

PREPARE FOR YOUR LEGISLATIVE MEETINGS

How to Make the Most of Your LD Caucus Time

- The **GOALS** of this caucus are to:
 - ⇒ Plan the agenda, speakers and topics for your meetings with your legislators.
 - ⇒ Choose a clear set of 1-3 bills/issues related to FAN's Legislative Agenda, and develop a clear "ASK" for each one.
 - ⇒ Build relationships between faith communities in your Legislative District.

- The **PROCESS** for Your Caucus Time
 - ⇒ Begin with brief introductions: names, faith community.
 - ⇒ Caucus time may be short. Encourage group to follow basic rules of respect, making space for all to speak when appropriate while encouraging dominant voices to listen more. Be aware of first-timers. Try not to use acronyms.
 - ⇒ Remind the group that legislative meetings will be 15 minutes at the most.
 - ⇒ Choose 1-3 bills you most want to discuss with your legislators (they may be different for each one). Who has a good SHORT story or illustration to share? What did you learn from your workshops is most urgent?
 - ⇒ Develop your clear "ASK" for each one. Be specific as to what you want your Legislator to do: support bill, oppose bill, help advance bill by talking up with colleagues, etc.
 - ⇒ Know your audience. Check which committees each of your legislators sits on (see FAN's "Legislators' Committees" document). Also make sure you know if your legislator is sponsoring any of the bills you're talking about.
 - ⇒ Identify one action, vote or sponsorship for which you can thank your legislator.
 - ⇒ Decide who will do what during the meeting with legislators (see roles below).
 - ⇒ Decide who will email the legislator after the meeting, thanking them and summarizing the 1-3 asks.

- **Outcome:** Your Legislative Meeting **AGENDA**
 - ⇒ A designated person starts the meeting, introducing FAN and thanking the legislator for their past work on an issue or bill. This person should also keep time so no one goes over. (1 min)
 - ⇒ Introductions: each person shares name, where they live, and affiliation (3 mins)

- ⇒ People speak on 1-3 bills, sharing a why and calling for a specific action. Make sure you are vivid, snappy and succinct! For a large group, you may want to choose 1-3 people to speak, one for each bill. For smaller groups, you may choose to give everyone a chance to speak about why one of the bills you chose is important to them. (up to 7 mins total)
- ⇒ Introducer or a different group member wraps up. Give legislator/aide chance to speak or respond, so you're building a relationship. THANK the Legislator for their time and service. (4 min)

Some Tips to Help your Messaging

- Remember that legislators are accountable to us as voting citizens.
- You don't have to be a policy expert. You can always say that you will consult with coalition partners and get back to them about something you don't know. If you promise to follow up with more information, make sure to get back to their office promptly and reach out to FAN if you need support.
- Know your audience.
- Keep your message brief and consistent.
- Offer an illustration or story from your community.
- Emphasize your values and concerns.
- Sometimes legislators want to talk more than listen – be mindful, bold and strategic!
- Thank your legislator.