



HOW TO: 10 TIPS TO HOLDING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING WITH POLICYMAKERS

- **Be clear on your goal.** Don't be vague; make sure your request is clear.
- **Make a connection.** Building a relationship is a main goal of meetings. Do a little research on the lawmaker in advance, and try to make a personal connection.
- **Know your issue.** You don't have to be an absolute expert, but it is important that you have talking points prepared so you can have an effective conversation.
- **Connect the issue to the lawmaker's district or state.** This is easy to do when it comes to climate change, for the effects are varied and already widespread.
- **Listen.** The policymakers should do most of the talking. Keep the conversation at least 50/50. Ask questions and learn about what matters to them.
- **Keep it short.** Most meetings with political figures only last approximately 15 minutes due to interruptions, phone calls, unexpected guests etc. so you should be prepared to keep your meeting within that time frame as well.
- **Deliver the message in the first five to 10 minutes.** In the case that your meeting does get cut short, it's important to get your point across early in your conversation. However, don't be afraid to chat in order to get to know them, for they're politicians and want to make you happy and making a connection and building a relationship is very important.
- **Stay on message.** Stay focused and try not to go off topic, for it pulls attention away from what you're there to really achieve.
- **The less paper, the better.** Not only to conserve resources, but the lawmaker you are speaking with should see you as a helpful resource. One or two pages are good leave-behinds.
- **Be professional with everyone.** Show respect and appreciation for the representatives or lawmakers you are meeting with and all of their staff, regardless of their age, title or political standpoint.
- **Follow up ASAP.** Support a good meeting with an effective follow-up, and you'll be that much closer to your goals.
- How to have a successful lobby meeting. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.worc.org/media/Have-A-Successful-Lobby-Meeting.pdf>, Winchester, F. (2018, January 12). 10 tips for meeting with Congress. Retrieved from <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/10-tips-meeting-congress/>