

MEETING WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Schedule an appointment with your legislator. If your Legislator is not available, **ask to meet with an aide.** Aides frequently do much of the background for legislators, and have responsibility to brief the legislator on your meeting.

Be on Time! Legislators are often busy in session, in caucuses and in committee meetings.

Be Brief. You may end up with lots of time to talk, but chances are you may have less. Be sure to cover your priority concerns at the beginning. If you are meeting as part of a group, be conscious that everyone may want to talk.

Be Clear. Explain what you want your legislator to do, and why. Be very clear if it is a budget or bill request. Be sure to listen carefully for the Legislator's answer. See "rap sheet" on back for key points to include.

Is it about changing the law? Be sure to say what is the bill number (example H.1234 or S.5678) and explain what the bill does in one or two sentences.

Is it about funding? Be sure to say what is the budget item (example "line item 4000-1000") and explain if you are asking for a change in how much is being funded and/or if you are asking to change the language to change how the money could be used.

Use Examples, if possible, but keep them clear and brief. Examples are good ways to make policy issues real, but long and very detailed descriptions can confuse or bore the listener.

Be Honest. If you don't know the answer to the question, say that you don't know and offer to get back to the Legislator with an answer.

Don't forget to **Breathe, Keep Calm,** and **say Thank You!**

Write your legislator a **Thank You note.**

Legislative Rap Sheet

My name is _____

I am a resident of (*city or town*) _____

I am here because (*explain the problem*) _____

I want you to support Bill # (*if it is a change to the law*) or Budget Line Item # (*if it is to change the funding level of a program*)

This will fix the problem by (*explain what the bill does*) _____

A fact that tells a story that supports your position: _____

- Share research and statistics (*only if you have them*)
- Share your personal experience as someone who has been in the system or worked in the system.

Make sure to leave time for dialogue to answer the legislator or aide's questions.

Will you (the legislator) support this ask? _____

I will be following the bill. Please keep me informed and thank you for your time.