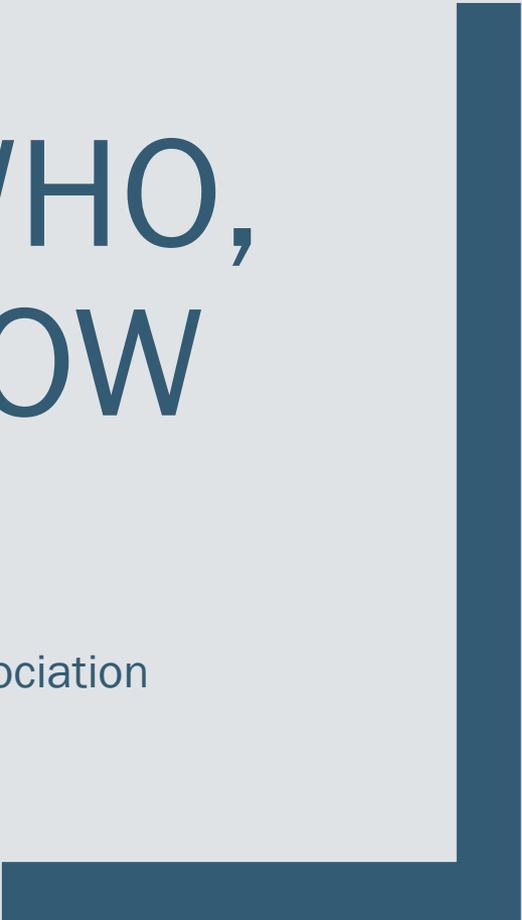




ADVOCACY: WHO, WHY, AND HOW

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Basis of Advocacy

- Right to lobby established in the Bill of Rights
 - *“Congress shall make no law ... abridging the right of the people to ... petition the government for a redress of grievances.”*
- What happens if we don't lobby?
 - *“If once [the people] become inattentive to the public affairs ... I, and Congress, and Assemblies, Judges and Governors shall all become wolves.”*
Thomas Jefferson
- The votes happen whether you weigh in or not. Give them a shot at getting it right.
- “Congress may not do better, but they can know better.”

Who is an Advocate

- A person who speaks or writes in support or defense of a person, cause, etc.
- AKA: YOU!
- You can advocate at any level – from within your district to Capitol Hill

Why lobby Congress?

- Proactively inform and shape policy discussions before they reach the proposal level
- Gain better laws
- Protect favorable laws
- Repeal or replace unfavorable laws
- Stop adverse proposals for laws

WHAT DOES CONGRESS DO THAT AFFECTS YOU?

