Making the Media Work for You

Initiative Consulting

Tracy Sabetta
There Are Effective Public Advocacy Messages
And Less Effective Messages
Why do we work with media?

- Expands the reach of our message
- Influences decision-makers
- Motivates public to action
How do we work with the media?

- Times they are a–changing
- Essential to make it as easy as possible
- Media advisories for events
- Press releases about reports, events
- Letters to the editor, op–eds
- Editorial board visits or reporter meetings
- TV and radio interviews
- Social media and digital news platforms
If you learn one thing today...

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE
Media advisories vs. releases

- Advisories:
  - Why come to or cover your event?
  - Catchy headline
  - Brief description
  - Who, what, when, where? Visuals
  - Contact information
How can you make it sexy?

IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2019

Contact:
Rachael Belz, 513–602–4115 (rbelz@ohiocitizen.org)
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No More Pork for FirstEnergy Solutions!

BOWLING GREEN, OH – Join Bowling Green–area elected officials and leaders from Ohio’s largest consumer and advocacy communities as they gather at Wooster Green in opposition to legislative efforts at the Statehouse to impose a consumer–funded bailout of two FirstEnergy Solutions nuclear plants and two of the area’s dirtiest coal plants. House Bill 6 also repeals the state’s effective renewable energy and efficiency programs, potentially making Ohio the first state in the nation to consider gutting clean energy standards to fund coal and nuclear bailouts.

The event will be hosted in the shadow of a giant inflatable pig, reminding area residents that FirstEnergy Solutions wants to bring home the bacon at the expense of all Ohio consumers. Bowling Green City Council members introduced and passed a resolution opposing House Bill 6 in early June. Following remarks by Bowling Green Mayor Dick Edwards and others, attendees will have the opportunity to offer brief testimony in response to House Bill 6 to be shared with decision–makers over social media.
WHAT: Press conference in opposition to House Bill 6
Opportunity for citizen testimony on the legislation

WHO: Bowling Green Mayor Dick Edwards
Ohio Citizen Action
Ohio Consumers Power Alliance

WHEN: Monday, June 17, 2019
3:30pm

WHERE: Wooster Green
Corner of West Wooster and South Church
Bowling Green, OH

VISUALS: 25-foot-tall inflatable pink pig
Media advisories vs. releases

Releases:

- Meat of your event or announcement
- Sent after to supplement your event or can stand alone
- Has a headline that captures attention
- Information included is newsworthy and timely
- Include citations if you include statistics and information
- Use quotes from those impacted or participating in the event, will the messenger appeal to your audience?
- Identify someone to be the contact and include information
- Direct reporters to websites or reports for other information or visuals
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, May 29, 2018

MEDIA CONTACT:
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New Report Finds Energy Innovation Can Bring $25 Billion in Investment, 20,000 Jobs to Ohio

Walmart, JPMorgan Chase, and others share their vision for the state’s energy future

(Columbus, OH – May 29, 2018)—Leaders from some of Ohio’s largest corporations, fast-growing companies, research institutions, and local economic development programs gathered in Columbus today to unveil a new report that outlines a vision for creating more than 20,000 jobs and sparking more than $25 billion in investment in Ohio through energy innovation.

Synapse Energy Economics hosted the event to release Powering Ohio: A Vision for Growth and Innovative Energy Investment, completed in partnership with Case Western Reserve University’s Great Lakes Energy Institute. A diverse group of advisors from across the business, regulatory, academic, labor, and manufacturing sectors in Ohio shared their energy insights and experiences to develop the report.

“Investing in smarter, cleaner, and more efficient energy is simply good business,” said Asa Hopkins, Principal Associate, Synapse Energy Economics, primary researchers for the report.

The report addresses five opportunities for growth in Ohio: attracting investment from corporate clean energy leaders; transforming transportation; building clean electricity generation; boosting Ohio’s energy productivity; and harnessing a 21st century electric grid.

