



Influencing Legislators

Juvenile Justice Coalition Advocacy
Training Series



Please join us for our next event



From Vision to Reality

June 7th, 2023 | 2pm | State House Room 428



Limit Mandatory Minimums

Expungement

June 07, 2023 | 2:00 PM | State House | Room 428 | [cfjj.org/lobby-day-2023](https://www.cfjj.org/lobby-day-2023)

Wednesday, June 7th | 2:00PM to 4:00PM

<https://www.cfjj.org/lobby-day-2023>

Civics 101: Branches of Government

Legislative: responsible for making the laws



Federal: Congress



State: General Court



Local: City Council

Civics 101: Chambers of the Legislature

US Congress: The Federal Legislature



US House of Representatives:
Nine Representatives
Average number of constituents
per US Representative: **761,169**



US Senate:
Two Senators
All MA residents are
are constituents of each
Senator: **7 million**

Civics 101: Chambers of the Legislature

MA General Court: The State Legislature



MA Representatives:

160 Representatives

Average number of constituents
constituents per State

Representative: **43,959**

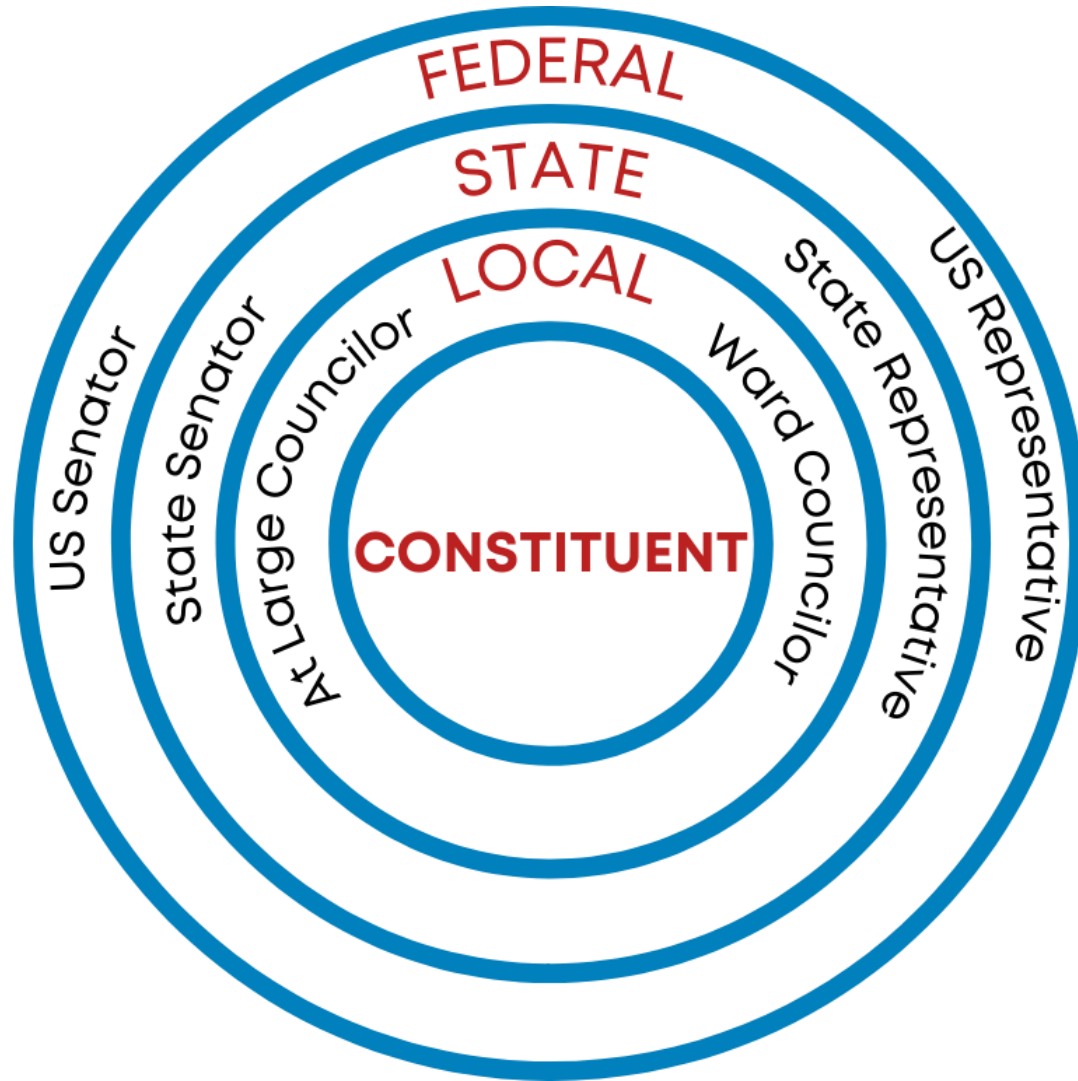
MA Senators:

