



Communicating with your Legislators

Communicating with your legislators can be a daunting task at times. We hope that this worksheet will help make it a little less frightening! Once you have done it a time or two you will realize it really is not that difficult.

Find your legislators at: <https://iga.in.gov/legislative/2023/legislators/>

Write down your district and the names of your representatives in the space below.

- Use the **blue links above their names** to visit their page.
- Click on **“Caucus page”** on the left. Scroll down to view contact info and fill it in below.
- Retain this sheet to reference your legislators. Be sure to update every two years!

Senate District _____
Senator: _____
Phone: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Assistant Name: _____
Assistant Phone #: _____
Assistant E-mail: _____

House District _____
Representative: _____
Phone: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Assistant Name: _____
Assistant Phone #: _____
Assistant E-mail: _____

Communications with your legislator should resemble a business relationship. **You or your community, have hired the legislator to create laws protecting your constitutional rights.** If a legislator is not standing up for the constitution, then they need a performance review. Here are some principles H4ML encourages;

- **Mutual respect is required**, for ideas and time. Prior to meeting, plan to have 1-2 topics with a couple main points of items you would like to discuss. Discuss the “most important” areas and remember, you will be speaking with them regularly, so you don’t have to say everything at once.
- **Educate them on your most important issue** including upcoming bills. H4ML will be providing information through texts, blogs, and videos.
- **This is not making friends.** While your legislator is probably a great person, becoming friends is not the goal, a healthy business relationship is. You are very unlikely to hold your “friend” accountable for poor actions. Think about the relationship between a supervisor and employee. How do you want treated as an employee? What would you expect as a supervisor?
- **Make regular contact** with support and reminders of your expectations. If bad votes are made remember it is your responsibility to provide constructive feedback and remain firm. Legislative and election seasons cannot be separated. *A failing employee gets replaced, so does a failing legislator.*





Having the Conversation

Two types of communications:

- **Calls to Action**- You will usually be speaking with the legislative assistant (LA). Sometimes they will verify that you are in the legislator's district, other times they won't. If H4ML puts out a call to action for legislators who are NOT yours it will likely be because they are key to a bill moving forward. You will receive the instructions in the text and often can find more information on h4ml.org/blog. Be kind to the LA, they don't have easy jobs nor do they get to vote.
- **Personal Communications**- We may encourage these, or you may initiate these on your own. You will likely schedule with the LA, through email, or request a call back from the legislator. We will review some tips below to make the meeting easier for you.

Prep for your communication:

- What is your goal?
- Narrow down your focus.
- Prepare to take notes, especially when they start using excuses.
- Remember to watch for excuses or cues that they are just pacifying you.
 - No one else talks about this issue.
 - You are unreasonable.
 - I agree, but I can't, won't, am not allowed
 - Someone else (leadership, governor, courts) won't allow it. So, it isn't worth it.
 - If we do this, they will take away more...
 - You are misguided, let me explain...

Plan your meeting with intent. Having a direction and objective of the meeting, will help keep you on track to get your points across and respect the time of the legislator. It may even be helpful for you to construct a meeting outline in advance and use that while you are taking notes.

1. **Identify your name and reason for communicating or meeting.**
2. **Explain the situation.** What is happening? Why does it need addressed? List 1-3 specific examples AND a resolution.
3. **Make it personal.** How is this issue impacting your family or community?
4. **Turn your problem into the legislator's problem.** How will it impact them? If this issue isn't resolved it will lead to... angry voters, job loss, loss of liberty, taxes, health, safety, etc
5. **Be clear on expectations.** I expect a resolution in the form of... If they are sympathetic ask for a verbal confirmation of actions to be taken.
6. **Sum it up.** I appreciate the opportunity to discuss (*problem*) with you. I expect you to resolve this issue by (*resolution*) to (*alleviate constituent suffering*) and (*prevent issue for legislator*).
7. **Follow up.** After your meeting type out a short response. Thank them for meeting, remind them of the basics and any commitments they made and provide them with any information you offered.

Once your meeting is over you are going to save your notes and follow up communications. Some may use a binder, folder, or electronic tools. Make sure you keep everything together and easily accessible. Don't forget to let us know how your meeting went! Visit h4ml.org/watchdog to share what you learned!