Integrating clean tech and energy innovation into Ohio’s manufacturing base will be critical for economic growth. Fortunately, Ohio has a strong foundation: With over 15,500 manufacturers producing $106 billion of annual industrial output, Ohio is a manufacturing powerhouse that ranks third in manufacturing employment nationally.

“The Powering Ohio report is useful to anyone interested in understanding the clean energy opportunities in Ohio that will elevate our state as a leader in job creation and application of technologies,” said William Alexander, President of GEM Energy. “Ohio is well-positioned to embrace the opportunity of clean
Pitching your story

- Develop a media list and keep it updated
  - Watch for stories on your issue and make a note of the reporter and their contact information
  - Don’t forget digital media sites that will run your release

- Send a media advisory in writing, follow up
  - Personal call gives you the opportunity to make your case and gauge reporter interest

- Television pitching is challenging but crucial
  - News directors need a reason why your story is more important than a house on fire
How can you make it sexy?

- Make a clear connection as to why this is important to the local area of the outlet
  - Do you have local statistics?
  - Do you have a local or recognizable spokesperson?

- Frame the issue as one they have not covered before—new angle, new messenger, visuals

- Make it timely
  - This is something everyone will report today and by tomorrow it will be old news—don’t miss out!
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2019

Contact:
Rachel Bell, 513-602-4115 (rbelz@ohiocitizen.org)
Melissa English, 513-207-8527 (menglish@ohiocitizen.org)

No More Pork for FirstEnergy Solutions!
Giant inflatable pig will remind Bowling Green residents that FES wants to break the bank

BOWLING GREEN, OH – Join Bowling Green-area elected officials and leaders from Ohio’s largest consumer and advocacy communities as they gather at Wooster Green in opposition to legislative efforts at the Statehouse to impose a consumer-funded bailout of two FirstEnergy Solutions nuclear plants and two of the area’s dirtiest coal plants. House Bill 6 also repeals the state’s effective renewable energy and efficiency programs, potentially making Ohio the first state in the nation to consider gutting clean energy standards to fund coal and nuclear bailouts.

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BG protests ‘pork’ in HB 6 for nuclear and coal power

TOPICS: House Bill 6 Renewable Energy

Giant, inflatable pig centers protest about bill involving Davis-Besse

Sentinel-Tribune
Updated: Rally - BG getting swine-dled on FirstEnergy bailout

By Debbie Rogers, Sentinel-Tribune Editor

If the smell of bacon was wafting through downtown Bowling Green on Monday afternoon, it may not have been the imagination.

An inflatable pink pig — as large as the Wooster Green gazebo it floated next to — swayed in the late spring breeze. The sow was a symbol for a rally against House Bill 6, which will add a new charge to individuals’ and businesses’ electricity bills to financially rescue two nuclear power plants.
Your turn

- Write a media advisory for an upcoming event
- Public health leaders speak out in support of action on climate change
- Remember to include the hook, who your speakers are, why it is important to audience
- Headline, brief summary, then who, when and where, and contact information
American Academy of Pediatrics is releasing a study linking an increase in the frequency of children’s asthma attacks to carbon pollution.

Your speakers are:
- Dr. Bob Roberts, AAP
- Dr. Lisa Carr, Cleveland Clinic
- Kelly Green, mother of asthmatic child

HEADLINE, CONTACT INFO, SUMMARY, HOOK
WHAT, WHO, WHEN, WHERE, VISUALS
Letters to the Editor

- Voice opinions or responses, does not have to be balanced
- Demonstrates readers are paying attention
- Local messengers are always more successful
- Local messages get more attention
- Newspapers do not have to print them
- May run them online only
Letters to the Editor

- **Be polite.** Comment on actions or policies. Avoid personal attacks.

- **Be specific.** If you are responding to an article, mention the date and/or title of the article.

- **Stick to one topic.** Deal with only one issue in one letter.

- **Stick to YOUR topic.** Do not repeat your opponent’s arguments or take the myth/fact approach. Restating a contrary position only serves to put it in print once again.
Letters to the Editor

- Use facts and figures to back up your arguments. Talking points and reports.

