

2012 NCSL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT – CHICAGO
HELPING THE PUBLIC: CONSTITUENT SERVICES PROGRAMS

Constituent Services Unit, Research Division
State of Nevada, Legislative Counsel Bureau

PURPOSE

Provide information and answers to constituent inquiries (no legal advice)

STRUCTURE

- Research Division – Policy Analysts & CSU Research Analysts (non-partisan)
- Formed in 1999 – to address quicker turnaround questions
- Carson City and Las Vegas – staff of 7 analysts (1 in LV), 2 Support Staff

SERVICES

- Letters, Proclamations, Speeches (non-political) – require legislator approval
- Case Work – occasional HIPAA release
- Session Staff – familiarize about CSU services to facilitate approvals during session

PROCESS

- Inquiry – by letter, e-mail, phone, fax
- Database Entry – contact information and description, can export info for mass mailings
- Research – Analyst works with agencies on gathering information
- Response – letter, e-mail, proclamation, informational document

PREPARATION

- Current Events – read newspapers, online news sites, major issues during session
- State Agency Visits – meet with state and local agency staff
- Database & CSU WIKI – tracks requests, serves as information resource, repeat topics reference
- Common Contacts – agency contacts accessible to all CSU staff

CHALLENGES

- Unknown Facts – may receive 80% of story, learn the rest through research
- Same Subject – receive same inquiry from many individuals, make each sound unique
- Quick Response – respond within a few days, some require weeks
- Work Load – session work increases, 60%-70% of Division requests go to CSU

SUMMARY

- Purpose is Help – we try to assist everyone who contacts us, sometimes answer is “no”
- Relationships – agency relationships make a difference
- Access to Info – database reduces need to reinvent the wheel with every request
- Empathy – may be the first time they contact a legislator, needs to be a positive experience

SLOGAN

- Investigation - Action - Problem Solved

CONTACT

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