

Guide to a Successful Legislator Meeting

Secure a Meeting

Step 1: Call/email the legislator's office to schedule a meeting. Be sure to include:

- Information about yourself (i.e., a constituent, organization affiliation)
- The issues you would like to discuss
- Other meeting attendees and their information
- Times that work for you
- Your gratitude for their time

Step 2: Call/email to confirm the meeting one or two days before the meeting.

Prepare for the Meeting

Step 1: Know your audience

Possible avenues to know your legislator:

- Official bio
- Previous Legislation
- District map
- News coverage
- Social media
- Website

Step 2: Tie your issue to their interests.

From your search about the legislator, what did you learn about his/her interests and values? Think about ways that tie your issues to what the legislator cares about.

Step 3: Prepare leave-behind information

About yourself:

- Business card
- Organization brochure

About the issue:

- Handouts of problems and solutions. Graphics/pictures are helpful!
- Recent newspaper articles
- Social media posts
- Community events

Step 4: Set goals for the meeting

- Clearly express your opinions on the issue
- Find out their position on your issue
- If they are interested in following up with the issue and having further communication with you

Step 5: Create a 5 minute "pitch"

- Introduce yourself
- Personal connection to the issue at hand
- Clearly state your opinion on the issue
- Close with asking them their opinion, if they have questions, and the next steps

Step 6: Rehearse your speech with someone

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During the Meeting

Step 1: Introduction and small talk

- Show gratitude for meeting with you
- Introduction about yourself
- Any previous encounters with the legislator
- Your support for the legislator on previous issues

Step 2: Tell a personal story that illustrates the issue

- Show positive or negative impact
- Use pictures (if possible)

Step 3: Explain the issue and the solution you support

- The cause of the issue
- Issue impact
- Solution and why it would work
- Why the legislator should get involved and how
- Use your handouts

Step 4: Ask for support

- What is the legislator's position?
- What other information does he/she need from you?
- What are other people you can talk to? Other support?
- Give the legislator time to think about the issue. If the legislator does not have a definitive answer, do not press on it. Instead, make arrangements for next steps.

Step 5: Next steps

- Make arrangements for future communication
- Thank him/her for their time

After the Meeting

- Send a thank you note
- Follow-up emails:
 - Questions asked and ones you asked during the meeting
 - Additional resources
 - Time/place for next meeting

About Science for Georgia

Science for Georgia is a 501c3 dedicated to bridging the gap between scientists and the public through training, outreach opportunities, and direct contact with the public, policymakers, and the press. Science for Georgia highlights how science can impact people's lives and advocates for the responsible use of science in public policy.

Please reach out with any questions or comments info@sci4ga.org

