

Fraternal Order of Eagles Grand Aerie Lobbying Research Committee



Feasibility Study For the Hiring of a Lobbyist Representing the Fraternal Order of Eagles

Presented to
Executive Department
Grand Worthy President Bill Loffer

Jr. Past Grand Worthy President & Chairman, Board of
Trustees Chris Lainas Jr.
Grand Trustee Mike B. Lagervall, Sr.
Grand Trustee Phillip D. Tice
Grand Trustee Melvin Fry
Grand Trustee Ron Stine

September 7, 2006

Mission of the Fraternal Order of Eagles

The Fraternal Order of Eagles, an international, non-profit organization, unites fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice and equality, to make human life more desirable by lessening its ills, and by promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope.

Mission of the F.O.E. Lobby Research Committee

Our mission is to gather any/all information needed to review the feasibility of hiring a lobbyist. The lobbying program could consist of promoting legislation to assist our communities, Aerie's, Auxiliary's and members.

Image and Reputation

Our image used to be that the Fraternal Order of Eagles was leaders in social legislation such as the Social Security Act. We can again become the leaders to make human life more desirable and believe for others everywhere.

Over the years, the Eagles have fought and won many bitter battles for a Workman's Compensation Act, Mothers and Old Age pensions, Social Security laws and "Jobs After 40" and are still fighting to liberalize present social benefits

Many great social and political leaders have belonged to the Eagles. President Theodore Roosevelt was one of the many who joined and praised the order for its humanitarian accomplishments, as did a later Roosevelt - Franklin D. President Harry S. Truman often reiterated that the Eagles were his type of organization

Case for Support and Possible Legislative Program

This possible legislative program is not intended to be the actual legislative program but just some ideas that have not yet been completely researched.

It's very important that we monitor proposed legislation and new laws enacted! We're letting everyone else decide our destiny (See attachment A on sample of information passed to us on a law enacted that our organization needed to know).

Change the current IRS law. Currently bingo is considered related income. Change the word bingo to all games of chance. Now if you sell bell jar tickets at a public gathering, you have to pay unrelated income tax on the profits (Please see attachment B).

Legislation in support of fire fighters and law enforcement officers

Place Eagle grave maker at the tomb of the unknown soldiers in Arlington, at the FDR grave site in Hyde Park New York and at all past presidents grave sites.

Support Home on the Range

Support Boys Town

Place important Eagle milestones in the congressional record. As far as we know the last time this happened was back in the 80's by Danny Splain (Thanks for the information Bob Wahls).

Lobby the US Postal service to issue a postage stamp – The Founder of Mothers Day

Youth and Child Advocacy

Child Care Plus – Promote health care for every child. In New York Gov. Pataki started "Child Health Care Plus". This program assures no child is without health care.

Amend the tax form to have a check off box that we made under \$25,000.00 for that year you don't have to fill out the details on the form. There is currently a check off box but you still have to fill out the complete form (Thanks Bob Wahls for your assistance in getting the details correct on this issue) (See Attachment C).

990 Tax Form – Change the law so Aerie's/Auxiliaries that make under \$50,000.00 don't have to make out the form.

Policy and Regulation changes to be included.

Pass a law that all government forms, publications, booklets etc. be written in at the 6th grade or lower level using the Fry Readability Scale. Many officials call this a “dummy down effect” but all communications should be completely understandable by the majority and not just the best educated. Literacy volunteers might be a great ally.

Be ready to assist any and all federal government roadblocks and red tape in making the Medical Research Facility a dream come true.

Maybe some law suits could be averted via legislation and law change(s)?

Remember, any legislation to make human life more desirable is one of our missions. Let's believe for others everywhere.

Leadership and Administration of Lobbyist

If a lobbyist is hired, a detailed objective of that position should be developed and who the Lobbyist is supposed to report to. It should be one person. To set the program up have the BOGT get the program developed and then hand it off to the Government Relations Committee at the next Grand Aerie Convention.

John Potter has stated he'd like to appoint a Government Relations Committee for the year he is the Grand Worthy President.

Funding Cost for the Lobbyist

The base cost will be about \$60,000.00 per year plus expenses (Please see proposal by Robert C. Gustafson). In New York when we started out lobbying program the State Aerie did not have the funds to pay for the start up costs. We asked for donations and received enough donations to fund the program for three years.

Committee member Kristy Spires – Grand Aerie Comptroller, stated that funding should not be a problem.

Marketing

Summary of Recommendations of how our marketing firm could work with our lobbyist. For example, the lobbyist could assist in getting artifacts from the Woman's Right National Park in Seneca Falls New York, loaned to the Grand Auxiliary to put the artifacts on display at Grove City.