- State your qualifications, if useful to the letter.

- Be concise. Short letters are more likely to be printed, stick to 200–250 words.

- Be original. Do not copy talking points or materials verbatim. Use your own voice and story.
Editorial boards and op-eds

- Editorial board meetings aim to influence opinion pieces written by the paper.
- Issue experts and personal stories are critical to successful editorial board meetings.
- Will typically be attended by editorial writers and reporters who cover the issue.
- Op-eds are guest columns typically written by impacted individuals with credibility on the topic.
- Both tactics are to be reserved, limited bites at the apple.

Ohio’s nuclear bailout bill will hurt children’s health: Aparna Bole and Kristie Ross (Opinion)

We urge Ohio lawmakers to oppose those provisions of House Bill 6 that would weaken Ohio’s clean energy standards and thereby harm our children, write Drs. Aparna Bole and Kristie Ross of Cleveland.
Ohio Editorial Boards Oppose House Bill 6

THE PLAIN DEALER

Why the “Ohio Clean Air” bill, HB 6, would take Ohio backwards and drive young people away: Bernie Moreno
July 18, 2019 — CLEVELAND — Last week’s announcement to turn the Avenue Shops at Westside City into a 500-acre mixed-use entertainment hub with a Ballpark City Block was a step forward.

THE PLAIN DEALER

Editorial: Ohio nuclear bailout bill needs work — and more scrutiny
June 26, 2019 — CLEVELAND — The proposed Ohio nuclear bailout bill, which also needs to monkey with other aspects of Ohio’s energy future, is too controversial to risk into passage this week.

The Columbus Dispatch

Editorial: Ohio Lawmakers: Drop nuclear bailout and invest in the future
June 21, 2019 — Changes made to the Ohio Senate Wednesday to a proposed bailout of two nuclear power plants make a bad bill slightly better. But the substitute version of House Bill 6 still does too little for Ohio’s energy future to justify wading into a debate with the mixture of the past.

THE BLADE

Editorial: No nuke bailout
June 30, 2019 — The best thing that can be said about House Bill 6 — the bailout of FirstEnergy Solutions Corp. and Perry nuclear power plants — is that it is no longer transparently as anything other than the ugly sweetheart deal that it is.

The Columbus Dispatch

Editorial: Don’t pass nuclear bailout without plan for renewable energy
June 25, 2019 — On Tuesday the Ohio Senate rejected a key tenet of the most controversial bills to come along in a while. If it passes without major changes, it will be an encroachment on Cleveland and to the state’s future economy. You don’t even have to know what the bill is about to know it’s absurd to say that you can fail that by the needle emerging past behind it.

The Vindicator

Editorial: State should not bail out old nuclear power plants
June 24, 2019 — FirstEnergy Solutions, which expects the state of Ohio to save its financially ailing Perry and Davis-Besse nuclear power plants, has perpetuated an advertising fuss that should be widely condemned.

Akron Beacon Journal

Marilou Johanek: At the Statehouse, they’re playing us for energy fools
June 6, 2019 — An army of utility lobbyists, aides and advocacy outfits in the Ohio General Assembly and statewide GOP headquarters, are playing us for fools.

THE PLAIN DEALER

Editorial: Fix it
June 9, 2019 — House Bill 6, a measure passed May 28 that would subsidize two energy-struggling coal and nuclear plants, is bad policy. It is now up to the Ohio Senate to put consumers first. What more perplexing about this future, and current law some of the bills from the future makes its way to the desk of Gov. Mike DeWine.

The Columbus Dispatch

Editorial: Energy bailout bill needs Senate changes to truly be clean
June 3, 2019 — House Bill 6, passed out of the House Wednesday with Republican and Democratic votes, would write into Ohio’s mandate for renewable energy and energy efficiency. It would make wind power at last competitive to develop in Ohio.

