

Prepare for Your State Legislative Visit



Determine Who Will Attend

Having a small group of constituents discussing an issue is a powerful way to make your voices heard by your legislator.



Learn About Your Legislator

Learning about your legislator's interests and thoughts on specific issues can be a very useful way to tailor your visit.



Learn About Your Topic

Make sure that you and the members of your group are fully prepared to discuss your topic with legislators or their staff.



Have Talking Points

Sometimes knowing your topic does not always translate into good delivery, so develop talking points and practice. Don't forget to include making the ask!



Dress Appropriately

Pick out appropriate attire for your visit. Business attire or business casual is appropriate depending on the scenario and demographics of the group.



Timing

Timing is critical to get your voice heard. If a vote is coming up on your issue, the legislator may be more likely to pay attention to what you have to say.

Quick Tips:

- A group of two to four takes the pressure off of a single person to speak the entire time.
- Review the legislative visit roles with the individuals attending the meeting.
- Arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled visit and take note of your surroundings.
- Take business cards and up to four leave-behinds to share with your legislator.
- Explain the reason for your visit.
- If you are speaking to lawmakers about specific legislation, it can be helpful if you know the bill number or the name of the bill.
- Use your talking points. Your legislator or staffer may only have 5 minutes to speak, so clear and concise talking points are crucial.
- Share both facts and a personal story.
- Make the ask for support!
- Thank them for their time and offer additional resources.
- Don't forget to follow-up.

Craft an Effective Legislator Visit

Introductions and Purpose of the Visit

- Identify someone from your group who is comfortable with conversing and networking to lead the introduction and kick off the meeting with the purpose of the visit.
- Have everyone introduce themselves; mention if there is a constituent in the group.
- Provide business cards to the legislator/staffer in the order you are sitting.
- After introductions are made, state the purpose of your visit: “We are here to speak with you about clean indoor air for all Pennsylvanians and fully funding tobacco prevention and control programs.”

Review of Facts and Materials

- Identify someone from your group who is comfortable discussing the issue, including statistics and data.
- Use the Clean Indoor Air and MSA internal talking points to guide your discussion.
- Select two or three statistics to focus on.
- Review materials with your legislator and provide a leave behind summarizing the facts

Personal Story

- Identify someone in your group who can share a meaningful, personal connection to the issue.
- Remember – Your story and your experience are what sets you apart from other advocates and issues.

The Ask

- Identify someone in your group to ask the legislator if they can count on support or opposition of the issue.
- Directly ask your legislator: “Do you support comprehensive clean indoor air for all Pennsylvanians?” and “Do you support maintaining level state funding (\$15.549 million) and seeking to increase funding for FY23 to comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs?”

After the Meeting

- Identify someone to follow-up with your legislator within a week of your visit or when the bill is up for voting.
- Send a personal letter or email thanking the legislator for their time, reminding them of the issue and its importance, and offering information and ongoing assistance.



Social Media

Don't forget to snap a photo with a state legislator or member of Congress and post it to social media with appropriate messaging.



Thank you @SenatorScavello for meeting with us to talk about #CleanIndoorAir in PA!”