



PROPOSAL FOR FEDERAL RELATIONS SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF KEY WEST

I. INTRODUCTION

The Raben Group (TRG) is delighted to present the City of Key West with the following proposal for federal relations services. We look forward to advancing your brand as America's Caribbean Island before federal policymakers and bringing increased support to your citizens, and visitors.

We look forward to working with you to complement your ongoing efforts to build relationships for the City among federal policy leaders and to advance the goal of increasing federal investments in your areas of concern. We are eager to develop a government engagement strategy and a set of corresponding tactics to strengthen the City's support among federal policy leaders, to place you in a premier position to increase the federal investment in tourism, and to magnify your voice in the national dialogue on policies that impact coastal, and island, communities.

The Raben Group brings together a diverse collection of professionals with deep roots in law and progressive public policy. Our mission is to identify opportunities and solve problems for clients in the corporate, nonprofit, foundation and government sectors. For each client, we carefully consider the substantive issues presented, the political environment and the audiences that we must reach to attain our client's objectives.

From our founding in 2001 by former Assistant Attorney General Robert Raben, TRG has grown to more than 40 employees in our central Washington (1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW, Suite 600, 20036) and satellite Los Angeles (515 S. Flower Street, 36th Floor, 90071) offices. Our clients take advantage of a tailored suite of services including policy development, direct lobbying, coalition building, grass-tops campaigns, political counsel and strategic communications.

For our work together, we have developed a partnership with The Ferguson Group, and we envision Courtney Snowden serving as your project manager with Kareem Murphy, a partner at the Ferguson Group will play an important leadership role on the team. Ms. Snowden's contact information is csnowden@rabengroup.com, 202-466-8585 (tel.) and 202-463-4803 (fax.). Additionally our current client is appended to this proposal; our current local government representation is the Los Angeles Unified School District.

More About the Ferguson Group: Founded in 1982, The Ferguson Group lobbies Congress and the federal agencies on behalf of public and private interests across the country. The Ferguson Group is the largest federal representative of local governments in

Washington, DC. In addition, we represent more irrigation districts, water districts, and local water agencies than any other Washington firm. Members of our bi-partisan staff earned their reputation serving on the front lines as staff to key Members of Congress. Our expertise in the substance, process, and culture of Capitol Hill is the foundation of our consistently successful advocacy efforts.

II. FIRM EXPERIENCE AND REFERENCES

The key to successfully advancing the policy agenda of the City of Key West depends on a combination of skills, knowledge and expertise in the policy, process, politics, pressure and people involved, as well as the interconnections among them. We provide our collective experience in each of these areas in turn below.

Policy: TRG and our proposed team have a deep understanding of the entire spectrum of federal policies that impact your community, including Transportation, Coastal Flooding and Fisheries, Homelessness and National Security. We understand the key levers and players involved in federal appropriations for these issues, as well as the regulations and policy guidance implementing these statutes. We are also deeply familiar with federally-funded economic development programs available to local communities.

TRG's team is fully conversant with current activities at the federal level relevant to local governments. In addition, the cumulative years of experience our team has spent on these issues means that TRG brings a vast and thorough knowledge of the history of relevant statutes, regulations and funding, including the political and policy reasons for why key decisions were made in the past and familiarity with the policymakers involved.

TRG would work in close collaboration with you to understand and become fully conversant with its current policy positions on federal issues, provide input into the development of future policies based on our understanding and analysis of the current policy and political climate, and work with you to shape your position on critical policy debates.

Process: TRG's team brings an unparalleled level of knowledge in the congressional authorizing, budget and appropriations processes. We also are intimately familiar with the internal processes of the Administration, including those concerning formal regulations, guidance, RFPs, peer reviews, and compliance. TRG has excellent and extensive contacts not only in key congressional offices particularly with the members of the Florida delegation including very close relationships with Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. We also have extensive contacts at all levels of the Obama Administration and in the relevant federal agencies, and the Office of Management and Budget.

Politics: TRG strongly believes in a bipartisan approach in advocating on behalf of our clients. TRG also understands that many decisions are based not just on arcane policy arguments but are influenced by political issues at the national, state and local levels. Because of the breadth of our client base and the caliber of our professionals, TRG is well attuned to the many political factors impacting congressional and agency decisions.

