

LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS

1. Description and Purpose The MSBA's legislative efforts enable the Association to offer and promote legislative proposals that can improve substantive law and influence the Minnesota Legislature on issues of concern to the legal profession and the public. A lobbying team consisting of an in-house Government Relations Director and an outside lobbyist work toward passage of the MSBA legislative agenda and to assist sections and committees with their legislative programs. The MSBA's Legislative Committee, a committee of the Assembly, reviews all section and committee legislative proposals during the fall of the year and makes recommendations to the Assembly regarding adoption as part of the Association's legislative agenda. The Assembly acts on the Legislative Committee's recommendations at its December meeting.

Year	Number of new Proposals approved by Assembly
2005-06	4
2006-07	5
2007-08	17
2008-09	11
2009-10	11

2. Historical Information Lloyd Grooms of the law firm of Winthrop & Weinstine has been the MSBA lobbyist. He is now joined by our new in-house Government Relations Director. The MSBA's lobbying team is available to the committees and sections for positions endorsed by the MSBA through the approval process described above. They provide direct legislative services, including bill drafting, securing bill sponsors, scheduling and preparing testimony before the legislature, and lobbying for or against specific bills. The lobbying team also reviews all bill introductions and refers appropriate bills to sections and committees for consideration throughout the legislative session.

In the 2008-09 bar year, the MSBA purchased CapWiz software to advance our grassroots advocacy capabilities. CapWiz will be used during the 2009-10 bar year to mobilize members to support key issues.

In the 2008-09 bar year, the MSBA created 1000Supporters.org, an online community of members dedicated to ensuring adequate funding for the courts, legal aid and public defenders. The website will likely be resurrected during the 2009-10 bar year because the state's ongoing fiscal problems will make justice system funding an issue again.

Year	1000Supporters Membership
2008-09	1162

3. Personnel: There is .90 FTE position allocated to this program.

4. Report on 2009-10 Performance Standards:

A. The MSBA will continue to work on balancing member demand with available financial resources in this area.

The MSBA has a two-year contract for FY 2008-09 and 2009-10 with Lloyd Grooms in the amount of \$135,000 per year. Due to increased legislative activity by MSBA sections and a number of larger policy issues such as justice system funding that are a priority for our

members, we increased our legislative resources by hiring an in-house Government Relations Director in November 2009. The Director's responsibilities include working with the sections on their legislation, making legislative contacts, expanding grassroots, working with LawPAC, and performing other duties.

B. The Legislative lobbyist and MSBA staff will meet with section and committee legislative liaisons in the fall of each year to explain MSBA legislative procedure.

This performance standard was met. MSBA staff went over the legislative process with all sections at the individual chair meetings in August and Mr. Grooms has met or spoken separately with sections that have historically been legislatively active. In addition, MSBA staff sent an early e-mail to all section and committee chairs, as well as any identified legislative subcommittee chairs for sections, informing them of the process and timeline for seeking MSBA approval of section legislation.

C. The MSBA will work to advance the Association legislative agenda adopted by the Assembly at their December meeting.

This performance standard is being met, even though the Legislative Session did not begin until February 4. The Legislative Committee received 14 legislative proposals from sections and members. The Committee recommended the Assembly approve 11 of the proposals submitted. On December 11, 2009, the Assembly adopted that recommendation and committed to work on those 11 bills in addition to other major efforts this session such as securing adequate funding for our justice system, opposing a sales tax on legal services, and reforming Minnesota's judicial selection system. In addition, the Committee recommended, and the Assembly approved, renewal of the MSBA's opposition to any legislation seeking reinstatement of the death penalty in Minnesota.

D. The MSBA will provide an opportunity for Council members to meet and socialize with legislators who are attorneys.

This performance standard was met. On November 19, the MSBA hosted a Lawyer-Legislator event at the Capitol. The event focused on judicial selection reform and featured Minnesota Supreme Court Justices G. Barry Anderson, Eric Magnuson, and Alan Page, as well as Tom Basting, former President of the Wisconsin Bar Association, and state Representative Steve Simon. Eleven (11) state legislators, along with seven Council members and other interested parties.

E. Responsibility for the Grassroots Action Network (Capwiz) will lie with the new in-house Government Relations Director. He will establish benchmarks to judge the success of the program.

This performance standard is in process; grassroots efforts will not begin in full until the Legislative Session begins. The effectiveness of the grassroots network should be judged by two standards: (1) member responsiveness to MSBA calls for action; and (2) effectiveness in persuading lawmakers.

F. The MSBA Lobbyist and staff will clearly communicate to MSBA members the value of the legislative program.

This performance standard was not met for the 2009 session. During session, Mr. Grooms provided two legislative updates that were distributed via Legal News Digest (LND), posted on the Legislative Committee's web page, and sent to Assembly and Grassroots Network members. In 2008, Mr. Grooms provided a total of 11 update communications to MSBA members during the legislative session. Responsibility for communications with members now lies with the Government Relations Director, who plans to send a legislative update to members each Friday during the Legislative Session.

