



# Tips for Effective State Legislative Lobbying

## Ongoing Preparation

- Join your state audiology association or coalition (if there is not one, organize and help start one).
- Familiarize yourself with your state's legislative process.
  - What is the session schedule for your state legislature?  
<https://documents.ncsl.org/wwwncsl/About-State-Legislatures/session-calendar4-2025.pdf> (also attached).
  - What are the rules and procedures for passing legislation in your state?
  - What are the committees of jurisdictions for the issues that are important to you?
- Identify the state lawmaker(s) that represent your district and build relationships with them.
  - Attend town halls and community events hosted by legislators.
  - Invite policymakers to visit your audiology practice or facility.
  - Participate in organized lobby days or advocacy events on a regular basis.
  - Offer yourself as a subject matter expert on audiology issues.
  - Provide regular updates to legislators via email or phone calls.
- Build relationships with other stakeholders (other healthcare providers, patients, representatives from other associations etc.).
- Monitor your state's legislative website to keep abreast of bills that may impact your practice, patients, and profession.
- Donate to your state PAC Fund.
- If you haven't done so already, consider hiring a professional lobbyist through your state association.

## Develop Your Strategy for Each Legislative Issue

- Define clear objectives for each legislative issue.
  - Are you initiating proposed legislative changes or are you reacting to a legislative proposal put forward by other stakeholders?
    - If you are initiating proposed legislative change, engage with key stakeholders *before* legislation is finalized and introduced.
    - If you are responding to a proposal put forward by other stakeholders, analyze the legislation carefully *before* responding (avoid knee jerk reactions).

- Develop a policy position on all issues of significance.
  - Support, opposition, or neutrality.
  - Recommend amendments if you can improve the legislation, particularly if the amendment will help create support or mitigate opposition.
- Prepare evidence-based data to support your position.
- Develop personal stories and patient stories that illustrate the need for change.
- Attempt to identify areas where compromise can be had on issues where there is strong disagreement.

### **Communicate Effectively to Support Your Position**

- Craft a clear, concise message about the legislative issue.
- Schedule meetings with state legislators or their staff.
  - Legislative staff are very often the gatekeeper, key influencer, and even the final decision maker.
- Personalize communication to align with legislators' interests and priorities.
- Create talking points for meetings and interviews.
- Create issue briefs (maximum 2 pages).
- Write op-eds or letters to the editor on the legislative issue.
- Prepare and deliver testimony.
- Use social media to amplify your message and engage supporters.

### **Mobilize Grassroots and Grasstops**

- Educate key stakeholders (colleagues, patients, other providers, care givers etc.) about the legislative issue.
- Organize letter-writing or call-in campaigns to legislators.
- Seek support from supporters who have special relationships or influence with policymakers.

### **Follow-Up and Evaluate**

- Send thank-you notes after meetings with legislators.
- Monitor the progress of the legislative issue.
- Assess the effectiveness of your advocacy efforts.
- Adjust strategies based on outcomes and changing political landscapes.

*Remember, successful advocacy often requires persistence and a long-term commitment. It often takes multiple legislative sessions to accomplish goals.*