



Things to Remember When You Communicate with Your Legislator

General Reminders:

- Your story is important.
- You can give legislators real information about how policies and regulations will impact people with disabilities and families.
- Be organized
- Be polite
- Be prepared
- Be honest
- Always say “thank you”

When you write a letter

- Begin with your name and why you are writing
- State a bill number or the issue.
- State how you want the legislator to vote or support an issue
- At the end of the letter, include your address, phone number and email.
- Keep a copy of your letter

When you call a legislator

- Be prepared to state your name, address and phone number.
- Make notes of what you want to say.
- Be specific, brief and courteous.
- Ask for specific action on the part of the legislator.

When you send an email

- Include your name, address and phone number.
- State why you are sending the email.
- Identify the bill number or issue.
- Ask for specific action from the legislator.
- If you disagree with his/her position, explain why and offer another solution.
- Thank you emails are always appreciated.

When you visit your legislator

- Personal meetings are the most effective.
- Always make an appointment and be on time.
- Always thank the legislator for his/her time.
- Write down your “talking points”
- Always dress appropriately.
- Address the legislator by his/her title, “Congressman”, “Congresswoman”, “Senator” or “Representative.”
- State the reason for your visit. State the bills number or issue.
- Thank the legislator for any past support and how that support has benefited people with disabilities.
- If the legislator has not yet supported a bill, clearly state reasons for supporting it.
- If the legislator is not supportive of your position, give him/her information and politely ask him to reconsider.
- Never be rude.
- Be prepared to answer questions. If you do not know an answer, state that you do not know the answer and that you will promptly get back to the legislator with the answer. Never make up an answer!
- Thank the legislator and leave on time.
- Send a thank you note. Hand-written notes are especially appreciated.
- If a photo was taken, mail or email the photo.