Advocacy at the Local, State, and National Levels - Critical Considerations and Key Tools
What is Advocacy?

- The process by which an individual or association seeks to promote an agenda of legislative and regulatory priorities by influencing policymakers

- Successful advocacy is achieved through:
  - Direct lobbying
  - Grassroots lobbying
  - Public Awareness
  - Research and Education
We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate.

-Thomas Jefferson
How Does NSPE Advocate for YOU?

- NSPE Government Relations works at both the federal and state levels to enact legislation and regulations that protect and promote the engineering profession.

- NSPE influences public policy:
  - As a single organization
  - With other engineering organizations
  - With like-minded coalitions (ex. Coalition for the National Science Funding)
NSPE’s public policy and advocacy efforts are led by the Legislative & Government Affairs Committee (L&GA)

In collaboration with NSPE Government Relations Office staff, L&GA:

- Provides updates on state and federal legislation;
- Reviews, revises and drafts position statements and issue briefs as needed
- Sets and promotes NSPE’s legislative agenda
NSPE’s Government Relations Office

• NSPE’s Government Relations Office is here to help YOU!

• NSPE’s GR staff proactively represents the interests of the Professional Engineer at the federal and state level.

• NSPE is working to support your state activities.

• To this end, NSPE’s Government Relations Office offers specific government relations services....
Online Legislative Action Center

- NSPE Legislative Action Center
  (https://www.votervoice.net/NSPE/Home)
  - Find your legislators
  - Read about legislation NSPE is tracking
  - See how your legislators voted on important issues
  - Write to public officials in response to Action Alerts
MultiState Tracking Service

- State legislative and regulatory tracking services in all 50 states.
- NSPE is able to more closely track, monitor, and inform states when new bills and regulations are introduced.
  - Licensure
  - Professional Liability
  - Procurement
Grassroots Advocacy

• Exchange of information depends on consistent, trusted relationships

• Trust is built on NSPE’s reputation – which depends on YOU
  • YOUR competence, as proven by licensure
  • YOUR ethics-bound duty to protect the public health and safety.
Grassroots Advocacy

- NSPE needs YOU to take action on critical legislative issues
- Members of Congress depend on their constituents for input
  - You can provide:
    - Technical expertise with credibility
    - The benefit of personal experience
State Advocacy in Action

• State societies have done a remarkable job in educating their members about the key elements of advocacy and many provide legislative updates at the end of each legislative session.
The Florida Engineering Society and the Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers appreciate the support of our members this legislative session. Your proactive emails, phone calls and personal visits to the Capitol are what made your lobbying team and staff effective in Tallahassee.

Florida legislators were able to end the 2014 legislative session on time. The Senate and House appropriations chairman on Tuesday, April 29, delivered the budget to legislators at 8:35 p.m., after which a 72-hour cooling period ensued before a vote could be taken. The time of adjournment was 10:30 p.m. Friday, May 2. Then state legislators approved a 77.1 billion state budget. The House picked up one new member, former Representative Eric Emmenegger, R-Orlando, who won a special election in returning to the chamber. Senator Elizabeth Benacquisto, R-Fort Myers, ran for congress but lost a special GOP primary, therefore she is staying in the Senate. Benacquisto currently serves as Senate Majority Chair.

Next year’s session will convene in March, as the constitution requires, but the 2015 session will begin on January 12, if Governor Scott signs a bill (HB 9) moving the date just that one time. The 2015 Legislature will then have the option of making the early start date permanent in odd-numbered years, should it so choose.

Commission on Legislative and Governmental Relations (CLGR) Report

Budget: After the budget conference, the budget grew from $75 billion in both chambers to $77 billion. Proposed budgets from either chamber each equaled about $75 billion, but the final product was increased by $1.3 billion for low income pool funding, $473 million for a transportation work program, $176 million for natural resources and $261.6 million for Public Education Capital Outlay funds. Of course, this is all subject to the governor’s veto pen. Similarly to recent years, the budget was one of the final bills to pass.

Transportation Funding:

Total: $10.1 billion
$12.8 million General Revenue (GR)
$10.1 billion Trust Fund (TF)
6,504 FTE
- Transportation Work Program - $9.2 billion TF
- Highway Construction - $3.9 billion TF
- County Transportation Programs - $158 million TF

- Aviation Grants - $337 million TF
- Seaport and Intermodal Development Grants - $184 million TF
- $12 million GR
- Public Transit and Rail Development $9 million TF
- Coast to Coast Connector Trail - $26.5 million TF

Environmental Funding:

- Northern Everglades BMPs - $3 million
- Dispersed Water Management with SFWMD - $10 million
- DACS BMP Implementation - $5.4 million
- Springs Protection - $35 million (in two separate appropriations of $30m and $5m)
- Lake Okeechobee Retention Areas - $10 million
- Everglades Forever Act Restoration Strategies - $32 million
- Everglades Restoration Generally - $85 million
- Total Maximum Daily Loads - $9 million
State Advocacy in Action: Texas Society of Professional Engineers

- Texas Society of Professional Engineers (TSPE) In Action
- Trish Smith, CAE, Executive Director, TSPE