



Tip Sheet

# Visit Legislators

## Tips for Visiting Your Legislators

**Plan Your Visit** – Be clear about what it is you want to achieve. Determine in advance which legislator or committee staff you need to meet with to achieve your goal.

**Make an Appointment** – When attempting to meet with your legislator, contact the Appointment Secretary/Scheduler. Explain your purpose and whom you represent. It is easier for staff to arrange a meeting if they know what you want to talk about and you're connected to an issue.

**Be Prompt and Patient** – When it's time to meet your legislator, be on time and ready to wait. Legislators are busy. It is not uncommon for a legislator to be late or to have a meeting interrupted. If you do get interrupted, be flexible. When the opportunity presents itself, continue your meeting with a legislator's staff.

**Be Prepared** – Whenever possible, bring materials that support your position. In some instances, a legislator may lack important details about the pros and cons of a particular matter. It's helpful when you share facts and examples that clearly the impact of a particular issue or piece of legislation.

**Be Political** – Legislators want to represent the best interests of their district or state. Wherever possible, show the connection between your request and the interests of the legislator's constituency. If possible, describe how you or your county Farm Bureau can be of assistance to him/her. Where it is appropriate, remember to ask for a commitment.

**Be Responsive** – Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information, in the event the legislator 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** – Address your legislator with respect, especially within a formal business setting.

Get more tips for communicating with your elected officials by contacting your county Farm Bureau or visiting [www.ilfb.org/fbact](http://www.ilfb.org/fbact).