



plural

How to Prepare for the 2023 Legislative Session

Best Practices to Advocate Your Issues
More Efficiently and Effectively



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Whether you're advocating on Capitol Hill or in your state legislature, public policy work is evolving. Influencing legislation today calls for a competitive edge. This guide walks you through steps public policy teams can take before sessions start—and how to use technology to advocate for your issue more efficiently and effectively in 2023.

A lot has changed over the past few years. The [pandemic accelerated the digital delivery of public services](#), laying the groundwork for government done digitally. Public awareness of social issues—and entrenched divisions—are at an all-time high. The majority of Americans think [democracy is in crisis](#). There's a lot at stake.

To successfully compete, public policy professionals need more efficient workflows, the ability to adapt quickly, and dynamic digital workspaces.

The months before a session are a valuable time for your public policy team. What you do now—from identifying priorities to understanding who you need to partner with—can set your team up for a more productive session.



Audit the Data to Find What Worked— and What Didn't—During the Last Session

The first step to giving your public policy work a leg up? Understanding what impact your work had during the previous legislative session. You can then use that information to organize and improve your strategy.

Start by taking a deep dive into the issues, researching the bill language that passed, and analyzing legislation that failed or succeeded in the last 1-2 sessions.

As you look over your findings, your team can inform future policy by asking:

- Which bills got traction and which bills died?
- Which strategies worked and which didn't?
- What bill language passed that we can build on going forward?
- Which bill language failed that we should avoid in the future?



AUDIT THE DATA (CONT.)

You may know how legislation on your issues played out in your own state, but now is the ideal time to look at what happened in other states on similar issues. Capturing those specific details will help your team shape your plan of action.

Between sessions is also an excellent time to dig into the bills legislators authored and championed, and where they stood on bills related to your cause. You can use this information to decide which legislators you want to build relationships with going forward. Once you've completed your audit, it's time

to refine your strategy based on what you've learned. Review all the data you've tracked and organize the key tactics you'll use to finetune your approach heading into the next session.

When developing priorities, ask:

- What issues do my group members care about the most?
- Is this fight winnable? How?
- Would constituent power add value and make a difference?

TECH TIP

Legislative intelligence software can simplify the audit process for your team, freeing them up to focus on strategy. When looking for the right tool, make sure you have the ability to identify similar bill language across states. This makes it easy to see what's happening with parallel legislation across the country and informs future strategy. Public policy teams should also look for the ability to export relevant data—tags, notes, and contacts—into a single spreadsheet for analysis and planning.

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Using legislative intelligence, we can look back at previous sessions and identify bills that made it far and had significant support but didn't get passed. From there, we can easily review what's in those bills and who supported them to determine our strategy for the next session and let our counterparts know so they can contribute to the effort.

ORLANDO JONES

DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CSME



Stay on Top of Bill Profiles Related to Your Issue

Before a session starts, most legislatures will allow legislators to introduce bills by prefilming them. The idea is to expedite the legislative process by getting paperwork ready in advance and giving legislative teams more time to draft the language.

The sooner you know of any prefiling bills of note, the sooner you can plan the steps you will take to advance your issue.

CHAMBERS ALLOWING PREFILES

- Alabama Senate & House
- Alaska Senate & House
- American Samoa House
- Arizona Senate & House
- Arkansas Senate & House
- Colorado House
- Connecticut Senate
- Delaware House
- Florida Senate & House
- Georgia Senate & House
- Hawaii Senate & House
- Idaho House
- Illinois Senate & House
- Iowa Senate & House
- Kansas Senate & House
- Kentucky Senate & House
- Louisiana Senate & House
- Maine Senate & House
- Maryland Senate
- Massachusetts Senate & House
- Minnesota Senate & House
- Mississippi House
- Missouri Senate & House
- Montana Senate & House
- Nebraska Senate
- Nevada Senate & Assembly
- New Hampshire House
- New Jersey Senate
- New Mexico House
- North Dakota Senate & House
- Ohio Senate
- Oklahoma Senate & House
- Oregon Senate
- Pennsylvania Senate & House
- Rhode Island Senate
- South Dakota Senate & House
- Tennessee Senate
- Texas Senate & House
- Utah Senate & House
- Vermont Senate
- Virginia Senate & House
- Washington Senate & House
- West Virginia Senate & House
- Wyoming Senate & House

CHAMBERS NOT ALLOWING PREFILES

- California Senate & Assembly
- Idaho Senate
- Indiana House
- Michigan Senate & House
- New Mexico Senate
- North Carolina House
- Ohio House
- Vermont House
- Wisconsin Senate & Assembly
- Puerto Rico House



TECH TIP

Legislative intelligence systems can help you automatically keep track of any profiles. For example, Plural users can save time by setting up notifications and saved search alerts so they're always making decisions based on the latest developments.