THE PLAIN DEALER

Ohio utilities may do politics better than electricity. Just look at HB 6: Thomas Suddes
June 2, 2019 — The Statehouse antics of Ohio’s electric utilities call to mind what Anglo-Irish statesman Edmund Burke said about Britain’s Great India Co.: “It’s a state required as a merchant.”

THE REPOSITORY

Editorial: Flawed energy bill emerges from House
June 3, 2019 — Over the several days leading up to Wednesday’s vote on House Bill 6, state Rep. Tom Wolf had himself in the same position as the Editorial Board trying to sort out complex legislation that seemingly was changing by the day.

Akron Beacon Journal

Editorial: Ohio needs its nuclear power plants and its renewable energy standard
May 10, 2019 — How important are the Davis-Besse and Perry nuclear power plants to the task of curbing climate change? Their closure would prompt to keep all the renewable energy development the past 25 years in Ohio and the dozen other states served by the PJM

THE PLAIN DEALER

Editorial: HB 6, the Ohio nuclear bailout bill, is a bad bill, but it can be made better
May 10, 2019 — The proposed nuclear bailout of FirstEnergy’s two Ohio nuclear plants is driven with problems. Among them: House Bill 6 would force taxpayers to subsidize nuclear plants that, in today’s low-cost-energy environment, are simply too expensive to operate.
TV and Radio Interviews

- May be live or recorded
- Keep answers short, repeat points, friendly
- Do not let reporters lead you astray
- It is perfectly fine to say you don’t know the answer
- If you can’t answer question, employ the Art of the Transition!!
  - That is an important issue that many people are working on. But today, we are talking about…
  - I’m not sure about that, but let me tell you what I do know…
Preparing for an interview

- What is your main message point?
  - Be familiar with the talking points and be sure you can clearly restate it a number of different ways

- Is there opposition to your message?
  - Know their typical argument against your message and be prepared with a counter point

- If you do not know the information, do not make up an answer
Social Media Tools

- Component of your campaign that fits into the overall strategy, cannot stand alone
- Social media is meant to help spread your message, increase your supporters, and motivate people to action
- Follow reporters and they may follow you back
- Tweet out event information or report links to specific reporters that you may want to target
- Send photos out to reporters over social media that they could use online or for stories
Social media tools

- Use social media to amplify the coverage that you do get from more traditional media.

- Mention (@) reporters or news sources when you post their stories.

- Mentioning lawmakers means they will receive a notification of your tweet (New report released today shows....@matthuffman1).

- Quote tweeting vs. retweeting vs. live tweeting.

- Use Facebook live for your events.

- Create a YouTube channel for your press events and videos.
FirstEnergy CEO: "...I view our political arena activities, if you will, to be limited and very, very focused in the future. You will be able to count on openness and transparency around the accounting of those activities."
@lbischoff reports:

FirstEnergy tells shareholders it is focused on ethics, integrity
FirstEnergy Corp. told shareholders that it is hyper focused on ethics and that the company is still cooperating with multiple investigations.

dispatch.com
# Social Media Tools

- **2X**: Tweets with hashtags receive 2X more engagement than those without hashtags.
- **21%**: Tweets with one or two hashtags have 21% higher engagement than those with three or more hashtags.
- **17%**: Tweets that use more than two hashtags actually show a 17% drop in engagement.
Helpful tips

- Respect the reporter’s time
  - Return their calls quickly
  - Do not send too many emails, you want yours to stick out when you have an important event
  - Use enough evidence and data to establish yourself as the expert on the issue, but do not bury the message

- Have message discipline
  - Regardless of how badly you might want to, do not stray from your main message
Sometimes You Lose, But Still Win Messaging War

**Nuclear bailout bill passes Ohio legislature, signed by Gov. Mike DeWine**

Updated Jul 23, 2019; Posted Jul 23, 2019

Ohio lawmakers have passed a bill that will bail out two FirstEnergy Solutions nuclear power plants, including the Perry

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**Ohio Gov. DeWine signs bill to bail out nuclear plants, slash renewable energy**

Jessie Balmert, Cincinnati Enquirer Published 9:29 a.m. ET July 23, 2019 | Updated 5:03 p.m. ET July 23, 2019

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**Nuclear bailout bill is signed into law despite flaws. Here are some of the Northeast Ohio legislators to blame: editorial**

Posted Jul 23, 2019
Helpful tips

- Keep things as local as possible
  - Utilize local or county data when accessible
  - Work with local messengers or experts when possible, who will influence your audience?

