

“Going to the Capital”

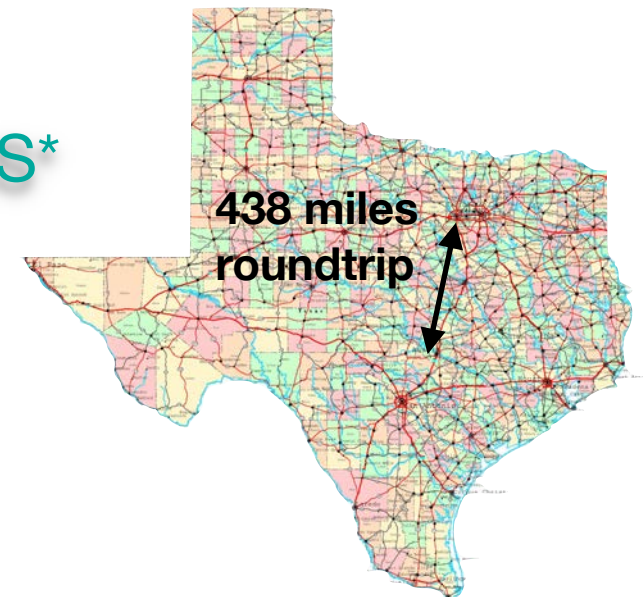
- How to lobby your state’s regulatory agencies and lawmakers

by Jim Bates
Funeral Consumers Alliance of North Texas



DO the TIME* / DO the MILES*

* because you don’t have the money
to compete with the lobby and/or the
political action committees

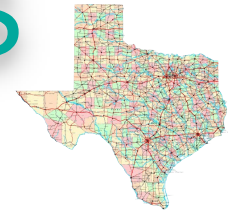


just me talking intro and bio

capitol drone flyover



DO the TIME / DO the MILES



- **Politics is driven by excessive power and money.**
- **Personality** and integrity is what you use at the capital to compete.
- **Politics is a contact sport** requiring aggressive, yet polite behavior.
- **You MUST establish a reputation.**
- **It cannot be about you.**
 - **Otherwise they will eat you alive.**
- **Letter and email campaigns do not work.**

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3 Groups to Study, Learn and Embed Yourself Into Their Culture

- **Regulatory agencies over licensed funeral establishments, prepaid funeral contracts and perpetual care cemeteries.**
 - **Licensing, inspecting and regulating funeral service retailers.**
 - **Rule making authority - operational details from legislative statutes.**
- **State legislature.**
 - **Pass laws to regulate licensed professionals, implement the political agenda, and perhaps ... protect the public.**
- **Your state's National Funeral Director's Association trade group.**
 - **Protectionist and promotional; typically is the industry lobby.**

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If any of the above don't know who you are, they might listen to you for a few minutes ...

Regulatory Agencies

Identify the regulatory agency (or agencies) over:

- Licensed funeral directors and crematories.
- Prepaid funeral contracts.
- Perpetual care cemeteries.

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Bottom Line: Establish yourself and FCA as a force to reckon with in your state.

Regulatory Agencies (cont'd)

Go to their websites:

- Learn their organizational structure and personnel.
- Backtrack the biography of the Executive Director of the agency (state employee) to discern bias and power.
- *Backtrack the biographies of the governor-appointed commissioners to discern their biases and power.*
 - Look in public records like “Follow the Money” to see if they “bought” their way into the appointment.

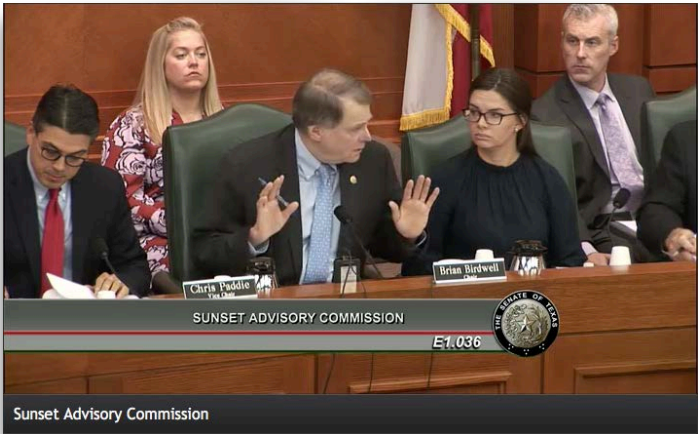


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Regulatory Agencies (cont'd)

- **Contact the agency to be put on their email list for anything consumer-related.**
 - **Ask if any stakeholder meetings are scheduled and request invitations.**
- **GO TO AT LEAST ONE SCHEDULED COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING PER YEAR.**
 - **There is typically a time for Public Comment on the agenda, so do so.**
 - **But don't complain, accuse, etc.**
 - **Inform, educate and report your FCA's good works.**
 - **They are curious and interested.**
- **Request Open Records of complaints to learn that part of the operation.**
- **Petition for Rule Change - THE BEST PLACE TO AFFECT CHANGE !**

