

## Strategies for Communicating Effectively with Lawmakers

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- Get to know your legislator in advance of asking for his/her help.
- Let your legislator know you are a constituent.
- Be on time for appointments.
- Have one chief spokesperson who will manage all discussion during a large group meeting with a legislator.
- Be concise, clear, and to the point in your remarks to Legislators, their time is limited.
- Be ready to provide examples of the current, or potential, impact of a specific piece of legislation on your community.
- Write letters to your legislators. Constituent mail is strongly considered. Keep correspondence clear and concise. Remember to refer to the issue and bill number in the first paragraph.
- Leave relevant and appropriate material with your legislator and provide information about how to get in touch with you later.
- Be honest if you do not know the answer to a legislator's question. Let them know you'll follow up with the requested information if you are able.
- Be sure to write a thank you note to your legislator for meeting with you, and be sure to thank him/her if s/he supports your position on a bill, or an issue.
- Never intentionally mislead a legislator or provide false information. Be sure to correct yourself and admit your mistake if you do so unintentionally.
- Well-informed assertiveness is key to effective advocacy. However, refrain from rude or aggressive behavior; it will do little to further your cause.