

TIPS FOR MEETING WITH YOUR SENATORS

1. Set an appointment to meet with your senator. Call the legislative aide to the senator and discuss the purpose of your meeting with him/her. This helps the senator and his staff prepare for the meeting.
2. Read a bio on the senator so you know his/her background and issues as well. Get a list of the committees he/she serves on or chairs so you can familiarize yourself with your senator's pet projects or work.
3. Prepare your documents for the issue you plan to present to the senator. The documents could be letters to the editor, testimony and so forth. Make one copy to leave with the senator and one to keep for your records.
4. Review the talking points included in this package. Practice discussing the issue until you feel comfortable. Keep in mind as you practice your delivery that you'll probably have about 20 to 30 minutes to meet with the senator.
5. Present yourself at your meeting in the most professional manner possible. This includes being on time and dressing in business attire when visiting a senator.
6. Meet with the senator. Discuss your issue and make a formal request for the senator's assistance. Listen to the senator's and staff members' replies to your issue. Express your appreciation for his/her time. Leave the summary you prepared, outlining key points. Tell him/her and the staff you will be in touch shortly.
7. During the meeting, it's a good idea to have someone take notes. This could be you or someone you take with you. Record the names and titles of the senator's staff attending the meeting in your notes to keep in a contact file for reference later if needed.
8. Follow up with the senator's staff members within two days of the meeting. Acknowledge their assistance and ask for any additional viewpoints on the matter.
9. Write a follow-up letter to your senator within two days of the meeting. Thank him for any action he promised to make regarding your issue. Mention you will be staying in touch until the issue is handled.