

EFFECTIVE GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY:

QUICK TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

PERSONAL VISITS

Personal visits are the most effective and powerful way to communicate with your legislator. They present a rare opportunity to convey your message directly to your legislator and build a lasting relationship.

PERSONAL VISIT DOS:

- **DO** identify yourself as a constituent.
- **DO** explain your position on a bill or issue.
- **DO** stay on message.
- **DO** use personal stories.
- **DO** ask for their position and assistance.
- **DO** thank legislators for their time.

PERSONAL VISIT DON'TS:

- **DON'T** discuss unrelated issues.
- **DON'T** let them change the subject.
- **DON'T** discount a meeting with legislative staff.
- **DON'T** ever lie, exaggerate or bluff
- **DON'T** overreact or be rude.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Personalized letters and e-mails are also effective. They are not time consuming, yet they clearly document your position and are likely to receive a response.

PERSONAL LETTER DOS:

- **DO** state that you're a constituent and include your address.
- **DO** state your support or opposition by bill number or issue area.
- **DO** ask for their position and/or assistance.
- **DO** personalize your letter.
- **DO** keep it brief.

PERSONAL LETTER DON'TS:

- **DON'T** copy sample/template letters verbatim from the association.
- **DON'T** send a form letter or preprinted postcard.
- **DON'T** be condescending, degrading or threatening.
- **DON'T** lie, exaggerate or bluff

PHONE CALLS

Phone calls are a quick way to communicate. They are good for conveying your message when time is of the essence.

PHONE CALL DOS:

- **DO** identify yourself as a constituent.
- **DO** state your position by issue or bill #.
- **DO** request their position/assistance when speaking with the legislator or staff.
- **DO** call during business hours.
- **DO** keep it brief.

PHONE CALL DON'TS:

- **DON'T** demand to speak with a legislator.
- **DON'T** stay on the phone too long.
- **DON'T** lie, exaggerate or bluff.
- **DON'T** be threatening or discourteous.
- **DON'T** read a phone script verbatim.
- **DON'T** stray off message.