40 Senators

Average number of
constituents per State

Senator: **175,837**

Civics 101: YOU are the Center!



Constituent Services **vs.** Advocacy

Help constituents navigate a government agency

Getting information about a pending case

Advocating on behalf of a constituent facing challenges in their services

Influencing a legislator's decision on a budget or a bill

Sharing your opinions/positions on issues so they can estimate the rate of constituents on each side of an issue

Tip: Level of Government (*city, state federal*) Matters

Advocacy Tips

Rule #1: Elected and appointed public policy makers make different decisions.

Rule #2: Get the **right information** to the **right person** at the **right time**.

Rule #3: Policymakers weigh **opinion equal to fact**.

source: *Real Clout*, The Public Policy Institute

The Right Person at the Right Time: Actions Legislators Can Take

A bill is filed.

When? January of odd year

Who? legislative champions in the House and Senate

Action? File the bill

- Champion
- Commitment to influence their colleagues

The Right Person at the Right Time: Actions Legislators Can Take

Bill co-sponsorship to show public support and accountability

***When?* When a bill is filed until a bill is decided by the committee**

***Who?* Your own legislators**

***Action?* Co-sponsorship:**

- Key accountability tool for constituents
- Co-sponsorship is a public commitment that if this bill comes up for a vote, the legislator will vote Yes
- Indicates to the issue-based committee the rate of support among their colleagues

The Right Person at the Right Time: Actions Legislators Can Take

Issue-Area Committee Public Hearing:

When? After bill filing

Who? All committee members

Action? Share **YOUR** recommendations and arguments directly with the committee

The Right Person at the Right Time: Actions Legislators Can Take

Issue-Area Committee Deliberation:

When? After the public hearing, but no later than early February of the even year.

Who? Committee members, with chairs holding greatest clout

Action? Share their opinion with the issue-based committee:

- Ask the committee to report out favorably
- Ask the committee to amend the bill and then report out favorably
- Share their opposition with the committee

The Right Person at the Right Time: Actions Legislators Can Take

Vote!

When? After the bill progresses through the various committees

Who? Every Representative and Senator

Action?

- File an amendment to strengthen or weaken a bill, or to get another priority tacked onto that bill
- Vote Yes or No (public accountability)
- “Voice Vote” (no debate)

The Right Person at the Right Time: Process for Bills

A bill is filed.

**TAKE
ACTION!**

Bill co-sponsorship to show public support and accountability

Issue-Area Committee Deliberation

Committee Public Hearings

Vote!

The Right Person at the Right Time:

Committee decision:



Ought to pass:

Ways and Means or
Third Reading
Committees (additional
advocacy opportunities)



Study:

Most frequent result.
Committee makes no
decision either way, but
bill is likely dead for the
remainder of the
session.



Ought to not pass:

Bill is dead and this
mark makes it much
harder to pass next
session.

