



TIPS FOR SCHEDULING A MEETING

- 1. Call your Representative's district office.** You can find the closest office at bit.ly/2w3OcRP.
 - 2. Ask to speak to a scheduler.** Jot down their name and email for later.
 - 3. Tell them you're a constituent and request a meeting in your home district.** Have multiple dates and times available for when you can meet and make sure not to hang up until you get a meeting scheduled, even if it's a few weeks away.
 - 4. Confirm your appointment.** The day before your meeting, call the office to confirm you're on the schedule.
- If your Rep can't meet with you, ask to see a staff member instead. Ideally, you'd meet with the District Director, but even if you meet with the most junior aide you will be heard.
 - If they ask you to complete a formal request or form, fill it out and get it back to them quickly.
 - If they ask what you want to discuss, tell them which Unity Principles, issues or bills matter to you most. This will increase your chances of getting a meeting and ensure you speak to the correct staff member.
 - If you're bringing a group, let them know around how many people and follow up later with a complete list. Include the city and Zip Code for each person so they'll know if they're meeting with constituents.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOBBYING

The personal is political. Share a personal story about how this issue affects you, your community and your district. Sharing the stories of friends and neighbors can help turn 5 voices in a room into 25. Your Rep's duty is to represent your district, so make this as localized and human as possible.

Do your research. Learn basic info about your Rep, their specific areas of concern, and their public stance on the issues you want to discuss. You may be able to link your plea to their issues.

Put it in writing. Bring a fact sheet with information on your issues to leave for your Representative. The staffer needs information to pass on to their boss. Your personal stories can be used in floor arguments and will help them remember your meeting.

Be professional and polite. Arrive early. It will take time to pass security and find the office. They won't wait around if you're late, and they'll remember when they consider your bill. Thank them for taking the time, and for any positive stance they take on your issue(s).

This is the beginning of a relationship. Try to connect with the lawmaker and their staff on a personal level, even if your political views differ. Finding common interests and humanizing each other will make them more open to listening and to meeting with you again in the future.

The staff is key. They're the eyes, ears and key holders to your Rep. Be appreciative if you meet with them, as they might be the ones most involved with legislation day to day.

Listen. Have a dialogue, not a monologue. You'll learn valuable information; they'll appreciate it.

Always tell the truth, and don't be afraid of "I don't know". You're here as a concerned citizen, not as a policy expert, so if you don't know an answer, write down the question and get back to them quickly. This will open up a continued dialogue and keep the issue in their mind.

Push for a commitment. Ask your Representative directly if they'll vote the way you're requesting, and if they'll take extra measures to support it. Push for a clear answer, even if it's in opposition, so you can share their stance with your neighbors.

Be persistent. Change doesn't happen in a day. Your visits and calls add up and create change.

MEETING WORKSHEET

Meeting Information Fill out prior to the meeting

Legislator: _____ District: _____

Legislator's Staff Member(s) at the Meeting: _____

Meeting Date: _____ Meeting Time: _____

Meeting Location: _____

Groups or individuals Participating: _____

Research Fill out prior to the meeting

Goal of Meeting/Ask: _____

Issue(s) to be Discussed: _____

Relevant Legislation: _____

Representative's Public Stance on the Issue: Supports Opposes Doesn't know

Questions you want to ask: _____

Personal story from you or your community: _____

Key Points to Raise:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Meeting Notes Fill out during the meeting

Representative's stance on the issue, and why: _____

Personal anecdotes, beliefs, or trusted sources that the Representative brought up to back up their position: _____

What did your representative say/promise/question/dispute/request: _____

Follow-Up After the Meeting Fill out after the meeting

Did your Representative ask for any follow up information? _____

Did you send a follow up thank you note, including any additional requests for legislative action? _____

Do you know your next steps? Will you share this information with your community? Will you push for further action? Will you share this with the press or with an activist organization? _____

Sample Agenda & Script

1. Start with thanking them for taking the time to meet.

2. Introduce yourself. “My name is _____. I am a school teacher, mom, activist and voter that has lived in your district for 20 years.” If there are more attendees, have them go around and introduce themselves briefly. Allow the staff in the room to introduce themselves too so you can learn their roles in the office.

3. Share the issue you care about, a story to illustrate why its important and then provide a solution to the Rep and/or their staff. Is there a piece of legislation they can oppose or support to help address this issue? If yes, name it. What else can they do?

4. Listen. Once you share, give space to the Rep to respond and for their aides to ask you questions.

5. It's OK if you don't have the answer. Remember, you can say you don't know and get back to them.

6. End on a good note. Ask for cards of the aides so you can follow up in the future and thank them once again for their time.

Notes