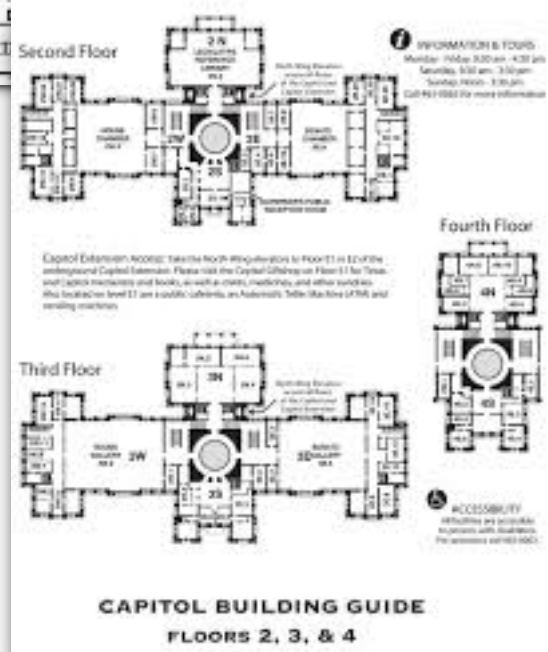
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HB 3162 video placeholder for OBS



State Capitol



State Legislature

- Research the legislature website for bills in past sessions to learn which committees hear what bills.
 - Contact the full-time staffers of those committees, introduce yourself, and ask how best to participate at a bill hearing during session.
 - Learn how to research the online bill tracking process; and how to enter keywords for alerting you to introduced bills that you want to follow and testify FOR or AGAINST in committee hearings.
 - Look at archived videos of past committee bill hearings to train yourself how the process works.
 - Also contact the pertinent committee clerk(s) and ask for advice on how to participate in the bill hearing process.

The bill hearing is where the action occurs !

In Texas, with the established reputation of FCA, if we speak AGAINST a bill, it is tabled or not scheduled for consideration on the assembled chamber floor (most of the time). The bill is dead.

State Legislature

a 1 minute video is played here.

to see it, download the workshop video from FCA website.

this video shows the webpages to use for tracking and running bills.

Your State's National Funeral Director's Association Trade Group



**TFDA members at regulatory commission
quarterly public meeting.
(They usually claim the comfy leather chairs)**



- **NFDA/xFDA has a powerful presence because they contribute heavily to politicians and are well organized at the national level.**
- **Get to know them, but be careful. They are funeral directors.**
- **Meet and greet their legislative/regulatory liaison designee. In regulatory stakeholder meetings, they will be your fiercest competitor.**
- **Follow them on Facebook and get on their email news update lists.**

And then ...
there's
these guys.



Traded on the NYSE.
\$3.25B in revenue 2019.



In the last 50 years, SCI has been the dominating force that monetized death to a perceived choice of retail service, or a pauper's burial.

We pay them to force our emotions and money through their process.

They lobby fiercely to ensure total control of our money and our hearts.



In the last 20 years, SCl and its officers, founder, friends, etc have given more than **\$1.7M** to Texas politicians; most notably the governor who appoints the Texas Funeral Service Commission commissioners, 4 of whom are designated as consumer representatives. (Ha!)



Robert Waltrip, Founder of SCl



Burnet Co. GOP leader going to jail
Police have charged Rogers in election night fight

Updated: Friday, 01 Jun 2012, 6:57 AM CDT
Published: Thursday, 31 May 2012, 5:47 PM CDT

Johnnie B Rogers, Jr,
Personal lobbyist for Waltrip

20 Years
\$1.7M



Recap:

1. **Meet, greet and learn the people and the process.**
 - 1.1. **Regulatory.**
 - 1.2. **Legislature.**
 - 1.3. **Trade groups.**
2. **Use the state legislature's online system to learn the process and see the action.**
3. **Make a keywords bill watch list on the legislature website to alert you.**
 - 3.1. **Target bill(s) you want to affect and go after 'em.**
 - 3.2. **BE SITUATIONALLY AWARE of the money and power you are facing and pitch it from there. SO THEY KNOW YOU'VE "DONE THE TIME AND DONE THE MILES".**
4. **Above all, be yourself. Truth is on your side. The human condition is on your side.**
 - 4.1. **And enlist as much help s possible from your peers. DO NOT MAKE IT ABOUT YOU.**

Politics

The most important element is *personality*.

Politics is all about:

- How well one plays with others.
- Who is fair.
- Who is trustworthy.
- Who offers help to his colleagues.

*These are things that count -
in bad times as well as good.*

- Paul Burka; Texas Monthly, 2013

Show and Tell Real Things mostly

THE END

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September 2020