Streamline Your Digital Collaboration

Legislation doesn't get passed in a vacuum. To build a winning coalition and move your public policy work forward, you need alignment with partners, be they organizations or companies with shared interests, business and professional associations, or political influencers and insiders.

That's in addition to making sure your lobbyists, volunteers, attorneys, and government relations professionals are coordinated and on message. In the past, you may have sent emails, made phone calls, and reviewed talking points in team meetings.

Today, you can use a single platform to securely organize and distribute policy notes and updates to the right people, and save hours in the process. Think of it as a digital conference room where all the key players are present, sharing notes, and reviewing the latest policy changes in real-time. Secure digital workspaces allow you to create a home for every team, working group, client, or issue area. All team members can access the latest data exactly when they need it.



TECH TIP

With the right tools, public policy teams that align digitally are highly organized, extremely efficient, and have the ability to quickly pivot. To illustrate, Plural Workspaces allows everyone on your public policy team — internal staff to external partners — to track conversations by issue, region, or role. Plural also allows users to add unlimited collaborators from any organization.



DIGITAL COLLABORATION (CONT.)

Think of how transformative it could be to have your team annotating bills, sharing analysis, and planning next steps all in one place. You no longer have to search through old emails or look for misplaced call notes—everything you need is captured and it's always up to date.

Nearly 80% of workers used collaboration tools for work in 2021, up from just over half of workers in 2019, according to Gartner. Having secure digital spaces where teams can plan strategies, share updates, and assign tasks saves time and ensures clarity and alignment.

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Source: Gartner



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As a powerful 501(c)3 working to give every Georgia citizen access to democracy it was important we had a tool that allowed us to share updates with our community. Plural allows you to add as many users as you'd like which allows us to share the policy with our 100+ member affiliates. No other tool provides this much access with this amount of quality at this reasonable rate.

ADAM SWEAT

ELECTION REFORM DIRECTOR, PRoGA

Build Adaptation Into Your Work Plan

Today, being nimble enough to act first is the name of the game. Your team needs to have a plan for reacting to change as it happens and a way to ensure you're ahead of the crowd in responding.

Machine learning has advanced so much in recent years that you can now get predictive insights on legislation, giving the data you need to plan your strategy ahead of a session start.

By incorporating legislative intelligence with machine learning capabilities into your toolbox, you can build in the flexibility you need to succeed by focusing on:

- Clarity around the priorities for your issue.
- How you will delegate tasks to specific team members to streamline response?
- Where everyone will go to have a single clear plan of action at all times.



TECH TIP

Legislative intelligence helps focus your plan throughout a session. For example, using machine learning and drawing on historical data, Plural by Plural's momentum indicator surfaces the bills that look most likely to come up for a passage vote at the end of a session.



Streamline Your Public Policy Tracking

Every public policy team needs to identify the legislation that impacts their business, cause, or agenda. However, determining which bills are likely to gain traction and come to a vote can be both time-consuming and labor-intensive.

Legislative processes can progress quickly — if you aren't constantly monitoring the legislation process or your internal database, you might miss something significant. Taking a break can be costly in more ways than one.

That's why Plural worked to transform all U.S. legislation, whether federal or state, into a structured, machine-readable format. That, along with natural language processing, enables you to track changes more easily, identify similarities, and run more relevant searches than ever before. Manual tracking is becoming obsolete.

If you're not using a tool for legislative tracking, now is the time to start. And if you already use tracking tools, it's time to adopt a legislative intelligence and collaboration platform to gain an important competitive advantage.

Using a single platform simplifies tracking and makes collaboration across organizations, partners, and volunteers far easier. (Plural comes with unlimited free users, so you can share the tool with anyone who needs to be in the loop.)

You'll be able to stay on top of relevant legislation and determine when it's time to take immediate action or if it's an update you have to monitor. Best of all, shared digital workspaces centralize conversations about particular bills and reduce the need for meetings.



TECH TIP

Legislative tracking software can allow you to efficiently discover bills and organize them by priority, issue, or type of action required. When looking for the right tool, check that it enables your team a way to structure workflows and quickly access the bills you are following — however it works best for you and your team.



