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How To: Tips for Talking with Legislators

Tips for Being an Effective Communicator

Be Respectful

Don't argue

Be positive about your issue

Don't be defensive

Address them as "Senator (last name)" or "Delegate (last name)"

Make sure to introduce who you are and that you're there on behalf of the Medical Society of Virginia

Plan Out Remarks

Try to do some background research on your legislators

Information will be provided to you by MSV staff

Familiarize yourself with these talking points prior to entering the legislator's office

Use personal stories or analogies to convey your point

Legislator may have limited knowledge on your talking points and personal anecdotes, or analogies can help relate your position

If you wish to express an opinion that is not aligned with MSV policy, please make clear that you are speaking as an individual and not on behalf of MSV

Be specific

Be positive

Be honest

Communicating Your Points Effectively

Do not be afraid to say “I don’t know” if a question is asked that you do not have an answer for

Use everyday language and try to avoid abbreviations or acronyms

Keep it concise, these visits are time limited