Our Decision

Recommendation

This committee recommends that a lobbyist or lobbyists be hired to work on legislation for the Fraternal Order of Eagles and our communities. Along with a lobbyist, a grass roots program should be implemented such as the Government Relations Committee program John Potter would like to get started.

The Committee

Bob Wahls – Grand Aerie Secretary
Fraternal Order of Eagles
1623 Gateway Circle South
Grove City, Ohio 43123
614.883.2200
Fax 614.883.2201
bwahls@foe.com
Carol

Gwen Stallkamp, Grand Madam Trustee
Fraternal Order of Eagles
22649 Bluegrass Road
Albert Lee, Minnesota 56007
507.373.5540
C 507.473.0473
woodgwen@webtv.net

Jim Roberts – Grand Aerie Vice President
Fraternal Order of Eagles
323 North Lincoln
Olathe, Kansas 66061
913.782.3403
Fax 913.393.0517
Jrfoe700@sbcglobal.net
Pat

Kristy Spires – Grand Aerie Comptroller
Fraternal Order of Eagles
1623 Gateway Circle South
Grove City, Ohio 43123
614.883.2200
Fax 614.883.2201
kspires@foe.com

Pat Durham – Grand Madam Vice President
Fraternal Order of Eagles
1922 Forest Hill Drive SE
Olympia, Washington 98501-3739
360.943.8469
jhdurham@comcast.net
Jerry

Ron Stine – Grand Aerie Trustee
Fraternal Order of Eagles
208 Cunningham Avenue
Cadiz, Ohio 43907
P&F 740.942.3755
sronfoe@foe.com
Linda

Bob Yager
Fraternal Order of Eagles
P.O Box 7187, Capital Station
Albany, New York 12224
518.218.1015
F 518.608.4582
C 518.928.7201
robertyagergt@aol.com
Pat

A Lobbyist Candidate

Robert C. Gustafson - President
Gustafson Associates
1175 Reston Avenue
Herndon, VA 20170
703-450-9066
August 4, 2006

Bill Loffer
Grand Worthy President
Fraternal Order of Eagles
Bellevue Nebraska #3912

Dear Mr. Loffer:

I am writing to follow-up on a conversation I had recently with Robert Yager regarding the Fraternal Order of Eagles' interest in expanding its education, advocacy, and lobbying capabilities in Washington, DC.

Based on my brief discussion with Bob, I would like to propose how I might assist the Eagles to fulfill their mission through a planned and coordinated program of outreach and advocacy with federal elected officials in Washington, DC. The thoughts and suggestions below are based on my somewhat limited knowledge of the Eagles. After you have had an opportunity to review this letter, I hope that we can talk in greater depth so I can better understand your interests and objectives.

It seems logical that the Eagles would move to re-establish a federal advocacy program as a means of advancing its mission. The federal government has the capacity to have widespread impact on the lives of Americans through changes in law and policy and funding for specific programs and projects. Advocacy at the national level is one of the most direct and efficient ways to generate wholesale social and economic changes (e.g., Social Security). In addition, the Eagles have a long and successful history of engaging in advocacy at the state and national level.

The Eagles have several substantial assets that would enable the organization to effectively impact federal policies of interest to the organization. These assets include:

- **Grassroots/grasstops** -- As a membership organization with more than 1 million individual members in as many as 1,500 locations across the United States, the Eagles have tremendous capacity to attract the attention of Members of Congress and Senators, based on local constituent (grassroots) interest. In addition, in many instances, Eagles are community leaders (grasstops) who may already be known to legislators.
- **Non-partisan** – With membership as diverse as John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, the Eagles can substantiate the claim that they are truly non-partisan. This can be used to mobilize broader coalitions for key issues and will enable the Eagles to have a deep impact on policy issues.
- **Solid reputation and widely accepted mission** – To the extent that the Eagles are known to lawmakers, their reputation seems sterling. In addition, the mission statement, including “lessening [life’s] ills, and promoting peace, prosperity, gladness, and hope” will be widely accepted by legislators and is general enough to enable activity in a variety of areas.

At the same time, the Eagles may face some challenges in establishing themselves as an active and influential force for positive change in Washington, DC. These challenges may include:

- **Depth of awareness** – Because the Eagles have not been active in Washington, DC in a consistent way in recent years, establishing the organization’s reputation and agenda here will require concerted work.
- **Mobilizing membership** – The ability of the Eagles to mobilize its membership will impact its effectiveness. The greater its ability to generate active involvement of its 1 million-plus members the more quickly results will be achieved.
- **Avoiding partisanship** -- Washington, DC is a highly charged political environment. In rolling-out an advocacy program, the Eagles will have to be very careful not to inadvertently appear partisan or wade into partisan issues. Simple things, such as the use of the words “human life” in the mission statement, can raise partisan hackles. The issues that the Eagles choose to focus attention on will have to be carefully assessed. The goal will be to avoid partisan entrapment, while still being 100% true to the Eagles’ mission and legacy.

