



# Lobbying *Tips*

## Successful Personal Visits with Elected Officials

There are certain protocols to remember when communicating with legislators in person. Here are a few communication tips for personal visits to your elected officials.

<b>BE ON TIME</b>	Make certain you reach your appointment on time, or a few minutes early.
<b>KEEP GROUP SMALL</b>	Limit your group to 3 to 5 people. Agree in advance who will be the spokesperson (if applicable) to introduce the group and explain the purpose of the visit.
<b>BE PREPARED</b>	Be informed about your issue; know the specific number of the legislative bill and author's name. Know what you want to say. Emphasize how the issue affects you, your local and your community.
<b>FOCUS ON ISSUES</b>	Present your views politely, but persuasively. Use relevant facts. Bring an expert on the subject to support your views, if possible.
<b>BE BRIEF</b>	Since legislators have extremely busy schedules, plan on getting your message across in 5 to 10 minutes at the very most. Don't get sidetracked into small talk -- make your time really count — "visit" only after you have gotten your point across.
<b>BE FIRM</b>	Find out exactly where your legislator stands on the issue. Ask what action he or she intends to take. Don't be afraid to press for specifics.
<b>LISTEN CAREFULLY</b>	Be ready to answer questions clearly. If you don't know the answer to a question admit it — tell the legislator you will provide the answer later. Listen carefully to your legislator's viewpoint — even if you disagree.
<b>REPORT BACK</b>	Results of your visit are very important to your lobbyists in Sacramento. Appoint a lead person who will report back to the lobbyists.
<b>FOLLOW UP</b>	Send a thank you note or letter to your legislator. Also include a summary of your position plus any other new information that supports your views.