Funding
Taxes

Vouchers/
school choice
Healthcare

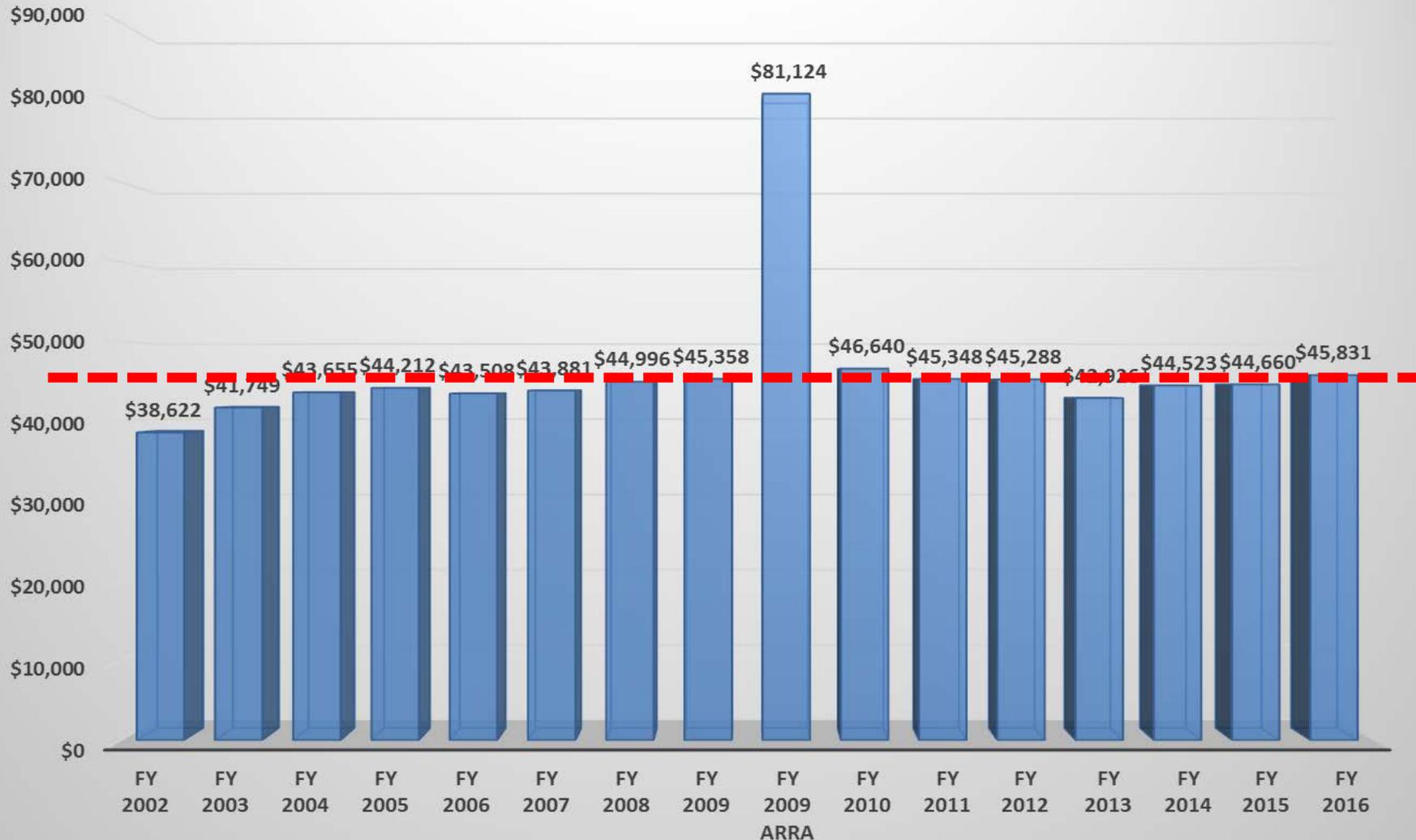
Higher Education
Immigration



FUNDING

Total ED Discretionary Funding Excluding Pell

in millions



FY17 Funding Package

- \$68.2 b for USED at base level, but when we account for \$1.3 b rescission to Pell, the level is \$66.9 (\$1.1 below FY16)
- ESSA
 - *Title I increased by \$550 m (\$450m from SIG), still short at LEA level*
 - *Title II cut by \$294m (13%) to \$2.1 billion*
 - *Title IV funded at \$400 m (revert to competitive?)*
- Other
 - *IDEA receives \$90 m increase (still at just 16% of federal share)*
 - *Impact Aid up \$23m to \$1.3b*
 - *21st Century up \$25 m*
 - *Charter Schools up \$9m*
 - *Head Start up \$85 m*
 - *Includes reauth of DC voucher program*

FY18 trump Budget Proposal

- FY18 Priority: Very real deep cuts.
 - *Parity between defense/non-defense discretionary*
- \$54b increase for defense discretionary; paid for with \$54 b cut to NDD
- \$9 b (13%) cut to USED
- \$1.4 b increase for school choice/privatization
 - *\$1b for Title I portability; \$250 m for vouchers; \$168 m for charters*
- Cuts IDEA and Title I local allocations, as well as Carl D Perkins (Career/Tech)
- Eliminates Title IIA, Title IV and 21st Century Community Learning grants
- Eliminate 20 other categorical grants

What the heck is happening now?

