

# Top Ten Tips for Talking to Lawmakers

## **Tip #1: Introduce yourself and smile!**

Lawmakers meet a lot of people. Don't assume that they remember who you are and who you represent. Be sure to introduce yourself and be friendly.

## **Tip # 2: Have a clear and concise ask.**

Keep your conversation short and to the point. Time is valuable under the Gold Dome so be sure to hit the highlights and wrap up with a specific ask of the legislator.

## **Tip #3: Prioritize your talking points.**

Organize your thoughts before your meeting. Lead with the most important thing a legislator can take away from your conversation.

## **Tip #4: Be polite and respectful.**

Lawmakers are working hard to make life better for people in our state. Even if you disagree with their position, being polite and respectful makes an impression and can get you a meeting on another issue in the future.

## **Tip #5: Don't make assumptions.**

It's easy to make assumptions. Avoid making a foregone conclusion that a lawmaker is automatically going to disagree with your position.

### **Tip #6: Be honest.**

If you don't know the answer to a question, that's okay. Offer to go find the answer and bring that information back. And then go do it.

### **Tip #7: Be a good listener.**

You can make good advocacy headway by listening to why someone disagrees with you. Listening to that disagreement means you can address those concerns and come out of the discussion with a clearer vision and ask.

### **Tip #8: Don't get frustrated.**

Making laws and policy takes a lot of time and a lot of patience. Don't give up, and don't get frustrated if it takes longer than you expect.

### **Tip #9: Offer to follow up later.**

The best way to build a relationship with your legislator is by making yourself available to help them later in the session or even outside of session. Be sure they have your contact information so you can have a dialogue outside of the Capitol.

### **Tip #10: Say "thank you!"**

A simple "thank you" can go a long way in acknowledging the hard work legislators are putting into making policy.