Pressure: Members of Congress are generally aware of their constituents' viewpoints and are very concerned about their re-election. Thus, a successful advocate needs both to convince Members to make the right decisions and to marshal grassroots pressure. TRG has successfully coordinated many issue and media campaigns. We believe that developing persuasive, understandable messages that promote a well-articulated policy agenda is another critical aspect of a successful legislative campaign. TRG's staff is accomplished in messaging development and execution.

People: Another key to successfully advocating for or against legislation is recognizing who the main players are, knowing who has access to and can influence them, and being trusted by them. We believe that no other bidder for this RFP has deeper and more varied trusted working relationships with key Members of Congress and their staff, key members of the Administration, all the major education and related organizations and coalitions and the media than the TRG team. We have spent decades building respected relationships with all of these players.

TRG has relationships at the highest levels of the Executive branch that you will want to target and influence. We are also well connected with key White House offices including the Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Public Engagement, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, and the Office of Management and Budget among many others.

This extensive experience and deep contacts in the congressional industrial complex and funding world, including with key House and Senate leaders, would enable us to hit the ground running on advancing your agenda. We should note that we are experts on federal programs relevant to Key West – CDBG, HOME, JAG, among others.

Courtney and Kareem have significant experience advancing public policy and funding priorities before Congress and the Administration on behalf of government entities.

Courtney leads our work on behalf of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) where she works with the Superintendent, School Board, and the district staff and LA Mayor Antonio Villariagosa and his education team to advance the shared policy priorities of both. For more than ten years, Ms. Snowden has worked with government, corporate, and non-profit clients to secure federal funding, advance public policy priorities, and effectively develop effective messaging that resonates on Capitol Hill, in the White House, and among other key stakeholders.

Kareem is a partner at the firm that is proudly known as the largest federal representative of local governments in Washington, DC. In addition, the Ferguson Group represents more irrigation districts, water districts, and local water agencies than any other Washington firm. Kareem has significant experience representing government entities in the state of Florida and understands the needs of Key West. He has been incredibly successful at securing federal funding for the numerous jurisdictions he represents and

has a keen understanding of how to effectively represent small and medium sized cities throughout the federal government. Kareem has compiled an impressive amount of experience and expertise in handling homeland security and emergency management issues. He has dealt with both statewide and localized emergencies in most parts of the country.

Daniel also has deep experience in the appropriations world, including high-level relationships with the offices of many appropriators, especially the members and staff of the Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee. Before joining TRG, Daniel managed budgetary and federal funding matters for three Members of Congress, and worked closely with appropriators in that context. During his time on the Hill and since his departure, he has organized numerous successful appropriations funding campaigns, including member letters, grassroots communications, and amendments and offsets. That work also includes the budget process, including discussions with OMB and the relevant agencies.

It is through this overall lens – focusing on policy, process, politics, pressure and people and understanding their interconnectedness – that TRG would work to advance your agenda.

Within our client roster you will find several premier associations and companies whose collective policy agenda we have advanced and for which we have monitored federal funding, policies and legislation. Our clients include Google, MasterCard, the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of more than 90 national education associations and institutions; the Los Angeles Unified School District, the nation's second large district; and America's Promise Alliance, a cross-sector partnership of 400+ corporations, nonprofits, faith-based organizations and advocacy groups whose top priority is ensuring that all young people graduate from high school ready for college, work and life. A full list of clients is available at www.rabengroup.com. And with the addition of the Ferguson Group, you will find an impressive client list of local and state governments at the www.thefergusongroup.com.

REFERENCES

In addition to providing references in the format requested, we have supplied short summaries of our client work.

