Capitol

# How a bill becomes a Law

Identical bills introduced in both houses



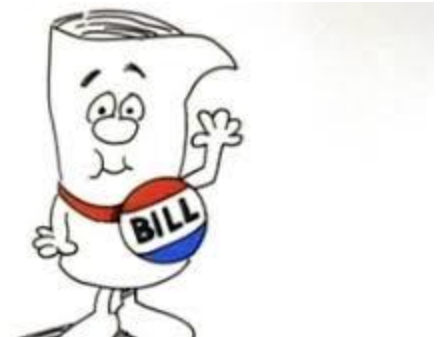
Committee(s) of jurisdiction



Vote



Governor – sign or veto

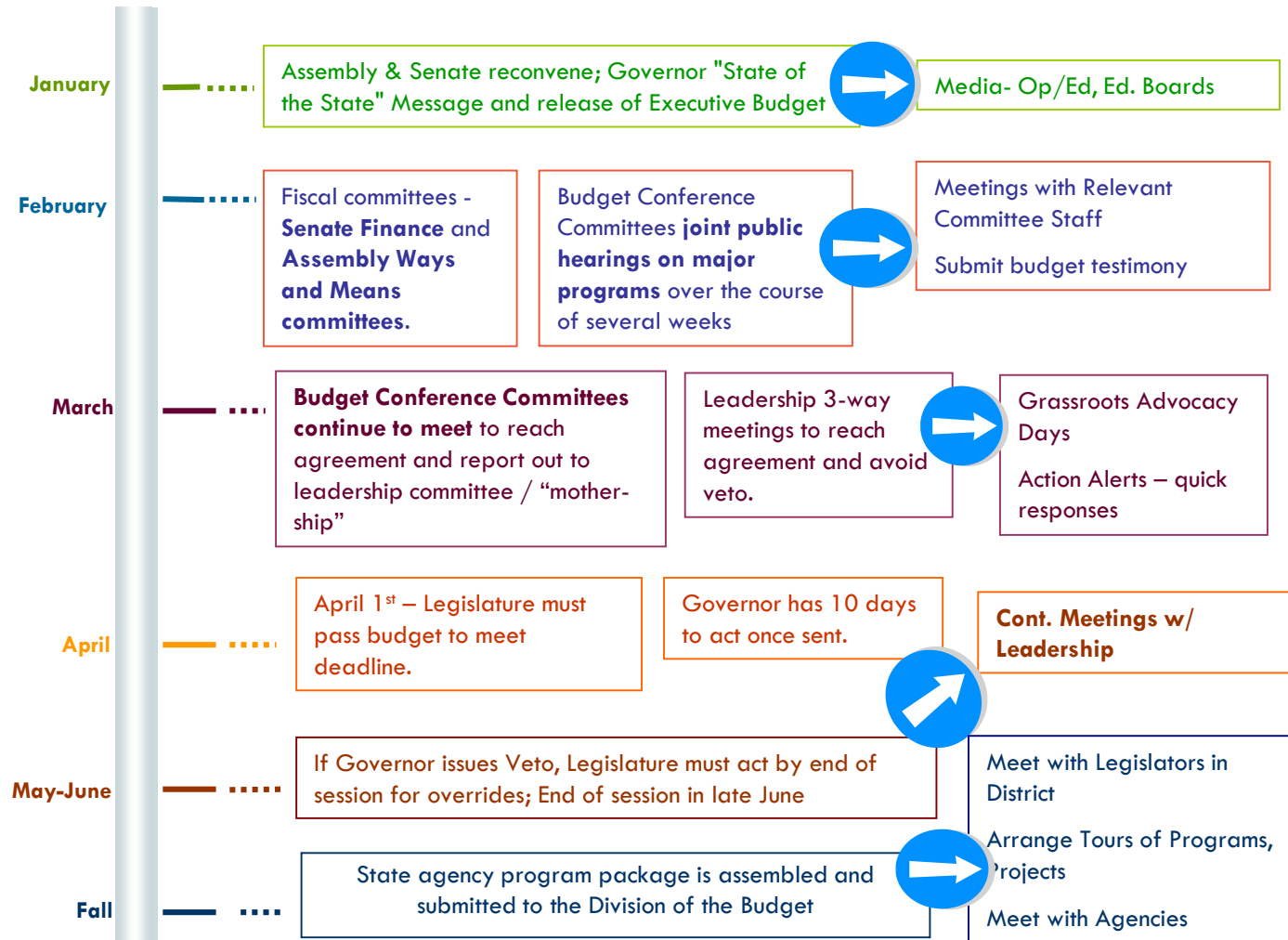




# Advocacy Opportunities

- Budget
  - Fiscal year April 1 -March 31
  - Governor presents Executive Budget to Legislature
  - Legislature amends, votes and then Exec and Leg negotiate until an agreement is reached.
- Legislative
  - Laws
    - Outside the budget process
- Administrative
  - Regulations
  - Implementation

# New York State Budget Process



# Budget

## Key opportunities to influence

- Executive Budget
  - June – August – Governor's staff
  - Op eds; case studies; convenings; roundtables
  - Tours of programs
  
- Late summer /fall
  - Governor – persist with message
  - Build legislative leaders /champions
  
- January – April 1
  - Focus shifts to Assembly/Senate – but also Governor
  - Joint Fiscal Committee hearings – early February
  - Joint budget committees – end of March

# Beyond Budget



## Legislative

- January – late June
  - Laws without a fiscal
  - Task forces
  - Legislative hearings
  - Roundtables

## Administrative

- Post-Budget – implementation
- Check agency websites for rules / hearings

# Bill Tracking

## Budget

- NYS Division of Budget
  - <https://www.budget.ny.gov/>
  - Summaries, bill language (executive, one-house, enacted).

## Outside Budget

- Assembly website
  - <http://nyassembly.gov/> click on "Bill Search and Legislative Information"
  - includes summary, status, sponsors, bill number
- Senate website – Bills and Laws  
<https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation>

# Advocacy successes? Lessons learned?



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# Take aways



- Advocate early and often!
  - To improve public policy
  - To expand impact
- Lobby if you can
  - Follow the rules