

Legislative Advocacy

How to Talk to Legislators

1 Make the Call

Script: Request a meeting

*Hi, my name is *name.* I'm contacting you on behalf of *organization* regarding our election integrity project here in *state.* This is a non-partisan effort to educate and encourage citizens to get involved in election process. We would truly appreciate an opportunity to speak with *representative* about this initiative.*

*Would it be possible to make an appointment to meet with *representative* for 15 - 20 minutes? we would like to let him/her know about our election integrity initiative and talk about state election code reform that may be considered this legislative session.*

2 Be Prepared

- Research representatives' Background
- Know what issues are important to them
- find out what committees they serve on
- Get to know staff members
- if representatives are unavailable, as to meet with their Chief of Staff

3 Be Professional

- Dress professionally in business attire
- Know exactly where legislators' offices are and where to park.
- be on time
- Bring professionally-printed business card and "leave behind" materials.

4 Present Your Case

- Briefly introduce yourself and your organization to staff and representative
- Summarize specific election integrity issues in your state - support with facts
- Identify possible legislative solutions
- Gauge representatives' interest in supporting election reform legislation - if appropriate, ask if they are willing to sponsor legislation
- Leave behind business card, professionally printed materials on your organization and legislative goals
- Thank representative and staff for their time

5 Follow up

- Send written thank-you notes
- Offer additional information or research on issues discussed
- Schedule follow-up meetings with potential bill sponsors to discuss specific legislation
- Contact legislator / staff regularly - track progress of bills

6 Committee Hearing

- Prepare to testify on behalf of bills - know committee hearing dates, time, location; procedure for getting on witness list
- Make notes, Plus handouts if applicable
- Be professional and concise - be prepared for questions, esp. from opponents
- Follow up with committee members to restate your support for legislation