

Lobbying 101

Tips on Meeting a Legislative Member or a Member of the Staff

A personal visit with your state Senator or Representative is an effective way to emphasize your interest in an issue or bill. Some tips for meeting a Legislator to urge support or opposition to legislation:

- Always make an appointment!
- When making an appointment, state the subject to be discussed and identify yourself as a constituent (if true) and PSU Advocate (supporter, faculty member, student, alumnus, etc.).
- Select a spokesperson if others are going with you and agree on your presentation in advance of your meeting.
- Know the facts, both legislatively and related to your position. If discussing a bill, know the number and title.
- Present the facts in an orderly, concise, positive manner. Stay on the issue. Don't try to talk about too many different topics or your position may become confused.
- Relate the positive impact of legislation you support and the problems it corrects. If you are affected personally, tell them your story and how an issue will impact you, your child, or your family.
- Relate the negative impact of legislation you oppose and the problems it would create.
- Leave fact sheets if possible.
- Encourage questions. Be prepared to discuss.
- Ask for favorable consideration, thank the legislator for his/her time and courtesy, and leave promptly.
- Be sure to get the name of the staff member covering your issue.
- Follow up with a note of thanks.
- You may end up meeting with a staff member instead of the Legislator if he/she is called away for votes or committee business. The staffer will convey your message to the Legislator.

Tips on Telephone Calls

- Telephone calls are extremely effective when you need to make your views known quickly and time isn't available to write a letter.
- When you call a legislator's office you will be talking to a member of the staff who will most likely ask your name and address for future follow-up. In addition to letting him/her know how you feel, you can also ask questions to learn the legislator's position on an issue as well as how he/she plans to vote on a particular bill.