Civic Engagement: Grassroots Advocacy on a State Level
Hemp as a Case Study
- Starting the Conversation About Hemp
- Introducing People to Opportunities & Challenges
- Networking and Connecting Teams
Starting the Conversation

Depending on the political climate & publicly-held stigmas, different avenues may be more appropriate than others

a. Example: If the larger decision-making bodies are not to the point of agreeing on crucial aspects regarding hemp cultivation, a campaign to influence both public opinion and decision-makers at different levels could be considered
   i. Relationship cultivation
b. The internet and social media are good tools, and to respect them means to only put out objective, relevant and evidence-based resources that can guide to better decisions/laws
c. Infographics, research, print ads, radio and TV time, media coverage of events, flyers, exhibits and health or environment activities, holding community forums - bring about AWARENESS
Introducing People to Opportunities & Challenges

Realities

1. Change can be scary
2. Uncertainty is uncomfortable
3. New and exciting is stressful

Challenges

1. Ego and personal profit
2. Logistical and workforce barriers
3. Bureaucratic systems
4. Apathy and complacency with status quo

Facts

1. Adapting is a lifelong process and change means opportunities for growth
2. Growth and leadership happen outside people's comfort zones
3. Consistent communication and transparency provide vision
1. Keeping lists of companies and contacts in a format that’s accessible goes a long way in engaging partners and supporters.

2. Categorizing areas can make it easier:
   a. Equipment: planting, harvesting, processing, storage, extraction, etc.
   b. End users: textiles and fabric, food services for seed, orgs for oil, fibre and construction, biocomposites manufacturers
   c. Investors: supportive orgs and individuals

3. Attending conferences and events that offer exposure to large amount of people, the sharing of ideas, solutions and lessons learned from failures are highly beneficial.

4. No conversation is unimportant and a main goal must be improving situations for others
Your Elected Officials Need to Hear from You!

- Face-to-Face Meeting
- Write a Letter – Have someone proofread it
- Send an Email
- Make a Telephone Call
- Post a note to the Legislator’s Facebook or Twitter page
- Attend town hall meetings and in-district coffees (they’re listed in your local newspaper)
Effective Communication
When Talking or Writing to Your Elected Official

- Share a personal story (i.e., my mouth hurts when I eat, I don’t like my smile, etc.)
- Keep the message simple and direct, but also tell them how you feel about it
- Tell the legislator what you know about the topic

Written
- Personalize your letter – tell your story
- Make sure to include your home address and telephone number
- Invite the legislator to contact you to talk more about the issue
Advocating for initiatives larger than us helps our world adapt to change with the intent to improve public health, protect the environment and well-being of all.
Thank you!

Kevin Barone
The Capitol Lobby Group
Kelly Rippel
@Kansans4Hemp