YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

Talking to your lawmaker.
WELCOME

OVERVIEW

- Why it's important?
- Make sure you are heard.
— How to tell your story!
Showing up

When you show up consistently in small ways, you create more chances that you’re in the right place when opportunities appear. Showing up really means to be present in more than one way. It’s about appearing consistently for things that matter. This can be showing up in your community by making an effort to create change, showing up for your family by listening to them, and showing up for yourself by pursuing your goals.
MAKING YOUR VOICE HEARD IS IMPORTANT.

As a young person, you might not have the ability to vote yet, but it’s your right to make your voice heard to lawmakers. Lawmakers work for everyone, even those who can’t vote. They need to hear from you to know what you need.
OUR COUNTRY SHARES POWER

National
Affects people in the whole country.

State
Affects someone that lives in a particular state.

Local
Affects someone that lives in a particular city.

Can you think of any examples of laws from each?

- The American With Disabilities Act
- Illegal to own a lion in Tennessee/Dynamic Accessibility Act
- Landlord to provide notice prior to an increase in rent
Federal Elected Officials
- Contact the White House
- Congress

State Elected Officials
- Governor
- Find your legislator

Local City
- Mayor
- Get contact information for your city, county, and town officials.
CREEP ON YOUR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL A LITTLE.
Know who you're meeting, know what party they're in, know some laws they have proposed. Look em up! Creep on them like you've got a crush on them. Follow them on social media and look at their official website. You're looking to build a relationship with your lawmaker, so they can remember you and what you care about.
There are many great reasons for building relationships with an advocacy groups, and lawmakers know that local organizations are committed to the people they serve. Some advocacy groups avoid the promotion or endorsement of any lawmaker, and they make a good starting point to get your heard.
HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY.

Being effective and being right.

Everyone has a story! Personal stories are just stories that highlight the importance of an issue, program, or service in an individual or family’s life. Personal stories make policy “real”. It’s easy to talk about policies or laws in big numbers. For example, a bill may include $800 billion in cuts, but personal stories make it not just about numbers.
ADA Hearing Video
Deaf
Joint House-Senate Hearing On Discrimination the Basis on the Basis of Disability, September 27 1988

Reading Commisioners
Video
Sometimes people go from being right to being righteous. That can lose you supporters along the way. You can’t win the battle and the war in one step. There’s a balance that to sharing what you’re passionate about and being smart about communicating that to lawmakers.
Pause before you head into a challenging situation. Ask yourself, "What is the long-term impact I want to have? What is the most effective approach?" This pause is major, as it will help you approach the situation with a focus on leading from a place of creativity and vision. It helps you get curious, preparing you to create dialogue instead of debate.
Beginning
This is your opener. Introduce yourself and the main point you would like those listening or reading to know. What is the main claim you’re making.

Middle
You need to ensure that the audience gets the message by informing them why something is important.

End
Why is this relevant?
What’s the moral or point?
Who is this message for?
What do you want them to do?
HOW TO ENGAGE LAWMAKERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

For many elected officials, social media is a megaphone for announcing policy positions, discussing issues with constituents, and, of course, sharing the occasional selfie.

Study their style
Familiarize yourself with the kind of posts they’ve typically engaged with in the past. This is helpful in seeing what organizations have had success in garnering engagement from particular lawmakers and what tactics they used to get that engagement.

Tag to grab their attention
After you’ve familiarized yourself with their social media habits, take steps to get their office’s attention. Start by tagging their official Twitter or Facebook handles in any post you want them to see.

Include location to signal constituency
Lawmakers prefer to engage with their own constituents. If you call into a lawmakers office, the first thing you are typically asked is “Where do you live?” On social media it can be hard to tell where someone is from, and whether that person lives in the member’s district. To boost your chances of having a member engage with your social media content, find a way to signal that you are a constituent.
ACTIVITY
WHAT ARE ISSUES THAT MATTER TO YOU?
## TRANSITIONS

Some phrases you could use to move to your next point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Emphasizing importance</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
<th>Call to Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We will be looking at/identifying/investigating the effects of...</td>
<td>More importantly... This is essential... Primarily... Mainly...</td>
<td>Let’s recap on what we’ve spoken about today... Let me briefly summarize the main points...</td>
<td>Stand strong against/for You may be thinking how can I help in this matter? My aim is to encourage you to go further and... What I’m requesting of you is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today I will be discussing...</td>
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<tr>
<td>My name is ___ I believe...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Shift between similar or disagreeing points

In the same way...
Likewise...
Equally...
This is similar to...
Similarly...
Conversely...
Despite this...
However...
On the contrary...
Now let's consider...
Even so...
Nonetheless...
We can't ignore...
On the other hand...

Moving on

First, let's begin with...
I will first cover...
My first point covers...
To get started, let's look at...