

ADVOCACY TIPS

SUCCESSFUL LEGISLATIVE VISITS



- ❖ Make it local – you are the constituent.
- ❖ Make it personal – tell your story or the story of others with bleeding disorders.
- ❖ Remember to ask for support. Do not assume they will help.
- ❖ Be flexible about where your meeting is held and who it is with. You are likely to meet with staff and not Members. It could be in the hall or the cafeteria.
- ❖ Be flexible about time, especially if the meeting is directly with your Member.
- ❖ Meetings can last just 15 minutes. Rehearse so you can make your points quickly if necessary.

Meeting Details

- ❖ Introduce yourself and share where you are from in their district/state.
- ❖ Give a brief background on your bleeding disorders and how it has affected you and your family.
- ❖ Share information about the issue your visiting about and provide a concrete example how it affects you living with a bleeding disorder.
- ❖ Ask for their support on the issue.
- ❖ Leave behind a packet of information. **Remember HFA can provide you with any information or resources you need visit our website: www.hemophiliafed.org or contact us directly.**
- ❖ Include your contact information with the materials. If you do not have a business card, make sure your name, street address including zip code, phone number and email are clearly included in your materials.
- ❖ Thank them for their time and invite them to contact you with any questions.

Do's and Don'ts for your visits

Do's

- ✓ Do arrive on time.
- ✓ Do begin by thanking the Member and/or staff for meeting with you.
- ✓ Do state your home town – to establish that you are a constituent.
- ✓ Do keep your message short, relevant and to the point.
- ✓ Do make your ASK. Ask for your Member to support or oppose a particular bill or issue.
- ✓ Do leave suggested letters, fact sheets, or other materials.
- ✓ Do thank them and follow-up

Don'ts

- ✗ Don't be afraid. You are a constituent, they need your vote, and you have a good story to tell.
- ✗ Don't be argumentative. It's OK to disagree. Be polite but persistent as you make your points.
- ✗ Don't claim to be an expert. If you do not know an answer to a question, offer to find out and contact them soon after your meeting.
- ✗ Don't assume that Members of Congress or their staff understand the issue and avoid acronyms.

ADVOCACY TIPS

Follow-Up

- ❖ Make sure to get a card from the staffer during your meeting so you can contact him or her directly.
- ❖ During or right after the meeting, jot down any questions raised, and your impressions about the Member's or staff's position on your issues
- ❖ Follow-up your visit with a personal letter (e-mail is best) thanking the Member and their staff for meeting with you.
- ❖ Send the note directly to the staffer, using this as an opportunity to establish an on-going relationship.

HFA is here to support your advocacy! Contact us at advocacy@hemophiliafed.org