Tips on Successful Legislative Meetings: IRL and Virtual Editions



Secret Formula for Successful Advocacy

Education

Passion

Action

Step 1: Find Your Legislators

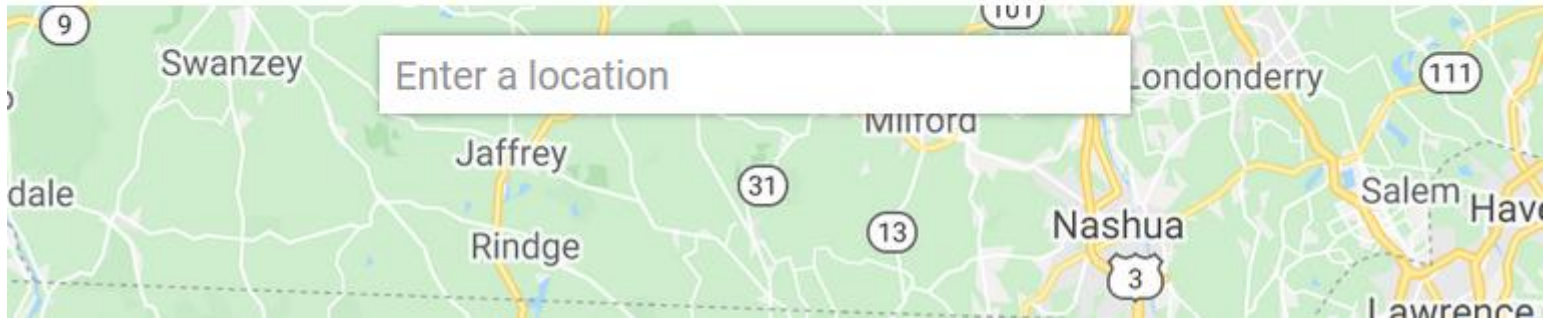


THE 191ST GENERAL COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Step 1: Find Your Legislators

Option 1 – top of the page

To find your legislator, enter a location or click the map:



Step 1: Find Your Legislators

Result Page of Option 1

To find your legislator, enter a location or click the map:



Step 1: Find Your Legislators

Option 2 – below the map

Find My Legislator

Find your legislator by entering your street address, city/town, and ZIP code. Please note that you can only search addresses within Massachusetts.

Street Address

City/Town **ZIP Code**

Search

Step 1: Find Your Legislators

Result Page of Option 2

Senator



Lydia Edwards

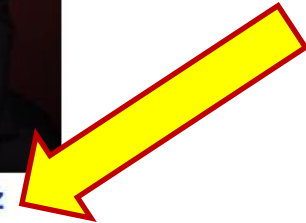
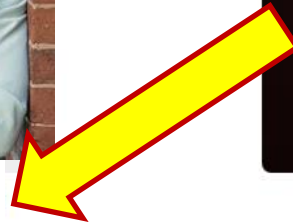
First Suffolk and Middlesex

Representative



Aaron Michlewitz

3rd Suffolk



Step 1: Find Your Legislators



 Aaron.M.Michlewitz@mahouse.gov

 STATE HOUSE

24 Beacon St. 
Room 243
Boston, MA, 02133

Phone: (617) 722-2990

Fax: 617-570-6575

Step 2: Schedule a time to meet

- Reach out by email (separate requests for Representative and Senator)
- Include the bill numbers and a link to the fact sheets
- Ask to meet with the Representative and Senator or ***their aide***
- Follow up with a phone call so they can keep an eye out for your email.
- **Tip:** Include your meeting location preference: in-person (in the district or State House) or on video

Step 2: Schedule a time to meet

- Do not be disappointed if the legislator is not available to meet. You will have more time with an aide for discussion.
- Aides frequently do much of the background for legislators, and have responsibility to brief the legislator on your meeting.

QUICK TIP:

If you convince an aide of your position, you've done 80% of the work to convince the legislator!

Step 3: Getting Ready for Your Meeting

- The meeting will probably be between 15 and 30 minutes. Cover your priorities first.
- If you are in a group, give members of your group a chance to share their thoughts.
- Prepare your talking points ahead of the meeting
- **Do NOT forget to make “The Ask”**
- Use your own words. It is easy to tell the difference between a script and your own thoughts.

Step 3: Getting Ready for Your Meeting

- **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.
- **Be Courteous!** Whether the legislator agrees with you, disagrees with you or doesn't want to tell you, it is very important that they have a positive impression of your visit. They are more likely to listen to your words when they feel respected.

