



## Tips for meeting with elected officials

- It is easier to meet elected officials in their local district offices where they have more time, rather than in Washington, DC.
- Contact the legislator's scheduler to arrange an appointment.
  - Introduce yourself, say you are a constituent and explain the purpose of the meeting.
  - Set a meeting date and time. Schedule the meeting for about 15-30 minutes.
  - If your elected official is not available, set the meeting with an appropriate staff person.
- Prepare.
  - Research the legislator's opinions, and current and past positions on your issue.
  - Prepare simple, to-the-point information that can be used during the meeting and left behind.
  - Prepare your message. Stick to one issue.
  - Know how much time you will have and plan accordingly.
  - Anticipate questions. Write them down. Prepare answers.
  - Bring a notebook and a pen.
- If you are part of a group, assign someone to lead the group and define everyone's roles .
- Confirm your appointment the day before the meeting.
- Arrive about 10 minutes early.
- Distribute the information you prepared for the meeting and explain your issue, emphasizing how the district could be affected by the issue.
- If the legislator has a history of supporting your issue, acknowledge that and thank him/her. But be ready to quickly move to the "new" aspect you wish to discuss and be clear about the "ask" you are making.
- If the legislator disagrees with you, stand up for yourself and debate the issues, but do not become overly argumentative.
- Remain non-political.
- Keep emphasizing the positives of your viewpoint and be sure to end the meeting on a positive note.
- Thank them for their time and determine next steps.
- Always send a follow-up letter thanking your legislator or their staff members and include any additional information you offered to provide.

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