I suggest that we first conduct some background research and develop a written plan to guide the development, introduction, execution, and institutionalization of the Eagles’ federal advocacy program. The plan would contain the following elements:

- A description of the reasons that the Eagles want to implement a federal advocacy program, **program goals, and indicators of success.**
- **Identify the things that make the Eagles unique** – their ethos, personality, history, and mission – and ensure that these are fully incorporated into all elements of the advocacy plan. A underlying goal of the advocacy program would be to teach key decisionmakers in Washington, DC about the values shared by all members of the Fraternal Order of Eagles and to project these values in all of the program’s activities.
- A **catalogue of the major issues** of concern to the Eagles, an assessment of the feasibility and desirability of including various issues as part of the advocacy program, and a **recommendation of which issue(s) to focus on initially.**
- **Develop an “ask.”** What specifically can legislators do to advance the Eagles’ chosen issue (e.g., cosponsor a bill, offer an amendment, sign a letter of support for an appropriation, call the President, etc.). This is critical, because once legislators are convinced they will ask, “what do you want me to do?” To this end, we may have to mobilize a legislator to introduce legislation to take the lead in some other way.
- Seek to develop a means of determining which aeries and individual Eagles have **pre-existing relationships with the elected officials.**
- **A list of the legislators and Administration officials who will be the primary targets of the advocacy program** – With 535 Members of the House and Senate, it will not be possible or feasible to initially try to impact them all. The list would include legislators who are critical to the issue(s) identified above (i.e., House and Senate leadership, serve on committees of jurisdiction) as well as legislators who represent states or districts with particularly active aeries. Appropriate Administration officials would also be included.
- **Develop a tactical plan and timeline** – Based on the research above, I would develop a tactical plan that would outline how the Eagles could roll-out their national advocacy program. The plan may include elements such as: mechanisms for mobilizing members and projecting their interests to their elected officials, face-to-face meetings with legislators, member lobbying day, call-ins, letter writing campaigns, inviting legislators to speak at aeries, members going to legislator’s town hall meetings, the possibility of an Eagles national convention in Washington, DC (which would include a lobbying day on Capitol Hill, presentations by legislators, and a Capitol Hill reception), coordination with public relations and media outreach efforts, etc.

I commonly work for clients on a monthly retainer that ranges between \$3,500 and \$10,000 a month, depending on the intensity of the project. At this point, it is unclear to me

what the exact needs of the Fraternal Order of Eagles will be until the research described above can be conducted and a tactical plan developed. I propose that the Eagles hire me initially for two months to conduct this research and develop a written plan at the rate of \$3,500 per month (\$7,000 total). This would include all routine expenses (phone, postage, fax, etc.). Any required out of town travel would be billed to you in addition to the regular monthly fee, but would be incurred only with your direct knowledge and approval. After the plan is in place, I suggest that we have further discussions regarding next steps, including the possibility of me being hired to implement the plan, and costs.

During the proposed research and plan-drafting phase as well as any subsequent work on behalf of the Eagles, I would adhere to the highest ethical standards and comply with the letter and spirit of all laws and rules regarding lobbying and advocacy. If appropriate, I would register as a lobbyist for the Eagles, which is a simple one-page clerical filing with the Clerk of the House and Secretary of the Senate.

I have attached a copy of my bio, but I will summarize my background and lobbying capabilities. I served for eight years on the staff of Congressman John Edward Porter (R-IL), including as his Chief of Staff and Associate Staff to the House Appropriations Committee. Rep. Porter (now retired) was a senior Member of the House Appropriations Committee, where he chaired the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. After leaving Rep. Porter's office, I was Director of Government Relations for a major international public relations firm and Director of Government Relations for a large Washington, DC-based law firm.

In 2000, I left the large law firm to start Gustafson Associates, so I could focus mostly on providing lobbying and government relations assistance to a variety of non-profit organizations, coalitions, and institutions dedicated to humanitarian and philanthropic work. Today, I work almost exclusively with non-profits and charitable organizations to impact national legislation, policy, and funding. I am originally from Suburban Chicago, graduated from Harvard College with a degree in Government, with honors, and now live in Virginia with my wife and two young sons.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you my thoughts on your plan to initiate a federal advocacy program. I would be very please to assist you as you move forward. Once you have had a chance to review this letter, I hope that you will feel free to call me so we can discuss your plans in greater detail.

Sincerely,
Robert C. Gustafson

