

# 5 Tips for Meeting with Your Legislator



- Prepare



- Deliver your message and listen



- Ask for a commitment



- Leave the door open for future communication



- Follow up!

# PREPARE

## **Learn about your legislator.**

You'll find a biography online (just type in the name, or go to [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov)).

## **Prepare** what you want to say:

- Who you are and what you do
- What your issue is about and why you care
- What you want the legislator to do

## **Be ready to meet with staff** instead of the legislator

Schedules change! Don't underestimate the value of talking with staff.

# AT THE MEETING



**Make a local connection:** you share the same community with your legislator.

**Orient the legislator in very basic terms.**

**Deliver your message in five minutes.**

**Listen** to your legislator's questions – and if you don't know the answers, write them down and offer to follow up!

# ASK FOR A COMMITMENT

As one legislator told a group: "Don't just ask for my *support*. In theory, I can support anything. If you want my VOTE, ask for my VOTE."

If your legislator is supportive, thank them. Then ask them to take a **specific action**: vote, make a budget request, or ask their colleagues for support.

If your legislator is undecided, offer to send more information and be sure to follow up.

**Request** that the legislator utilize you as a resource.



# LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN FOR FUTURE ADVOCACY

- The legislator who is your strongest opposition today might be the vote you need on a different issue tomorrow.
- Be careful not to alienate, even if you strongly disagree.
- Be polite and focus on your goal.



# FOLLOW UP

- Leave your contact information and our one-pager.
- Send a short thank you note.
- If your legislator made a commitment, thank them, and restate what he or she promised.

