

Visiting your Elected Official

Meeting with a legislator or their staff is a very effective way to share your concern about a specific issue and you don't have to go to Washington DC or Lansing to do it. All Legislators host events or constituent coffees in their district. This is a wonderful way to meet with them one on one and you often have more time than you would if you made a visit to their Capitol office.

Below are some suggestions to consider when planning a visit to your legislator's office:

Be informed. Before contacting your legislator, take time to familiarize yourself regarding the bill or issue that concerns you. However, it is not essential that you know every detail about the bill or issue. The goal of your visit is to express your concern over a particular bill or issue.

Make an appointment. Contact the Appointment Secretary or Scheduler. Explain your purpose.

Be direct and brief. What specific action is needed? Use the bill name and number when possible.

Localize. Tell your lawmaker exactly how the issue affects your community or state.

Be Responsive. Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information.

Follow up. Write or email and thank the legislator for his/her time. Add a summary of the meeting's key points and give additional information if it was required.

Don't forget the staff. When the lawmaker is unavailable, meet with the staff. It's the staff's job to study and learn details about proposed legislation and make recommendations to the legislator. It's always a good idea to get to know the staff.