



Tips for Successful Legislative Meetings

Scheduling a Meeting

- Start by calling their office. If you do not get an answer, follow up with an email. Be persistent but polite.
- Have a couple options for date and time. Typically Mondays and Fridays are not an option, and mornings before 10:00 AM are preferred.
- If you are a constituent to the Senator or Delegate, be sure to mention so.
- Meetings with legislators during session are usually scheduled in 15 minute time slots.
- The meeting may be scheduled with a staff member and not the Senator or Delegate.

Before the Meeting

- Try to establish an ongoing relationship with your legislators outside of session, which will give you more influence as a constituent.
- Get involved early in the legislative process by communicating while legislation is still being considered by committees, as well as when it's on the House and Senate floor.
- Find out the committees and subcommittees on which your Delegates and Senators serve. Members of the legislature have much more influence over legislation within their committees' and subcommittees' jurisdiction.
- Arrive early to your meeting. Introduce yourself to the legislator's staff and be understanding if the legislator or staff is running behind schedule.

During the Meeting

- Use talking points and handouts to make your points clear, concise and succinct.
- Be yourself. Talk about why the issue is important to you personally. Use personal experiences to strengthen your case.
- If there are two or more people going to the appointment, identify a spokesperson to lead the discussion and ask other members of the group to speak as the discussion moves along.



- Restrict yourself to one, or at most, two topics.
- Be Conversational. Avoid using shorthand terms, acronyms, or jargon that might be unfamiliar to your audience.
- Listen to the legislator's responses, concerns, and questions. Respond to questions as best you can, but if you aren't sure, don't guess or make an answer up. It is perfectly acceptable to follow up post-meeting to answer the legislator's questions.
- Keep things friendly and avoid party politics.
- Make the ask. Tell the legislator what you want them to do, and thank them for considering your request.

Post Meeting

- Make sure to follow up with any additional information or answers to questions asked during the meeting.
- Send a thank you for the meeting. An email is acceptable.