



TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

**Whenever talking or communicating with legislators,
we encourage you to:**

Be brief.

Use your own words.

Be civil.

- ✓ **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS:** Get to know the lawmaker(s) before your issue “blows up.” It is easier to ask for their help and support if they already know you.
- ✓ **EDUCATION:** Educate yourself. You do not need to be an expert, but you should have a clear understanding of the issue. Information equals more effective advocacy.
- ✓ **BUILD SUPPORT:** Find others who care about the issue. Always look for established organizations or groups that are likeminded. Host educational forums when possible.
- ✓ **INTEGRITY:** Don’t fake an answer to a lawmaker’s question. If you don’t know, tell them you will follow up with additional information.
- ✓ **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY:**
 - ~ Explain your opinion, **briefly**.
 - ~ State your expectation of them as your representative (e.g. Please vote no!).
 - ~ **Ask them what they think** about the issue and how they plan to vote.
 - ~ Tell them you will be paying attention to the issue and their vote.
- ✓ **MAKE IT PERSONAL:** Tell the story that makes the issue personal for you.
- ✓ **SHOW UP:** Attend Lobby Days, Legislative Forums, etc. Send them an email after to let them know you attended and summarize your thoughts.
- ✓ **FAITH MATTERS:** If applicable, tell them that you are talking about the issue as a person of faith. Lawmakers need to understand there is a spectrum of faith perspectives on many issues.

How do I connect with a legislator when I am at the Capitol?

- You will enter the Iowa Capitol on the south or west side.
- After going through security, proceed to the center of the ground floor and find the staircase or elevators.
- The House of Representatives and Senate chambers are on the second floor of the capitol.
- Go to the main entrance of either chamber. There is a small desk with forms to request a legislator come out and talk with you.
- Complete one of the forms including your name, date, time, legislator's name, desk #, and a short note about the subject. Add that you are a constituent, if that is relevant. If you are clergy, also add your title!
- Hand your note to the doorkeeper and wait for your legislator to come out or a reply.

Find your legislator:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

Contact information

House Switchboard: 515.281.3221
Senate Switchboard: 515.281.3371

Legislative Emails: FIRSTname.LASTname@legis.iowa.gov

Iowa Capitol mailing address:
State Capitol Building, 1007 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50319