

HELPFUL HINTS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Keep the following helpful hints in mind to make the most of speaking at a public meeting:

- **Determine the purpose and tone of the event.** Contact your policy-maker's district office to determine who else is expected to participate or make a presentation. Gaining a better sense of what the overall agenda of the public meeting is to be focused on, and anticipating the general “tone” of the meeting will help you to prepare your remarks and your delivery style.
- **Be prepared with accurate, timely, and relevant information.** Be as strategic as possible. Work to present your position or statement as early in the meeting as you are able, as the press is more likely to attend and cover the first part of the event.
- **Use your network.** Share information about the meeting with other advocates and partner organizations. Try to get as many other advocates to attend the town meeting as possible. This will lend support to your efforts and demonstrate to your policymaker the extent of community support for a particular initiative.
- **Keep your presentation brief.** Limiting your statement to a small number of clear, concise points and providing persuasive facts allows those attending the public meeting to understand and remember your points.
- **Practice makes perfect.** Practicing your position and statement on colleagues and other advocates will ensure that you are comfortable and convincing when sharing your concerns with a larger audience.
- **Provide paper.** Leave written copies of your position or statement with the policymaker, his/her staff, press, and the public attending the meeting.