G. The Government Relations Director will develop a recommendation for LawPAC and execute on it. This may be terminating the PAC, revitalizing the PAC, and/or changing the mission of the PAC.

This performance standard is being met; LawPAC is being revitalized. Currently, ideas are being generated to educate members about LawPAC's role and its connection to the MSBA's legislative efforts. In addition, plans are being formulated to establish and maintain consistent member contributions to LawPAC.

5. Three-Year Plan Performance Standards

A. The MSBA will continue to work on balancing member demand with available financial resources in this area.

B. The Legislative lobbyist and MSBA staff will meet with section and committee legislative liaisons in the fall of each year to explain MSBA legislative procedure.

C. The MSBA will work to advance the Association legislative agenda adopted by the Assembly at their December meeting.

D. The MSBA will provide an opportunity for Council members to meet and socialize with legislators who are attorneys.

E. Responsibility for the Grassroots Action Network will lie with the new in-house Legislative Director. The Legislative Director will establish benchmarks to judge the success of the Network.

F. The MSBA Lobbyist and staff will clearly and regularly communicate to MSBA members the value of the legislative program.

G. The Legislative Director will develop a recommendation for LawPAC and execute on it. This may be terminating the PAC, revitalizing the PAC and/or changing the mission of the PAC.

6. Report on 2009-10 User Satisfaction

A written survey of all section and committee chairs and/or legislative liaisons will be conducted following the 2009 legislative session to evaluate the legislative services provided by the lobbyist and MSBA staff. Eighty-five percent (85%) will rank those services as valuable or extremely valuable.

This performance standard was not met. A survey was sent to all section and committee chairs, section legislative liaisons, and members of the Legislative Committee. There were 27 responses. Respondents rated Mr. Grooms' services Extremely Valuable (50%), Valuable (26.9%), Somewhat Valuable (7.7%), Not Valuable (0%), No Opinion (15.4%). 77% found Mr. Grooms' services valuable or extremely valuable. Respondents also rated the services of MSBA staff: 29.6% found them Extremely Valuable, 33.3% found them Valuable, 11.1% Somewhat Valuable, 3.7% Not Valuable, and 22.2% had no opinion. 63% found services provided by MSBA staff valuable or extremely valuable.

7. 2010-11 User Satisfaction

A written survey of all section and committee chairs and/or legislative liaisons will be conducted following the 2010 legislative session to evaluate the legislative services provided by the MSBA's lobbying team. Eighty-five percent (85%) will rank those services as valuable or extremely valuable.

8. Market Penetration

Not applicable.

9. Current Issues and Challenges:

The demand for legislative services from MSBA sections has been on an upward trajectory. The MSBA struggled to meet those demands with our outside lobbyist and .10 of an MSBA FTE. We expanded our capacity and the breadth of our legislative efforts by hiring a Government Relations Director.

It is difficult to provide information to members in a manner that is valuable to them (i.e., both timely and informative). We continue to explore and develop ways to use the Internet to provide timely legislative information to our members. Note that in the MSBA membership survey completed in February 2003 80% of the respondents indicated that it is important for the MSBA to communicate with its members about changes in the law. However, between the 2003 and 2005 surveys, members' familiarity with the MSBA's legislative initiatives fell by 22%. In addition, the importance of "legislative updates" fell between 2003 and 2005 from close to 60% to slightly less than 40%. This indicates we still have much work to do on communication. This will be one of the main areas where the Government Relations Director will need to focus his efforts.

10. Explanation of Budget Categories:

Legislative Representative -- The MSBA pays this annual fee in four equal installments. The amount is lower beginning in 2009-10 in recognition of our hiring a Government Relations Director. We may be able to further reduce the cost for an outside lobbyist in future years, when our Government Relations Director will have more experience.

NABE Legislative Conference – Each year NABE (National Association of Bar Executives) hosts a legislative workshop conference. The MSBA's contract lobbyist has attended this conference in the past. It would be beneficial for the new Government Relations Director to attend this conference in 2010-11 to meet and network with colleagues from bar associations in other states.

ABA Day in Washington -- The MSBA has been consistently represented at ABA Day in Washington since 2002-03. ABA Day in Washington is a focused lobbying event organized by the Government Affairs Division of the ABA. It is an opportunity to meet with members of the Minnesota Congressional delegation and share with them priorities of the legal profession. The officers that have participated have found this event to be informative and beneficial. The budgeted amount will cover all expenses for two bar leaders, to be selected by the president.

Lawyer-Legislator Events – Pays for any room rental charges, food, and other materials for a meeting and/or social event with Council members and lawyer legislators.

Miscellaneous -- Includes expenses such as copying, conference calls, postage, parking fees and other items related to our legislative efforts.