Los Angeles Unified School District
Address: 333 South Beaudry Ave., Los Angeles, California 90017
Tel: 916-446-6641
Contact Person: Edgar Zazueta, Director for the Office of Government Relations
Length of Relationship: Five years

The Raben Group serves as LAUSD's Washington, DC office. On behalf of LAUSD, we monitor developments in federal education policy in Congress, the White House, and the executive agencies. We draft correspondence and testimony on education policy issues as needed, staff members of LAUSD's leadership and board of directors during visits to DC, provide regular updates to LAUSD's state-based government affairs office, coordinate with other California education advocates, and promote LAUSD's innovations and success stories. A strategy for increasing visibility and resources is at the core of our work with LAUSD. During the last two years, The Raben Group helped LAUSD accomplish a number of policy goals, including the passage of the School Nutrition Act and the Education Jobs Fund. We also promoted and connected LAUSD's new superintendent to staff from the White House, U.S. Department of Education, and Congress, and arranged for him to present a talk at the right-leaning Washington, DC-based think tank American Enterprise Institute.

America's Promise Alliance

1110 Vermont Avenue, NW | Suite 900 | Washington, DC 20005

Point of Contact: Melinda Baskin Hudson | Executive Vice President

(202) 657-0614 direct | (202) 657-0601 fax

Email: melindah@americaspromise.org Web: www.americaspromise.org

Length of Relationship: Two years

The Raben Group has twice been retained by America's Promise Alliance, in 2011 and 2012, to organize and execute the Hill Day component of the Grad Nation Summit, an annual national conference that brings together local leaders from the education, business, and non-profit communities to collaborate on approaches to reduce high school dropout rates. As part of our work, we scheduled meetings for 150-200 conference participants with House and Senate offices, organized a bipartisan breakfast panel discussion with top congressional staff, staffed a respite room to provide Hill Day participants with answers to any logistical questions and a place to store luggage during the day, and also organized a lunch for participants to debrief and share their experiences.

III. **Personnel Qualifications and Availability**

The Raben Group works on a team model. We anticipate that the following team will provide the core staffing for this work, and other staff will contribute to this project when their unique skills or sets of relationships are well-suited to a particular task. Full biographical information about the core team is appended at the end of this proposal.

- **Courtney R. Snowden**, a principal with over 10 years of experience in a broad range of policy issues and relationships with key Administration staff and Members of Congress will manage the policy approach of our efforts, will serve as your point staff person in setting direction and in managing our work. She estimates devoting a minimum of 7 hours a week to our engagement with you.

- **Kareem Murphy**, a partner at The Ferguson Group, works to secure resources from and establish partnerships with federal policymakers. His experience includes advocacy in homeland security, health, human services, social services, workforce development, emergency management, disaster response and recovery, equal justice and social justice campaigns, and business development. He with Ms. Snowden will lead the team and estimates devoting 7 hours a week to our engagement with you.
- **Daniel Penchina**, a principal with extensive experience advocating for non-profit organizations and coalitions on Capitol Hill and with deep knowledge of the federal funding process, will work in collaboration with Courtney and the rest of the team. He estimates devoting a minimum of 5 hours a week to our engagement with you.
- **Larry Gonzalez**, a principal with extensive experience advocating for local issues and policies with organizations and coalitions on Capitol Hill and deep relationships with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute, will work in collaboration with Courtney and the rest of the team to support your relationship with FL-based organizations and Congressional offices. He estimates devoting a minimum of 5 hours a week to our engagement with you.
- **Donald Gatlin**, a senior associate at the firm with experience working on a broad range of policy issues and our local government client, will join our team in executing our plan to advance your goals.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF SCOPE OF SERVICES

We understand you to have clear priorities for your federal relations consultant and we are well situated to effectuate all of your goals, employing the following approach to do so:

1. Conduct an Environmental Scan and Review

As an initial step, we propose spending time with you to determine and refine your policy priorities, better understand your organizational structure, and determine how best to complement the City's ongoing federal activities and relationships. In this phase, we will survey the universe of relationships you have and need to have to devise criteria for targets to pursue in order to advance each of your concerns.

2. Identify Federal Funding Opportunities and Partners

Next, we will undertake a comprehensive survey of federal agencies and grant making programs that align with the City's various community needs. Once these funding sources and partners have been identified, we will work with you to develop a time-bound work plan. This work will utilize our expertise regarding the grant making processes and leverage our relationships with the aforementioned key players in the Administration and on the Hill. This undertaking will also reveal emerging opportunities which may inform the City's broader policy goals and priorities.