- Congressional budget process (in theory)
 - *The President submits a budget request to Congress (February)*
 - *The House and Senate pass budget resolutions*
 - *House and Senate Appropriations subcommittees "markup" appropriations bills*
 - *The House and Senate vote on appropriations bills and reconcile differences*
 - *The President signs each appropriations bill and the budget becomes law (before October 1)*

What the heck is happening now? (cont.)

- Congress has already passed several Continuing Resolutions (CR) – in essence kicking the can down the road
 - *They still have to fund the government for the next 9 months*
- Because Democrats have no other leverage, they have demanded the addition of CHIP and DACA to the funding bill
 - *This has become very normal*
- The House passed a bill to fund the government for one month and to fund CHIP for 6 years – no DACA deal
 - *Passed with only Republican votes*
- The Senate needs 60 votes – meaning all Republicans and 9 Democrats
- Now, we're in a game of chicken

What happens if the government shuts down?

- Luckily, most education funding is prior year, meaning you're operating with last year's funding, so your main federal funding sources will not be affected.
- At the U.S. Department of Education, 90 percent of staff will be furloughed
- Impact Aid applications are due January 31 – could lose access to technical assistance
- Head Start programs would not receive their monthly funding, if it lasts beyond February 1

Tax reform – why we care

- SALT-D – reduction of the state and local tax deduction
 - *This could tie the hands of districts to raise local taxes, because that money would be double-taxed by the local district and the federal government*
 - *Would most definitely lead to lower education spending at the local level – especially in a high-tax state like New York*
- Vouchers – expansion of 529 plans
 - *Expands 529 college savings plans to be used for K-12 private schools as well*
 - *Most state tax legislation echoes federal legislation, so this would expand state 529s as well*
- Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZABs)
 - *Repeals tax-exempt status for bonds, thus increasing the interest rates available to school districts and the long-term costs*
- \$1.5 trillion added to deficit
 - *Will pressure Congress to make cuts elsewhere, may trigger more across-the-board sequester cuts*

Vouchers/School Choice

- Betsy DeVos was hired as the school choice Secretary
- Has seen little success, but is still pushing for more school choice options at the federal level

Healthcare

■ Medicaid:

- *House bill (AHCA) and Senate bills (first BCRA, then Graham-Cassidy) would change the way Medicaid is funded*
- *Would create block grant to states – allowing states to decide which institutions to reimburse*
- *Would also lead to lower funding levels*

■ CHIP:

- *Provides health insurance for low-income children not covered by Medicaid (9 million children)*
- *Many students on CHIP receive health care in schools as a part of the Medicaid program*
- *Funding expired in October – some states already looking at shutting their programs down*
- *We are urging Congress to fund the bill for a significant period of time*

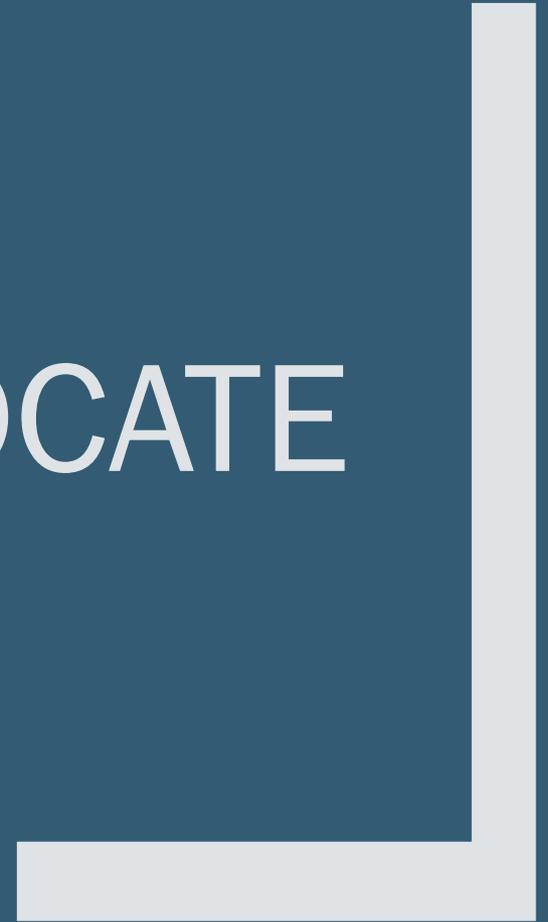
Higher Education

- House education committee already passed a (partisan) bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act – PROSPER Act
- Eliminates both TEACH Grants and Public Service Loan Forgiveness
 - *Would make teaching less attractive*
 - *Could seriously exacerbate the teacher shortage issue we're seeing throughout the country*

