



Tips for Visiting a State Legislator

Adapted from Partners in Policymaking

<http://www.pipcalifornia.org/topics/advocacy-resources/>

Here are some tips for planning a visit to your state Senator or Assemblymember in Sacramento:

- 1) Find the names of your state Senator and Assemblymember if you don't know them. Go to <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/yourleg.html> and enter your zip code.
- 2) Write a few sentences about the issue that concerns you and why you want to meet with the legislator. Be sure to have these sentences in front of you when you call the legislator's office so that you can clearly and concisely explain why you want to meet.
- 3) Decide when you would like to visit.
- 4) Call the legislator's office in Sacramento. Ask to speak to the person who schedules visits for the legislator.
- 5) Explain that you are a resident in the legislator's district, why you would like to visit, and when you would like to make the visit. Use the information you wrote down in #2 above. If the representative is not available, ask to meet with the staff person who handles the issue you are interested in.
- 6) You will often be asked to mail, fax or email a letter requesting the meeting. If so, send a short letter that states: (a) who you are, (b) what group you represent, (c) names of anyone who will attend the meeting with you, (d) why you want to meet, (e) when you want to meet, and (f) your contact information (phone number, address, email address).
- 7) If a written request for a meeting is required, call back about a week after sending your request to follow up on scheduling a meeting.

When you visit:

- Take a short, written statement of the issue you are concerned about and what your position is on the issue. Leave this statement with the legislator or staff member so that they remember the purpose of your visit and your views. Be sure to include your contact information so that they can contact you to follow up if necessary.
- Take a camera to get a picture of the visit.
- Be at the legislator's office 5 minutes early for the meeting.
- Write a thank you letter after the visit. Remind the legislator or staff member of the issue you are concerned about and your views on the issue. Be sure to include your contact information and say that you are available if they have future questions.