



# Being an Angler Advocate

# Why Advocacy is Important



# Ways Your Chapter Can Advocate



Target audience	General Advocacy, from education to grassroots lobbying				Direct lobbying
<b>Any elected official</b>	Build relationships	Inform them about issues	Invite them to your workdays, banquets	Hold targeted events for them; show them your stream and its issues	Ask them to vote a certain way
<b>Your Membership</b>	Hold a public forum to educate them about an issue	Send an email about a policy issue or legislation (for information only)	Send an email about a policy issue or legislation with an opinion/point of view from your organization (no specific call to action, yet)	Send an email about a policy issue or legislation with a call to action, "Contact your legislator, tell them how you feel about this issue, ask them to vote yes, and here is how to contact them."	N/A
<b>Federal or State Legislators</b>	Meet them in district or at a listening session to introduce your organization, no ask at this time	Take them fishing or show them streamwork restoration sites to introduce them to the issues on your river	Put them on your newsletter/email lists.  Sign up for their email list.	Send them educational information about your concerns- be their resource for quality information about water issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testify at a public hearing</li> <li>• Call, send a letter/email asking them to vote yes/no</li> <li>• Meet at their office in the Capitol</li> </ul>
<b>Local: County, City, Village, Town officials</b>	Meet them at a coffee shop to introduce yourself and your organization	Take them fishing or show them streamwork restoration sites to introduce them to the issues on your river	Put them on your newsletter/email lists.  Sign up for their email list (if available)	Attend County Land & Water meetings (or other appropriate committee meetings) to learn, listen, educate and/or make requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testify at a public hearing</li> <li>• Call, send a letter/email asking them to vote yes/no</li> <li>• Attend a meeting to ask for funds in the budget, an ordinance, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>DNR resource managers</b>	Invite DNR staff to events, workdays	Invite the DNR Secretary and staff to your events; consider annual meetings, especially with Fisheries Bureau	Ask the DNR staff/administration to fund programs/staff that support trout streams in your region	Provide letters of support to the Natural Resource Board for polices that support trout streams, or speak out about polices that will harm them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask DNR managers for resources to protect trout streams in your region</li> <li>• Provide comment or testimony on DNR or Conservation Congress issues</li> </ul>

# Tips for a Successful Meeting with Your Legislator



- ✦ **Introduce yourself with some context.** Mention where you live and/or own property, and reference any affiliations you might have in the area- you are a member of the PTA, you are president of a hunting club, you are on the library board, etc.
- ✦ **Some chit chat is great, but be mindful of your time.** Chit chat is how you establish rapport, so it's definitely a good thing to pursue, but in order to get all your points across while being respectful of the time your legislator has dedicated to talk with you, don't carry on too long.
- ✦ **Thank them.** A little background investigation of your legislator's voting record can provide you with an opportunity to thank them for a past vote. If you find a topic or know of an issue (it doesn't have to be a conservation issue) where your legislator voted well, be sure to mention your appreciation. Everyone likes to be recognized for making good decisions!

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- ✦ **Be organized.** Plan your meeting and stick to your agenda. Decide among yourselves who will present what. Even in a more casual setting such as a living room or coffee shop, map out the points you want to be sure are discussed, who is tasked with taking the lead on each, and how you would like the point to be addressed. For example, are you asking them to vote on a specific bill, or just looking for them to acknowledge the issue for now? Practicing the meeting can help you feel more prepared.
- ✦ **Tell your story.** Bringing it home is what makes the difference. Tell how the issue at hand affects you, your family, your business, your community, and why you care. Make it personal and real, but be sure not to exaggerate or wander off point. Be clear, concise and resolute.
- ✦ **Be respectful.** No matter what happens in your meeting, be respectful. That doesn't mean you have to reach agreement, but you do want to make build a relationship for the future.

# Tips for a Successful Meeting with Your Legislator



- ✦ **No jargon.** No acronyms, no fancy science speak.
- ✦ **Request a follow-up meeting.** Consider asking for a follow-up visit or check-in with the legislator before the end of your meeting. Especially if your meeting is intended to be introductory and relationship-building, follow-ups can then get more to the heart of the issue, or provide the opportunity to ask for specific action.
- ✦ **Respect the staff/aides.** Recognize that aides, not legislators, will often be your official point of contact, and should be treated with the respect you would show a legislator. They are often tasked with learning details about issues, and can be important allies for constituents. A good relationship with an aide can open doors to the legislator in the future.

# How to Handle Some Common Meeting Situations



- 🐟 **What if my legislator is focused on something else—not what we want to discuss?** Politely but firmly, take the conversation back to your topic: “We will be sure to share that with our members, but at today’s meeting, we’ve gathered here to talk about X.”
- 🐟 **What if my legislator asks me something I don’t know?** This is the perfect opportunity to offer a second meeting or contact. First, don’t lose credibility by guessing at an answer (and possibly getting it wrong). It never hurts to say you don’t know the answer, but will certainly find one and get back to them. You’ll be remembered and respected for your honesty, and you get a second chance to remind them about the importance of your issue.
- 🐟 **What if my legislator says they can’t do anything without seeing/reading a bill?** This answer shouldn’t prevent you from getting a sense of where they are. Try a response like, “I understand that your official position will depend on reading the bill, but in general, could you support the key positions that we have laid out here?”

# How to Handle Some Common Meeting Situations



- ☛ **What if my legislator says they can't do anything because they are in the minority party, not on the committee, etc.** In order for a bill to become law, they will have to take a position at some point, so try an approach like, "I understand that legislators have different roles in the process, but as our legislator do you intend to vote for the bill when it comes to the floor?"
- ☛ **What if my legislator totally disagrees with us on the issue?** "I appreciate that we can't always agree on everything. We hope that you will keep our concerns in mind. The next issue we'd like to talk to you about is X."
- ☛ **What if my legislator is already a really helpful/enthusiastic supporter? Do they still need to hear from me?** Absolutely. They need to be able to tell their colleagues they've heard from constituents in support of the bill. "It is so great that you are supportive of this issue. Besides voting for the bill, would you be willing to lend your public support to getting the bill passed by asking leadership to schedule the vote and working to make sure members of your caucus will also support it?"



- ✦ Gov Track: <https://www.govtrack.us/>
  - Great all around resource for finding and tracking bills and legislators
  - Easiest to search by bill number
  - Sign up for email updates as a bill is developed
- ✦ TU Action Center: <http://www.tu.org/action-center>
  - Actions, Legislator Look-up, Find Legislation, Quick Sign-up
- ✦ StandUp: <http://standup.tu.org/>
  - Clearing house for major TU campaigns, take action
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