

How to Legislatively Advocate



1. *Phone*

When calling your legislator's office in their district or Washington, DC, you will speak to one of the legislator's assistants. You can ask to speak with your legislator or the legislative aide who is working on the specific issue you are calling about.

1. Identify yourself by name, hometown and that you are a Catholic constituent.
2. Ask with whom you are speaking.
3. Identify the issue or specific bill.
4. State your position and how you want your legislator to vote on it. Be specific!
5. Ask what the legislator's position is.
6. Ask for the best way to follow-up.
7. Thank the staff person for their attention to this issue.

2. *Mail/Email*

1. Identify yourself and the reason why you are writing.
2. Ask what you want your legislator to do about the issue.
3. Acknowledge the legislator's view.
4. State your view.
5. Share a personal example to put a human face to the issue/problem.
6. Provide statistics to support your argument.
7. Explain why you care about this issue.
8. Reiterate your ask.

3. *In Person*

1. Prepare for the Meeting
 - Contact your legislator's office to set up an appointment either in your district or when you are visiting Washington, D.C.
 - Inform the scheduler about the issue you would like to discuss and if anyone else will be accompanying you.
 - Ask if you will have the opportunity to meet with the legislator or with an aide.
 - Prepare a 15 minute and a 90 second agenda.
 - Confirm your visit the day before the meeting.
2. Conduct the Meeting
 - Thank the aid or legislator for taking time to meet with you, and do introductions.
 - Open with a positive statement (if possible about the legislator).

- Identify the issue.
 - Make your ask.
 - Use personal examples of why this issue or piece of legislation matters to you.
 - Be clear and constructive but not combative.
 - Before leaving, get a commitment from the legislator stating their position on the issue or bill.
 - Thank the aid or legislator for their time.
 - Leave a handout that summarizes what you are asking.
3. Follow-up After the Meeting
- Write a thank you note.
 - Summarize your key points and what you are asking of the legislator.
 - Restate what commitment the legislator made during the meeting.
 - Thank them again.