



TIPS FOR A SUCESFUL ADVOCACY DAY

BEFORE THE MEETING:

Dress the part: If you are a religious leader, wear appropriate symbols of your faith such as a collar or cross. Legislators and staff will be in 'business attire.'

Research the legislator: Know a little bit about them. Read their bio on their legislative profile page to know their career, education, family, and other issues they care about.

Plan: You only have 15-20minutes! Plan ahead including a 2-3 minute story about the issues.

Stories over Data: Legislators can research the data; you are there to tell a story! Use stats and data only to help amplify your story. Data tells and stories sell!

IN THE MEETING:

Begin with introductions – Say your name and if you represent an organization or congregation. If you have something in common – ie. same alma mater, share that!

State your intent – “We are here to talk about our lame duck priorities. As people of faith, we care deeply about a variety of issues.

Stories – Advocates should share a few 2-3 minute personal stories that illustrate why we care about these issues and the impact that policy change can have.

Ask questions – Ask the legislator/staff if they have any experience, understanding, or thoughts on these issues. Try to develop a dialogue. Lawmakers should have thoughts, opinions, or questions. Encourage them to share.

Make the ask- Tell them, specifically, what you want them to do. “Will you support investments into Ohio families struggling to make end meet, modernize our criminal justice system, and protect the most vulnerable students in our schools?”

Thank them! Always end with a thank you and a promise to follow-up on issues as needed. A handwritten thank you card is also great for long-term relationship building.

EXTRA TIPS:

Be Respectful – it is okay to disagree, do it directly and respectfully. We don't win everything in one day. We need to build **POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS**. Threats of electoral retaliation or talking about campaign contributions shuts down dialogue.

You don't need to be an expert! If they ask something that you don't know the answer to, it provides an opportunity for follow-up!



Develop your meeting plan

Plan your meeting:

We are providing a handful of relevant issues to assist your group to have a good meeting. A good plan will help guarantee you can have the conversation with legislative staff and legislators.

1. What are your issue priorities?
2. Who is your team facilitator? They will be responsible to get the meeting started and identify any follow-up information that we need to know about. Work to keep the team on time, because you only have 15-20 minutes.
3. Who will be your 1-2 storytellers that will explain why this issue is important.
4. Who will ask questions of the legislator or staffer to invite them into the conversation?
5. Who will make the pitch? This person should be prepared to ask the legislator or staffer if they currently support or oppose the policy proposals as well as any questions they have about the policy issues.
6. Everyone on the team should follow-up with a thank you card to both the legislator and staff person. Make sure to get their card and name before leaving.