

Tips for Visiting Your Legislator

Plan Your Visit – Use the Legislative Visit Planning Guide in this packet to create your plan of action. Be clear about what it is you want to achieve. Determine in advance who will speak to each issue.

Be Prompt and Patient – When it's time to meet your legislator, be on time and ready to wait. Representatives are busy. It is not uncommon for a representative to be late or to have a meeting interrupted. If you do get interrupted, be flexible.

Staff Meetings – Because legislative schedules are subject to change, there is the possibility you will meet with staff even if scheduled with the member. Staff are very knowledgeable on the issues and this meeting should be treated with the same respect as one with a member. The information you provide will be passed on to your congressman.

Be Prepared – Use the knowledge from your OFBF issue brief to speak to the issues. Be prepared to share facts and most importantly, your personal examples of how these issues will impact your farming operation and Ohio agriculture.

Make it local – Representatives want to represent the best interests of their district or state. Wherever possible, show the connection between your request and the interests of the representative's constituency. If possible, describe how you or your county Farm Bureau can be of assistance to him/her and how you can work together back in the district.

Be Responsive – Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information, in the event the representative expresses interest or asks questions. Follow up the meeting with a thank you letter that outlines the different points covered during the meeting and send along any additional information requested.

Be Courteous and Brief – Address your legislator with respect, especially within a formal business setting. Stay on message and make sure everyone present has had the opportunity to play their part. Make sure your cell phone is off.

LEGISLATIVE VISIT PLANNING GUIDE

Visiting your legislator can be daunting. The following is a "cheat sheet" designed to allow you to gather your thoughts and the ideas of other Farm Bureau members from your district, prior to sitting down with your representative. Answer the following questions with the individuals from your district, then create a basic script for you and your group to follow while meeting with your Representative.

Legislative Rep/District #: _____

Meeting Time and Place: _____

Who will kick-off the meeting and introductions?

What stories or examples from your farm and/or experiences can you share with your Representative?

What are three issues/topics you would like to discuss with your Rep. and who from your district will introduce each issue/topic?

1. Speaker: _____

Topic: _____

Talking Point: _____

2. Speaker:

Topic: _____

Talking Point: _____

3. Speaker:

Topic: _____

Talking Point: _____

What other issues/topics are of interest if there is remaining time?

General notes:

