



June 7, 2019 CLHO Leadership Development Webinar

Policy and Navigating Political Landscapes

Learning Objective: Receive practical advice from experienced leaders about moving forward local public health policies.

Key Points from Panelists:

Commissioner Kelley Minty Morris, Association of Oregon Counties Health and Human Services Committee

- Timing is everything. Be strategic about priorities that might be controversial. For example, when working on TRL, that was the only thing we were doing. Then we laid low, then later we moved on to tobacco-free county properties and parks.
- “It’s all Politics”. As co-chairs of the AOC Health and Human Services Committee, we’ve been strategic to only bring up one or two contentious issues per meeting. At least get one thing past the finish line.
- Get to know each of your Commissioners and what motivates them. Help them look good.
- Be prepared to lose.

Alex Cuyler, Lane County Inter-Governmental Relations Director

- Identify the correct audience. Identify a local champion and help them become an expert.
- Establish context (tell a story). Provide an example of an issue in another area that is more mature, then bring it over into the area you’re trying to advocate for.
- Be brief in all communications: limit testimony to one page.
- Remember to thank your elected officials!
- Build statewide coalitions and avoid unique programs. Make efforts duplicatable and standardized across counties.
- Try to alert Commissioners to relevant community presentations given by other entities (not public health).

Rebecca Austen, Lincoln County Public Health Administrator

- Build relationships with Commissioners. Bring public health reports to the Board in small doses; make information concise and understandable. Remind them that they’re the Board of Health.
- Show up: come to events Board puts on, keep following up on issues with more data and conversations.
- Use data and constituents to tell the story. When you find champions, bring them to meetings to “make data come alive”.
- Get rid of jargon, speak clearly, give good presentations to the Board.

Top Tips

“Play therapist a little. And by that I mean, remember that each of your elected officials...are complicated, unique humans with probably a unique set of motivations. So if you can try to figure that out by playing therapist a little, I think you’ll be successful in being able to make your pitch to that person.” - *Commissioner Kelley Minty Morris*

“Try to make sure that we’re all aligned as much as possible. So ensuring that people are aware of...the big issues that CLHO is working on at the state level and ensuring that at the local level we’re working to support those statewide initiatives.” - *Alex Cuyler*

“I think treating your Commissioner like they’re a colleague and that they’re in this because they want to do something. So figure out what that something is, and then try to appeal to that with the work that you’re doing. And I really think the number one top tip is to not to talk public health lingo. To just talk regular language and...win them over with that. And remember that they’re human just like we are.” - *Rebecca Austen*

“Nurture community champions.” - *All*