DACA

- In September, President Trump announced he will be ending the DACA program
 - *Gives Congress six months to come up with an alternative*
 - *Impacts about 250,000 students*
 - *Is now causing the issues around funding the government*
- AASA opposes this change
 - *Resources posted to our blog*
 - <http://aasa.org/policy-blogs.aspx?id=40802&blogid=84002>
 - Advice to schools:
 - *Know your rights – ICE agents are not allowed on school grounds*
 - *Do not collect information you do not want to share – especially immigration status of students or parents – Plylar Guidance dictates that you do not have to share*

HOW TO ADVOCATE



What does Effective Advocacy Look Like?

- Personal
- Relationship-based
- Campaign-based
- Trust-based
 - *Honesty*
 - *Accuracy*
 - *Credibility*
- Education-based
- Constituent-based
 - *Reelection and reputation most important to the lawmaker*
 - *“When I feel the heat, I see the light” – Dirksen*

When should you lobby?

- The best time to lobby is when you don't need anything.
- Lobbying is about relationships – don't just show up when you need something.
- In athletics, games are won not on game day, but in the off season. In advocacy, votes are held on the floor, but not necessarily won on the floor.
 - *Do the work now—building the relationship, being a resource—so that when they have to vote, they are informed and in the habit of communicating with you.*



Relationships

- Advocacy is all about relationships
- Relationships matter; relationships take time.
- Congressional staffers range from experts to novices
- Be confident that you are an important constituent.
You are an education expert; you know your schools
and your community.



Endurance

- It's a marathon – not a sprint
- Reach out often – not just when you need something
- Once a month – try our 2017 Year of Superintendent Advocacy Challenge



Logistics

- When you have meetings, they may be with your member of Congress, but they may just be with their education staffer
- The education staffer often knows more about our issues than the member
- Congressional offices are crowded – your meeting may be in the reception or hallway – that doesn't mean they don't take you seriously, so don't be insulted



Knowledge

- YOU are the expert in the room
- Be sure to share information about your district, schools, and the great work being done
- Be honest in how a policy is or would affect your schools
- If you have questions, be sure to ask



Communication

- Advocacy is not a one-time thing – be sure to follow up often
- After your meeting, follow up with the staffer – promise them some information or a resource and send it along
- Don't just be in touch if the sky is falling. Constant communication keeps you on their mind.
- Invite your member of Congress to your district – have the photo op with your kids and school

Working with Staff

- Know who they are
 - *Personal staff*
 - *Committee staff*
 - *Range from very knowledgeable to not at all knowledgeable*
- Help them
 - *Educate them where needed*
 - *Send them things they can use*
 - *Your relationship is a two-way street*

