



## 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 as 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 up the meeting with an appropriate staff person.
- Prepare for the meeting.
  - Research the legislator's opinions, as well as 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.
- Assign someone to lead the group, if applicable, and define everyone's role.
- Confirm your appointment the day before the meeting.
- Arrive about 10 minutes early.
- Distribute the information you've prepared for the meeting and explain your issue. Emphasize how the issue could affect the district.
- If the legislator has a history of supporting your issue, acknowledge that and thank them, 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 end the meeting on a positive note.
- Express thanks for taking time to meet with you and determine next steps.
- Always send a follow-up letter thanking the legislator or staff member(s) and include any additional information you offered to provide.