

Legislative Meeting Role-Play Practice

With your group, divide up the following roles and practice acting out the meeting with your legislator. Assign one person in your group one of the following roles. You might be in a solo group or in a smaller group. That is okay! Be flexible, and practice will help.

These roles can shift depending on who you are meeting with or if people want to try different roles in different meetings.

EVERYONE: KNOW YOUR LEGISLATOR

Did the office co-sponsor any of our bills? Check the Advocacy Day App! (Go to Legislators, click on the Legislators you have meetings with, and click Bills).

- If they are a co-sponsor of one of our bills, please thank the legislative office for their support.

EVERYONE: BE PREPARED NOT TO KNOW!

During your meeting, you might be asked specific questions about policies that you don't know the answer to. That's OK! Acknowledge it and promise more information will come:

- Example: "I don't know the answer to that right now. But I will make a note to follow up with your office about this in our follow up communication."

ROLE #1: START THE MEETING/MAKE INTRODUCTIONS

Start the meeting with a brief round of introductions. If you represent an organization, introduce yourself and tell your representative or staffer about your organization and where it is located.

- Example: Hello Representative/Senator _____. My name is _____ and I live / provide for patients in _____ (name of area) in your legislative district. I'll let everyone else introduce themselves as well.

ROLE #2: NAME THE ISSUE

State clearly and concisely what issue you want to discuss, what your position is, and what action you want your elected official to take. Offer a few supporting facts about why they should take your position.

- Example: I'm here today to talk about _____ (name of an issue or bill). This is an important issue to our community because _____.

ROLE #3: STORYTELLER (2 people can have this role if you have time)

Share a personal story or concrete examples that highlight your experience with the issue and why you care about it.

- Example: (Issue) is important to me because ____ (share a positive story or share a challenge). If (issue / challenge) were to improve, it would help my organization better meet the needs of patients. The impact that would have on our community would be _____.

ROLE #4: MAKE AN ASK

Make an explicit "ask." Pose a direct, yes-or-no question to which the legislator can respond.

- Example: "Can we count on you to support Gerald's Law to allow equal access to burial benefits, no matter where a Veteran chooses to receive end-of-life care?"

ROLE #5: THANK THE OFFICE FOR TIME, SHARE HANDOUTS

No matter how an office responds to your ask, thank them for their time. If you don't get a "yes" today, it might be a "yes" tomorrow! Give the representative or staffer your "Leave Behind Folder" with all relevant information we want them to know.