



Lions and Tigers and Legislators, Oh My!!

EIPCa continues to urge you to **visit your legislators in person** in their local office. That's because it's the best way to influence them.

If that sounds scary or intimidating, here's some great advice:

- **Go with a friend**, or two...
 - No more than three others – you are not there to overwhelm but to communicate.
- **Have an agenda**
 - Know what you want to discuss and limit yourself to no more than TWO topics per visit.
 - **Be well informed.**
 - If discussing a bill, read it thoroughly and understand it.
 - Read and digest EIPCa's letter on the bill, and take a copy to leave behind.
 - Take a printed copy of the bill with you in case your legislator has not read it, or at least not thoroughly.
 - Be prepared to offer short, clear points about the pros/cons of the bill in order to quickly educate your legislator about your point of view.
- **Listen**
 - Express your point of view respectfully and knowledgeably.
 - Be willing to listen respectfully and thoughtfully to your legislator's opposing perspective.
 - Attempt to understand perspectives offered and politely respond with helpful information that might further the discussion and lead to shifts of opinion.
- **Accept**
 - You may not completely win your legislator over to your point of view.

- Two-way communication is the key to keeping the door open to future meetings.
- **Return**
 - Let your representative know you'll be back again, and then keep that promise.
 - You'll be most effective if you are a frequent fixture in the office.
- **Goals**
 - Reach a point where you are on a first name basis and you have each other's cell phone numbers.
 - Be sure your legislator knows you're paying attention and expect accountability.
- **Debrief**
 - Go for coffee or lunch with your friend(s) after a meeting.
 - Discuss what went well and what did not. Discuss how to improve next time.
- **Follow up**
 - Write a note or email to your legislator after every meeting.
 - Express gratitude for the time.
 - Review major points and expectations.
 - Indicate your eagerness to meet again soon to follow up on the topics discussed as well as future bills and other concerns.
- **Remember**
 - You are not going to confront or attack.
 - You are going because you are a citizen who is an active member of We the People working to Keep the Republic.
 - As citizens involved in self-governance, it is crucial that we work together to fulfill our civic responsibility to not only elect but guide and supervise our representatives.
- **Comport yourself with dignity, kindness, grace and respect AT ALL TIMES.**
 - You will make a greater difference showing respect than showing defiance.
 - You will keep the lines of communication open.

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