Legislative Process

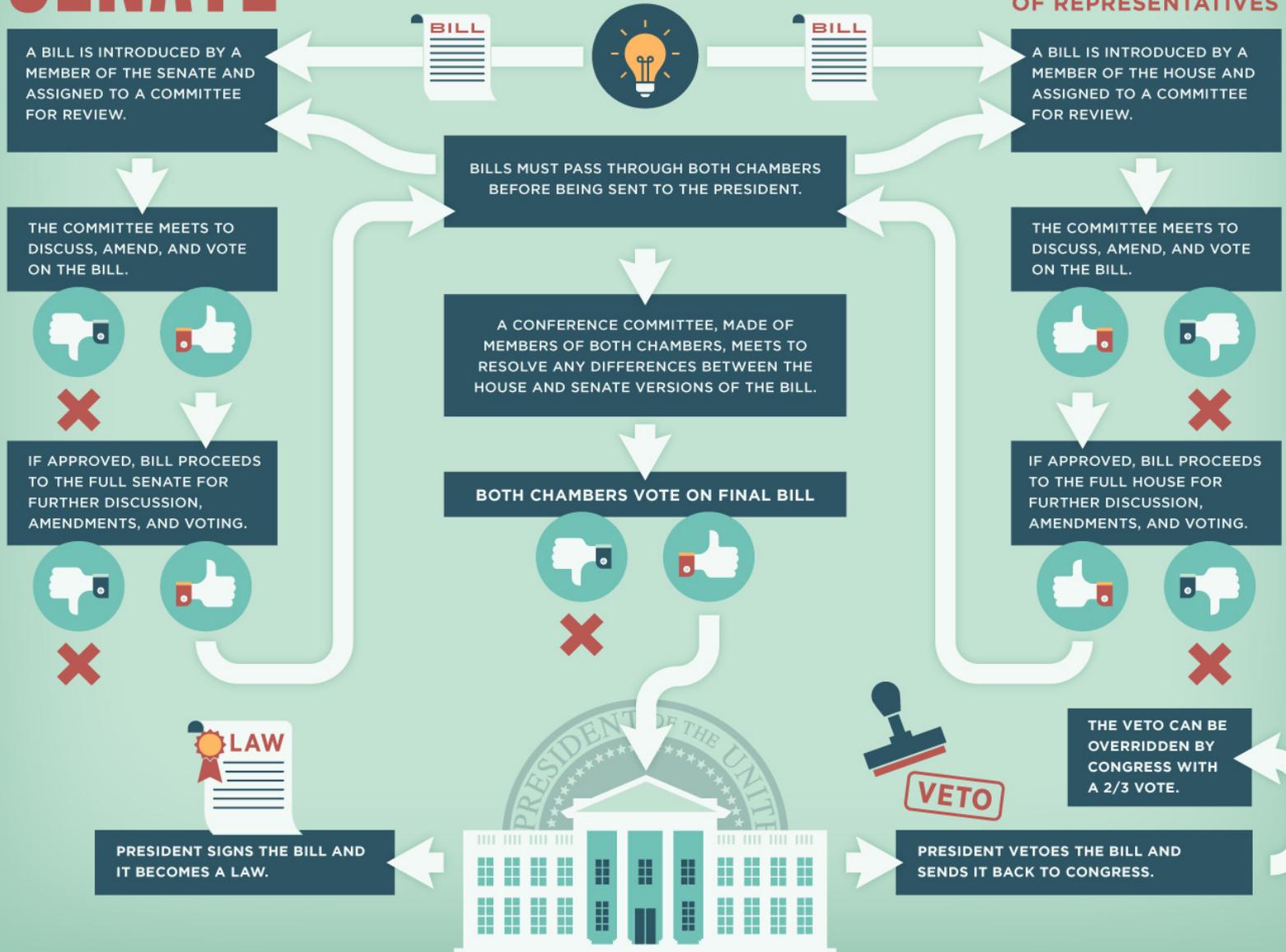


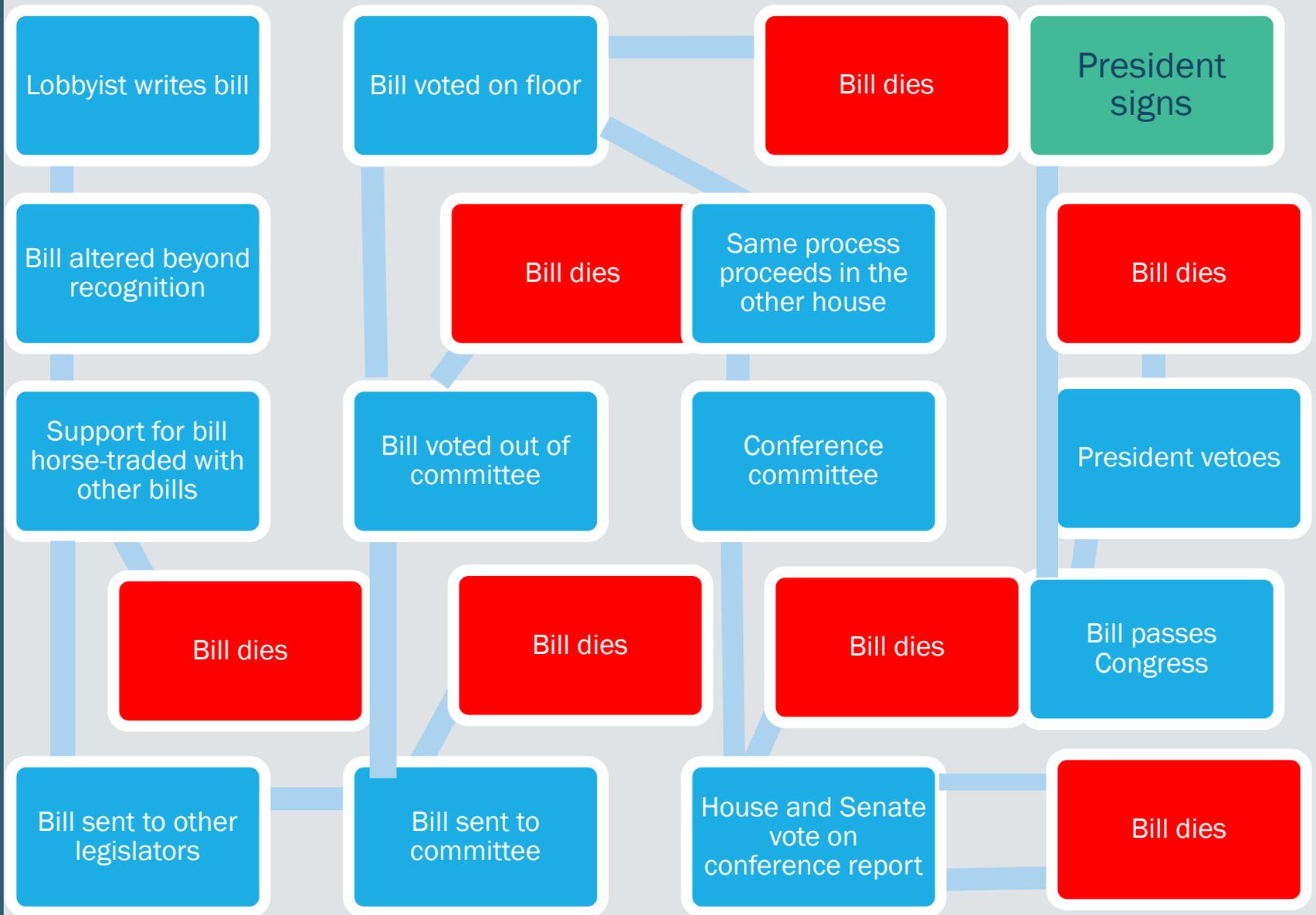
THE US LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

SENATE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

IT STARTS WITH AN IDEA...





Meeting Structure

- Before the meeting
 - *Do your homework*
 - *Know what you want to talk about*
 - Put together necessary information
- Going as a group
 - *Plan who will talk about which issues*
 - *Prepare materials, where applicable*
- In the meeting
 - *Be friendly!*
 - *Share stories*
 - *Have stats/numbers ready where necessary*
 - Don't rely TOO much on numbers – stories are more persuasive
 - *Ask for information*
 - *Provide concrete information*

AASA Legislative Agenda

- ESSA
- School Nutrition
- Perkins Career/Tech
- IDEA
- Rural Education (REAP, Forest Counties, Impact Aid)
- School Vouchers
- E-Rate/Lifeline/EBS
- Student Data & Privacy
- Charters
- Higher Education Act
- Early Education
- Affordable Care Act
- Regulations: DoL and EPA
- Immigration / DACA
- More?

Public Schools Week

- February 5-9
- AASA wants you and your colleagues, parents, and community members to join us in lifting up the great things happening in your school and district.
- Use the hashtags #PublicSchoolsWeek and #LovePublicEducation and share why your school community is doing a great job educating kids and preparing them to thrive in the future.

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