

ADC 2012 ROUNDTABLE - HOW TO RUN A SUCCESSFUL BILL HEARING NIGHT

1. What is Bill Hearing?
2. What is the purpose of Bill Hearing?
3. Preparing delegates
4. Showcasing Y&G to the community
 - a. How can we use Bill Hearing as an opportunity to get out the message about Y&G?
 - b. You've just had a great Bill Hearing Night – now what?

To the Panel Members:

Thank you for volunteering your time to be a panel member for Albany YMCA's Youth and Government Bill Hearing. This is a brief overview of the Bill Hearing process and your role in it.

For the past several weeks our delegates have been working on proposed legislation or bills. At Bill Hearing they will have an opportunity to present them to their peers, parents, community members and you, our distinguished panel of guests. The primary purposes of Bill Hearing are practice and evaluation. The delegates need an opportunity to go through the committee process and receive critical comments. Also, of the bills you will hear only those which are most ready will be submitted for our Model Legislature and Court. Hearing them argued is the clearest way to determine which bills are ready for submission.

The Bill Hearing process is fairly straightforward. The Bill Hearing Procedure will give you an idea of the flow of the event and also tell you when to ask questions or make comments. There are two primary opportunities for you to ask questions – after the Bill Sponsor speech and after the Lobbyists. The Bill Sponsor will explain what the intent of the bill is and make an initial argument for its passing. After s/he is done you will be given 5 minutes to ask questions of *intent and interpretation*. These are clarifying questions – if you don't understand the bill, if you are unsure you have read it correctly, asking the Bill Sponsor to re-state the intent of the bill, etc. No questions about feasibility, cost, likelihood of success, etc. This process is done through the chair which means you should wait for the chair to call on you before asking your question.

Your next opportunity to speak will be after you hear several lobbyists argue for and against the bill. Questions should be held until all lobbyists have had a chance to speak and then as a group they will stand for your questions. You may ask specific lobbyists questions or you may ask the group as a whole a question. You can even state your opinion and ask the lobbyists to argue against it. This is not done through the chair which means you may address the lobbyists directly.

After the Author Summation speech you will be given a chance to write down your comments and criticisms. I have attached a form for that as well. This is extremely helpful to the Advisors in determining which bills are most prepared for submission. The criteria we look for in a good Youth and Government bill are different than what you would look for in an actual bill. We are looking for bills which are original, feasible, and debatable. We also want them to be relevant to California and not fiscally irresponsible. Whether a bill achieves what you would consider a positive end is not necessarily important. Sometimes, the best bills are the ones we truly wish would not pass. Lastly, preparedness is probably the most important criteria. We will have to submit these bills shortly after Bill Hearing and therefore a bill which is weaker on some of the criteria but ready to be submitted is better than a potentially great Bill which will still require a lot of work.

Bill Hearing Procedure

Chair Introduces Bill

1. Clerk reads the enacting clause
2. Sponsor's speech (*3-5 minutes*) – stating purpose and major provisions of bill
3. Questions of intent and interpretation – to the sponsor, through the chair and open to the Panel (*5 minutes*)

-These are questions meant purely to clarify the purpose of the bill. Please do not be offended if one of the delegates shouts “point of order” while you are speaking, they are supposed to do this. It means you have asked a question outside of the scope of intent and interpretation. It is vital the delegates learn and practice this.

4. Legislative Analysts – fiscal impact of the Bill on the State; no questions (*2-3 minutes*)
5. Lobbyist comments – three people FOR and three people AGAINST (*2-3 minutes each*)
6. Lobbyists should then all stand and allow the panel members to ask them questions (*5 minutes*)
 - This is the panel's opportunity to question the pro and con speakers on opinion, clarification, feasibility and validity, or anything else relevant to the bill.
7. Author Summation Speech (*3-5 minutes*)
8. Panel members should be given a couple of minutes to write down thoughts before chair calls for next bill

Panel Member Feedback Form

Bill Topic: _____

Is it debatable? _____

Why or why not? _____

Is it relevant to California? _____

Why or why not? _____

Is it feasible? _____

Why or why not? _____

Is it fiscally attainable? _____

Also:

Were the students prepared? _____

Did they know their facts? _____

Did they conduct themselves appropriately? _____

Any other comments or concerns? _____

[illegible]

Thank you from the Albany YMCA Youth & Government Delegation.