3. Government Relations Development

We will next devise a strategic government relations strategy that best directs the City's unique brand and resources toward potential validators and policy forums hosted by the Executive Branch, Congress, and among relevant associations. The goal of this work is to: (1) educate the Administration, Members of Congress, the policy and advocacy community and key media about the importance of your community's needs; (2) enhance your profile among key players; and, perhaps most importantly, (3) increase the investment, buy-in, and support of those Members of Congress and the Administration for your community.

a. Outreach to the Executive Branch

- i. Enhance the City's relationships with White House and Executive Branch departments and agencies.** TRG will facilitate meetings between Key West's elected and appointed leadership and members of the White House Domestic Policy Council, the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Departments of Health and Human Services and Homeland Security. We also have excellent relationship with FEMA, among other federal agencies.
- ii. Engage broadly in Executive Branch policy forums.** In order to share Key West's position with core audiences, TRG will also work to include the City in public conferences and meetings that the White House and Executive Branch departments and agencies convene related to policy topics of concern and local government relations.

b. Outreach to Members of Congress

- a. Informal Interviews of Members of Congress and their staff.** In order to ensure that our insights and advocacy are properly framed, we will conduct interviews and conversations with relevant Members of Congress of the Florida caucus, and their staff, to learn how the City is perceived and how well its policy priorities are understood by lawmakers and policy leaders. We will then identify a series of potential partners and champions beyond your home state members, including House and Senate leadership, members of key committees, leadership of the congressional caucuses and others.

- b. **Engage Targeted Members of Congress and their staff.** TRG will work to enhance relationships between Key West personnel and relevant lawmakers and their staff.
- c. **Inform congressional staff.** TRG can either work with you to host, or participate, in briefings convened on relevant policy matters. TRG can help identify these opportunities and work with Key West staff to draft agendas, invitations and “Dear Colleague” letters for congressional offices to use for promoting the briefings. We will also send information via email to key appropriations staff of members of Congress.
- d. **Influence relevant policy.** TRG will monitor policy and appropriations debates and identify opportunities to submit testimony and provide Members of Congress with questions at relevant committee hearings regarding areas of interest to the City.

4. Deliverables

- a. *Strategic plan of action with appropriate timeline to conduct the above activities.*

The Raben Group will provide you with a comprehensive strategic government relations and advocacy plan that outlines the steps we believe the City should take to accomplish your goals. The plan will include an appropriate timeline of those steps that we agree will be mutually-achievable given our joint resources as well as estimations of staff time to complete specific activities.

- b. *In-person briefings*

The Raben Group will happily participate in an in-person interview to formalize our partnership with Key West and will participate in regular phone and in person briefings and meetings with City administration officials. Those briefings can take the form of policy updates, legislative briefings, updates on strategic planning, and training sessions for meetings with Members of Congress or their staff and Administration officials.

- c. *Regular phone calls to keep Key West staff apprised of progress.*

The Raben Group will convene regular phone calls updating all staff involved with timely updates and strategic advice regarding the implementation of the work plan. Those calls will include updates about congressional activities and positions taken by the Administration on relevant issues, including analysis of specific policy proposals.

- d. *Written reports*

As specified in the RFP, we will provide quarterly reports to the City Manager reporting on activities undertaken and the impact of those activities and provide any reasonable bi-annual documentation requested by the City Commission.

We will also provide regular, timely email communications with the latest intelligence and strategic advice. TRG will provide an update after each stage of the appropriations process: release of the President's Budget, House and Senate Budget Committee reports, adoption of the final Budget Resolution, House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees and full committee versions of relevant annual appropriations bills, House and Senate-passed versions, and the final enacted conference report and/or omnibus appropriations bill.

V. **OUR FEES**

The Raben Group prefers to work on a monthly retainer as we have found it best serves the interests of the clients and our firm. Both parties are able to plan costs, expenses and invoices and we can work zealously to provide the best counsel and service without worrying about overspending the budget.

We propose \$6,000/month for the full suite of services described above.

Please note that this fee does not include incidental costs such as travel to the City, printing, or any other direct costs. We are also able to tailor our services to suit your needs, budget, and interests, implementing any and all of the tactics and strategies described above.