

Real Reform

Reform the Rockefeller Drug Laws **2004**

How to Lobby Your Legislator

After you've identified your representative or a committee member to talk to about Real Reform 2004, you are ready to conduct a lobby visit. You should bring all information that is pertinent to **real reform**, and ask them to support **real reform** legislation. (See **Real Reform 2004 Fact Sheets**.) You should also be prepared to present key points that affect the importance and impact of the reform legislation. (See **Campaign Talking Points and Fact Sheets on Real Reform 2004 and the Rockefeller Drug Laws**).

If you are part of a group making a visit, you should: choose one person to facilitate the meeting to keep track of time (no more than 5-10 minutes); make sure the key points are made; ask the representatives to act on **real reform** legislation; and leave informative materials for the legislator's review.

7 Steps for an Effective Lobby Visit

1) Introduction

- a) **Introduce** who you are. Make sure to give your full address if you are a constituent. You may also want to give a very brief description of what your job is or what organizations you work with that give you special knowledge on the issue.
- b) **Identify** yourself with **Real Reform 2004**.
- c) **Explain** that you are there to talk about **real reform** of the Rockefeller era drug laws.
Real reform is defined as: Reducing Sentences, Restoring Judicial Discretion, Delivering Retroactive Sentencing Relief, and Expanding Drug Treatment Programs and other alternatives to incarceration for low level offenders.

2) **Support** your argument with the examples from the Real Reform 2004 Fact Sheets.

3) **Connect** the legislation either directly or indirectly to the representative's constituents.

4) **Ask** him or her to **ACT** by voting in support of **real reform** legislation in the committee and getting others to support it also. Once the bill is out of committee, request their support for **real reform** when the bill is voted on by the New York Legislature.

5) **Distribute** relevant materials, including the **2004 Real Reform Fact Sheets**, before you leave.

6) **Use** the Record Sheet to make notes.

7) **Follow up** with the representative, especially those who were undecided or needed more information.