- Make their jobs easy
  - Ensure your quotes have been approved
  - If you list a media contact, make sure they are available during that time
  - Provide as much information as you can initially and be prepared to offer follow up resources
  - Tweet the story back at the paper or reporter
Media Coverage Has Impact, Even in Defeat

IN THE COMING WEEKS, DON’T GIVE THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION, EMAIL, CELL PHONE, ADDRESS OR SIGN YOUR NAME ON THEIR PETITION.

CHINA IS QUIETLY INVADING OUR ENERGY GRID AND COMING FOR OUR OHIO JOBS.

DON’T SIGN THEIR PETITION ALLOWING CHINA CONTROL OVER OHIO

DON’T SIGN THEIR PETITION allowing China control over Ohio!

- Keep Ohio’s power grid out of the hands of the Chinese Government.
- Protect over 4,000 good-paying jobs.
- Help to preserve our environment. Ohio’s nuclear power plants are carbon free and create no air pollution.

DECLINE TO SIGN! SAVE OUR JOBS!

IF YOU SEE A CIRCULATOR REPORT THEM TO OUR HOTLINE:

CALL: 888-308-2606 | TEXT: 614-591-4141
VISIT: OHIOANSFORENERGYSECURITY.COM
Media Coverage Has Impact, Even in Defeat

Editorial: Don’t believe the garbage put out by foes of HB 6 referendum

The Columbus Dispatch
Media Coverage Has Impact, Even in Defeat

House Bill 6 campaign worker charged over confrontation with repeal campaign worker

Updated Sep 13, 2019; Posted Sep 13, 2019

HB6 Referendum petitioner Amy has a brace on her wrist. She reported to OSU police that a pro-HB6 tracker attacked her yesterday on campus
#OHEnergyLaw #HB6

The Columbus Dispatch

House Bill 6 referendum petition circulator struck by opponent in Dublin
Media Coverage Has Impact, Even in Defeat

Yost warns House Bill 6 supporters to not harass referendum workers

Opinion

Editorial: Intimidating petitioners? Knock it off

By The Canton Repository Editorial Board
Posted at 6:15 AM
'In a league of its own': Ohio is No. 1 state when it comes to public corruption, experts say

Laura A. Bischoff  The Columbus Dispatch
Published 5:48 a.m. ET May 10, 2021 | Updated 11:23 a.m. ET May 10, 2021

Current Speaker Bob Cupp, R-Lima, declined to offer any details of the caucus conversation from the night before. Cupp said he had no update to share about Householder’s future in the chamber, just as the House leader had no update last week, the week before that, the week before that or the week before that.
Take Aways...

- Right messenger is as important as right message

- Once you have decided on it, be vigilant about message discipline

- Establish relationships with reporters and media outlets before you need them

- Impacted individuals, timely information, and good visuals will get you the coverage you want...even if you don’t win in the end
And of course...

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE
It does matter...

OGLETHORPE SCHOOLS CHANGE POLICY

Threat disrupts plans to meet about threats

By Crystal Owens
crystal.owens@onlineathens.com

Oglethorpe County schools officials were making the Oglethorpe County High School gym about 12:45 p.m., claiming that a bomb would go off by 1 p.m., said Sheriff Mike
It REALLY does matter...

Tiger Woods plays with own balls, Nike says

‘We hate math,’ say 4 in 10 — a majority of Americans

Death is nation’s top killer

Cows lose their jobs as milk prices drop
Thank You!

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