

Legislator Visit Guide

1. Introduce yourself

Legislators will remember your story better if they can connect it to a person and a place, so say something about yourself and your hospital.

2. Thank them for meeting with you (if you have a specific example of something they have worked on, use it!)

3. Review your agenda

If you are meeting with your legislator in their office, you will have at most 15 minutes to discuss your priority issues. Begin by clearly summarizing your position on the issue(s) you want to discuss. If you are meeting with your legislator out of their office, confirm how much time you have.

4. Be direct, clear, and concise

Elected officials meet with many people every day. They may not be familiar with your issue(s). Be clear and direct about what you are explaining or asking. Avoid jargon, acronyms, and too much detail. Legislators also don't know the ins and outs of running a hospital. Use a lot of examples to illustrate your points.

5. Do not interrupt

While you may be anxious to make your point(s), be careful not to interfere with an elected official's love of talking!

6. Admit you do not know the answer to a question

If the senator or representative asks a question you cannot answer, say you do not know the answer. Promise you will get back to the legislator and do not forget to follow up with an answer as soon as you can!

7. Ask for something

Always ask for something, even if it is simply having them keep an open mind. Do not threaten or grandstand, but do not expect the legislator to read your mind.

8. Ask how you can help them

There may be an issue the legislator wants your advice or support on, or perhaps he or she might like to meet with your staff. Ask if there is anything you can do to assist. If so, be sure to follow up as soon as you can!

9. Always keep the door open

Respect the legislators' views, even if you disagree. Be polite. Make sure you will be welcomed back!

10. Say thank you

Thank the legislator for his or her time and consideration; express your hope to have the chance to meet again. If you are meeting in their office, invite them to your hospital.