

Tips on Meeting a Legislator or a Member of the Staff

A personal visit with an elected official is an effective way to emphasize your interest in an issue or bill. Some tips for meeting a legislator to urge support or opposition to legislation:

1. When making an appointment, state the topic to be discussed and identify person who will attend, noting whether they are constituents.
2. Select a spokesperson if others are going with you and agree on your presentation in advance of your meeting.
3. Know the facts, both legislatively and related to your position. If discussing a bill, know the number and title.
4. Present the facts in an orderly, concise, positive manner. Stay on the issue. Don't try to talk about too many different topics or your position may become confused.
5. Relate the positive impact of legislation you support and the problems it corrects. If you are affected personally, tell them your story and how an issue will impact you, your child, or your family.
6. Relate the negative impact of legislation you oppose and the problems it would create.
7. Leave fact sheets if possible.
8. Encourage questions. Be prepared to discuss.
9. Ask for favorable consideration, thank the legislator for his/her time and courtesy, and leave promptly.
10. Be sure to get the name of the staff member covering your issue or who attended the meeting. Maintain regular contact with them. Add them to your mailing list.
11. Follow-up with a note of thanks.
12. You may end up meeting with a staff member instead of the legislator if he/she is called away for votes of committee business. The staffer will convey your message to the elected official.