

COMMUNICATING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS



WHAT MIGHT INFLUENCE ELECTED OFFICIALS

CONSTITUENTS

You'll often hear elected officials say, "How does this impact my constituents?" It's the lens they use for most decision making.

FRIENDS & FAMILY

Friends and family have a tremendous amount of influence on day-to-day decisions.

THE MEDIA

Politicians love good press and hate bad press.

STAFF

It's important to build solid relationships with legislative staff. They know best how to effectively communicate with the member they represent.

PARTY CONSIDERATIONS

Political parties help shape campaigns. Being elected and winning re-election are always a top priority.



KNOW YOUR ASK

Be sure to ask for something specific. Don't generically talk about an issue; be prepared to make specific asks like:

- Can you introduce this bill?
- Can you sign onto this bill as a co-sponsor?
- Will you ask your Committee Chair to run this legislation?
- Can you talk to leadership about bringing this to the floor for a vote?
- Can you help find a bipartisan co-sponsor?
- Can you attend an event and speak on this subject?



EFFECTIVE TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH LEGISLATORS

1. Identify yourself & your business/organization.
2. Leave materials behind. Consider providing legislators with something that summarizes your message and identifies your ask.
3. Be specific with your asks. Instead of saying, "you should care about tourism," provide suggestions on action they can take.
4. Make your priorities clear. Do not ask for too much. It's important that you prioritize your requests.
5. Be polite and do not vilify those on the other side of your issue.
6. Be patient.
7. Always be honest. Credibility is key.
8. **DO NOT** discuss campaigns in a legislative setting or with legislative staffers.
9. **DO NOT** threaten with your vote. In general, do not deliver ultimatums.
10. Follow-up, be consistent, and remember that *legislative advocacy is a marathon, not a sprint.*