Simplify How Your Team Builds Relationships

It's not always what you know, but who you know. That's why your team should focus on building relationships with the right legislators, staffers, lobbyists, and community organizations all year long.

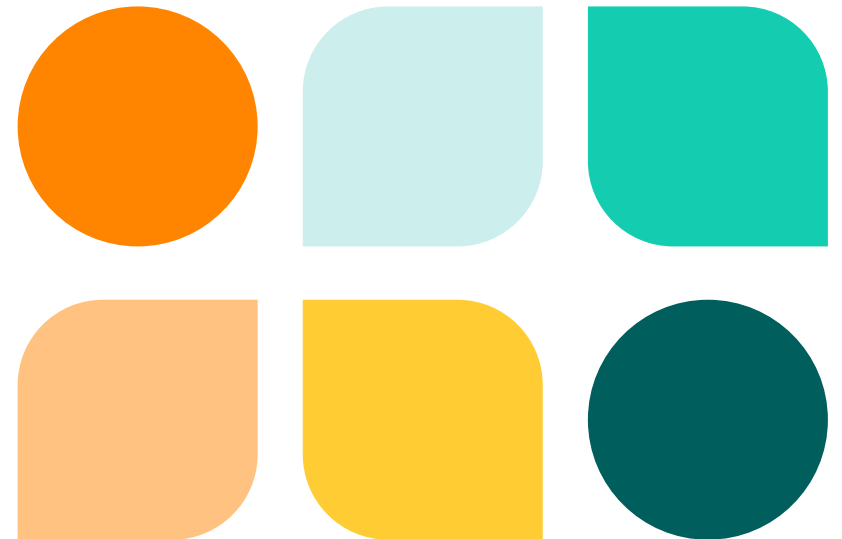
When the legislature is out of session, your team has more opportunity to build personal relationships that make teaming up on shared causes easier once the session starts.

And while lawmakers may not be passing legislation when not in session, your public policy team will still want to stay on top of what's happening at the Capitol. Are any members or senators in danger of being replaced due to a special election? What about significant committee meetings or hearings taking place between sessions? A legislative intelligence platform can help you keep track of developments, key players, and make a plan not just to react but be proactive.



TECH TIP

A great collaboration tool will help you to align your internal team with external partners, seamlessly uniting everyone committed to a common cause. Look for legislation technology that helps you identify legislators who can influence action on your issue, based on their position, party, district, committees, and the bills they have sponsored in the past.

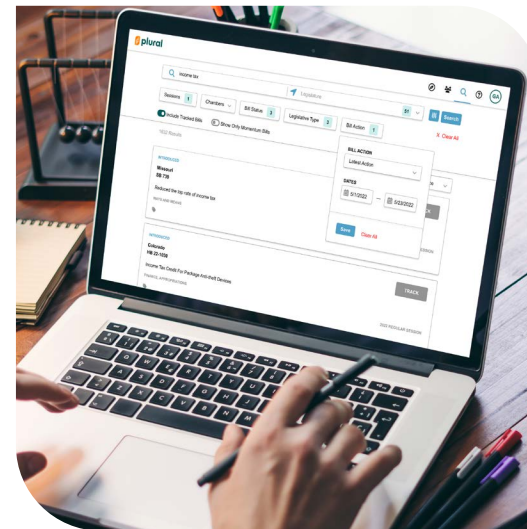


About Plural

Plural helps busy public policy professionals advance their issues by providing the most intelligent, streamlined, and collaborative public policy tracking platform available.

- Save time with automated legislative tracking
- Streamline workflows so you can respond effectively and quickly to change
- Synchronize team and partner strategy using shared workspaces
- Collaborate with internal and external teams without limit
- Modernize your team's processes with on-demand training and support

Schedule a demo at pluralpolicy.com
or email us at sales@pluralpolicy.com



Conclusion

As technology has taken an ever-increasing role in public policy work, so has digital collaboration among teams and stakeholders.

Thanks to new legislative intelligence and machine learning technology, we now have better data and the ability to analyze it to inform strategy. If your current processes are outdated and manual, can you leverage technology to save time, align stakeholders, and focus where it counts?

Being the first to know about legislation—and what may be influencing legislation—is a huge competitive advantage. The right collaboration tools can make your coordination efforts more efficient and cross-organization cooperation more effective.

As the work continues to change, we at Plural will remain your partner in advancing the practice of public policy work, with the latest innovations in technology and the advice and learnings from the top minds in the business.



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- Save time with automated legislative tracking
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For more information, contact us at info@pluralpolicy.com