

The President's Message **by Brian Barno**

PAGR Testifies On Senate Bill 1:

PAGR presented testimony on Senate Bill 1 and lobbying disclosure at the May 11, meeting of the House State Government Committee. Joining me representing PAGR were Immediate Past President Judy Eschberger and former President Ted Mowatt. Our testimony centered on PAGR's support for meaningful registration and reporting requirements for lobbyists and for linking lobbying disclosure with campaign finance reform. In response to questions, Judy and Ted detailed PAGR's concerns about reporting expenses not directly related to lobbying. The public has the right to know expenditures that truly influence or may influence administrative or legislative action. The rent, utility bills and salaries of our co-workers are not relevant to the legislative process - but they provide juicy material for lazy reporters to lament about the "shameful" practices that occur in the Capitol. The vast majority of people I encounter in state Government are individuals of integrity. If the press is looking to expose "bad apples" abusing the public trust, having access to my gas and electric bill isn't going to help.

PAGR was warmly received by Chairman Paul Clymer and the Committee. The effort that PAGR Presidents Judy Eschberger, Ted Mowatt, Dave Tive and other PAGR volunteers have put into this issue over the last few years has been tremendous. Their hard work has engendered a great deal of good will for PAGR and made us a recognized stakeholder in this process. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

Importance of Field Work

My brother Dave is back home after 18 months of military service in Afghanistan. We're grateful he's back safely. But his return reminds me of all our troops still in harms way. In Iraq, Pennsylvanians make up the largest state National Guard contingent. Let's keep all these folks in our thoughts and prayers.

Dave once told me the story about picking a staff officer as he was taking command of a Ranger unit. He selected a promising young troop leader for this high-visibility slot and approached him about the job. The officer thanked him for his offer but said no and responded: "I want to be in the field with the troops." My brother shot back: "That's exactly why you're perfect for the position. We need leaders who want to be in the field."

PAGR members talk with legislators daily about the needs of their clients and the challenges business faces in a competitive environment. We articulate information about the client to provide the best representation we know how. But do we really know the client and the business they're in? Or are we just repeating an executive summary? If you're a lobbyist representing a firm, have you been at the cash register, in the bucket truck or sat in on sales calls? If your client does telemarketing, lays fiber optics or works in a retail establishment, have you been there? If not, why not? Put on your work boots, hardhat, hairnet or company uniform and go to the field for a day. You'll gain a deeper understanding of the business you're representing at the Capitol. It will impress your client, provide you with knowledgeable contacts and make you better at what you do. You'll appreciate the hard-working men and women in the field you represent. You'll also appreciate how fortunate we are to work as lobbyists.

Survey Results Are In

We tip our hats to everyone that completed and returned the PAGR Membership Survey. Here's a snapshot of the results:

- On the question of what is the most valuable service PAGR provides, the top answer was Networking Opportunities followed with a second place tie of Timely Speakers and Meetings (valuable to meet with lawmakers and other lobbyists).
- On the question of how can PAGR better serve your needs as a lobbyist, the top response was Lobbyist Training program/mentoring program. PAGR's new lobbyists strongly supported such a program and there also was strong interest from experienced lobbyists to serve as mentors.
- 92% of respondents are interested in receiving the PAGR newsletter electronically.

- Members thought it was important for PAGR to stay involved in lobbyist disclosure and campaign finance/election reform legislation.
- Support was also expressed for PAGR's role in the YMCA Youth in Government program.
- Perhaps the most heartening statistic was that 100% of survey respondents would recommend PAGR membership to other lobbyists.

If you have questions, concerns or want to follow up on any of these points, please drop me an email or call. Thanks for the feedback.

Membership Meeting:

11:30AM -12:30PM

Firehouse Restaurant

606 N. 2nd Street . Harrisburg

OUR GUEST WILL BE:

Greg Fajt

Secretary of Revenue

What Are We Looking For?

When it comes to programs at Membership Meetings or seminar topics of at our annual "Lobbypalooza" event. the PAGR Board wants to know...what do you want?

Send your ideas to Christine at the PAGR office (phone 717-540-4391, fax 717-657-9708, or info@pagr.org).

Welcome New Members

- Jeannine Bender
CEPHALON, INC.
- Patricia Byrnes
HILL SOLUTIONS LLC
- Albert J. Neri
CAPITOLWIRE.COM
- Sharon Roth
PA CHAMBER of BUSINESS &
INDUSTRY