

Tips for Attending Town Hall Meetings

- **Be Prepared.** Come with thoughtful arguments, good data, and persuasive stories. This will help you be remembered.
- **Tell a Personal Story.** Members of Congress are always looking for firsthand accounts of the impact that policies have on their constituents. Think in advance how a policy might affect you, your family, business, or community.
- **Use Numbers If You Have Them.** Let the legislator know how many more people you represent. Use numbers by saying things like, “I have 50 employees,” or “I represent 100 people in my union.”
- **Be Respectful.** It doesn’t matter if you’re talking to your grocer or a public official – starting any conversation with another person in a rude manner is not a very effective way to persuade them.
- **Go in Groups.** Attending in large numbers is a good way to get attention and send a “listen to us” message that is sure to be heard.
- **Talk to Staff Every Member.** brings staff to town hall meetings. Tell them your story before the meeting (also ask a public question during the meeting) and get their business cards.
- **Leave Paper.** Any documents passed to state-based staff will likely be faxed to the Legislative Assistant in Washington who covers your issue.
- **Follow Up.** An elected official often responds to an individual who just follows up with a phone call a few weeks after attending a meeting.
- **Get Your People to Multiple Meetings.** Hearing the same thing in different places reinforces the importance of your issue to the legislator and staff members.
- **Demonstrate That You’re Not Going Away.** If you continue to show your presence at town hall meetings, the legislator must deal with you, if only to avoid an uncomfortable encounter at a future town hall meeting.

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American Health Care Association ♦ National Center for Assisted Living

1201 L Street, NW ♦ Washington, DC 20005

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