Step 4: What do I say in the meeting?

1. Introduce yourself:

My name is _____

I am a resident of _____

I am here because _____

"I would like to talk to you about 3 bills that I would like the Representative (or Senator) to:

- The Ask!** {
- Co-sponsor
 - Ask the relevant committee to report out favorably
 - Amend/oppose
 - Vote for/against

Step 4: What do I say in the meeting?

2. For each bill:

- Bill number _____ is in the _____ Committee
- Explain the problem (it can be based on the fact sheet and talking points, or from your experience. Both are facts and are equally valuable.)

Step 4: What do I say in the meeting?

- 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

Step 4: What do I say in the meeting?

3. Make sure to leave room for discussion and to answer questions
4. Will the Representative (or Senator) support these bills by co-sponsoring and asking the Committee to report them out favorably?
5. Thank you for discussing these issues with me. Make sure to thank the legislator or aide for their time whether they agreed with you or not.

Step 5: After the Meeting

- Send a follow up email or mailed note to the aide with whom you met thanking them for the meeting.
- Many legislators are responsive on social media. You can also thank them directly on twitter or facebook.

Role Play



Breakout Sessions:

Role Play Legislative Meetings (40 mins)

2023-2024 Grassroots Training Series

<https://www.cfjj.org/grassroots-training>

Session 2: Influencing Legislators

WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST FROM 3:30PM TO 5:00PM

TRAINING SLIDES

LEGISLATIVE MEETING
TIP SHEET

BILLS AND THEIR FACT
SHEETS

Breakout Sessions:

Role Play Legislative Meetings (40 mins)

- Breakout Sessions assigned by bill topic
- Each session will have one “legislative aide” assigned whom you will conduct a practice meeting with
- There may be multiple constituents in your breakout group or you may be alone in your assigned room
- **Volunteer request: six participants to be assigned as a legislative aide**

Breakout Sessions:

Role Play Legislative Meetings

Choose your topic:

Room 1: Raise the Age

Room 2: Diversion

Room 3: Expungement

Room 4: Student Discipline

Room 5: School Policing

Room 6: Education of Incarcerated Youth

Judiciary Committee

Education
Committee



The Right Person at the Right Time: Process for Bills

A bill is filed.

Bill co-sponsorship to show public support and accountability

Issue-Area Committee Deliberation

Committee Public Hearings

Vote!

Breakout Sessions:

Role Play Legislative Meetings

20 Minutes: Prepare your team's pitch

- Review the bill fact sheet
- The key talking points
- Role of each member of your team
- The "Ask"

Legislative Aides remain in the main room for instructions.

Breakout Sessions:

Role Play Legislative Meetings

15 Minutes: Meetings with Legislative Aides

- Make the pitch
- Make the "Ask"
- Answer any questions or provide feedback

Breakout Sessions:

Role Play Legislative Meetings

5 Minutes: Legislative Aide's Feedback

- Was the information clear and digestible that you are able to relay the content to the Boss?
- What were the most compelling arguments? Why?
- Where can the "constituents" improve their pitch?

Role Play: Participant Feedback

- How did the experience go?
- Lessons learned?
- What do you need to lead your own real life meetings?

Questions? Feedback



Please share your **feedback** on today's session at
<https://forms.gle/cZpFpU78nb5Qn5WU7>

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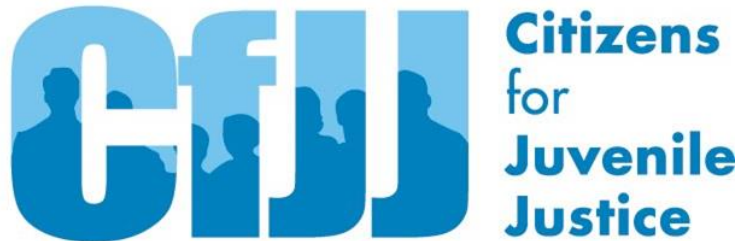
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Contact



join our email list

cfjj.org/jj-news

sanafadel@cfjj.org

617.338.1050