



## Tips on Meeting with Elected Officials

Nothing is more effective than a face-to-face meeting between you and your elected official. Get your issue on your policymaker's radar using these best practices before, during, and after your meeting.

### Before the meeting

- **Schedule a meeting** - Get in touch with your elected official's office through phone or email. Let them know you're a constituent and request a meeting. Ask about the meeting length and state the purpose of your request.
- **Do your research** - Research your elected official's views on your position/issue. Look at the issue page on their official website, search for public statements, review bills passed and committees that the elected official serves on. Review the campaign site and Facebook page of the elected official to determine what organizations have endorsed the candidate.
- **Decide who will attend** - Bring constituents and keep the group small (under 6 people).
- **Figure out a game plan** - Meet beforehand and agree on your agenda and talking points.
- **Assign roles** - Decide who will start the conversation and who will discuss each agenda item. Assign someone to be the notetaker.
- **Know your goal** - What is your specific ask? Make sure it's clear and concise.
- **Create a one-pager** - Develop a handout about your project to leave behind with your elected official and staff.

### During the meeting

- **Be prompt and patient** - Show up on time.
- **Be polite** - Keep the meeting positive. Taking a negative, accusatory approach may turn your elected official against your cause.
- **Introduce yourself** - Start the meeting by having everyone in the group briefly introduce themselves. Bring up any personal, professional, or political connections if possible.
- **Show your appreciation** - Thank them for their time and mention any votes or actions they've taken that you appreciate.
- **Stay on topic** - Keep the meeting short and focused. You'll likely have only 15 to 30 minutes with your elected official.
- **Share a story** - Elected officials like to learn about new issues/concerns. They don't know everything happening in their district and want to hear how these issues impact constituents personally.
- **Make your ask** - Don't forget to make your ask! Set a deadline for when you'd like a response.
- **It's okay to say 'I don't know'** - You don't need to be an expert on the topic. If you're unsure about something, say that you'll provide the information they are requesting after the meeting.
- **Bring something to leave behind** - Bring your one-pager and any other relevant materials.

### After the meeting

- **Send a thank you** - Each person who attended should send a personal thank you letter to the elected official.
- **Follow-up** - Share any information you promised to provide and check-in about your ask.