

## Tips for Meeting with Oregon's Elected Officials

- Call first for an appointment. Explain the purpose of your visit.
- Arrive on time.
- Don't be surprised if you meet with a staff member rather than the elected official.
- Bring with you any relevant materials to leave with the elected official such as your business card. Don't bring too much paper, as Oregon legislators are "green-conscious."
- Be efficient and articulate. The meeting should be brief and concise. If you are with a group of people, it's helpful to designate one spokesperson.
- Be respectfully tenacious and do not get discouraged.
- At the end of the meeting, ask if you can provide any more information. Remind them of your key point(s).
- Write a thank you letter to the elected official or staff promptly after your meeting. Even if the elected official did not support your position, let them know that you appreciate their consideration, and explain why you think they should reconsider their position. Reiterate the impact the issue will have on your community.
- Give feedback to the OLA through the Library Development and Legislative Committee.

## Tips for Writing, Emailing, or Faxing Oregon's Elected Officials

- Use the correct address and salutation, i.e. "Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_".
- Confirm you have the correct postal address, e-mail or fax number.
- State your position in the first sentence (or subject line on an e-mail) and include a bill number if relevant.
- Keep your message focused and brief. Explain what you are asking them to do and why.
- Use your own words and city stationery (if appropriate). Form letters are often discarded as impersonal and do not carry much weight.
- Give specific examples of how the issue affects your community.
- Know the facts to ensure you are giving credible information.
- Be timely. The elected official needs time to consider or act on your request.
- Say thank you. Even if the elected official does not support your position, let them know that you appreciate their consideration.
- Ask if you can provide additional information or be helpful in any way.

Source: *League of Oregon Cities. Communicating With the Legislature.*  
<http://www.orcities.org/Portals/17/Toolkit/CommunicatingLegislators.pdf>