



How to Advocate by phone, letter, or email.

Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute.
Defend the rights of the poor and needy. (Psalms 31:8-9)

God calls all Christians to not only donate to charity, but to take action to help those less fortunate. Anyone can become a good citizen lobbyist. If you believe in a cause deeply enough to be reading this guide, you are already through the hardest part - choosing to take action.

1. Research the issues. Be prepared to support your cause with facts, and be ready to answer questions the legislator may present.
2. Find your representative. Use this helpful link to find Montana representatives. Be sure you are contacting the correct person for the issue at hand, be it your own representatives or committee members and committee heads.
3. Be respectful. The legislator may not agree with you. Listen to what they say, and present your side. Even if you don't see eye to eye on everything, you may find common ground through conversation.
4. Establish your story and why the issue is important to you. Bring some personal experience to the issue. Tell the legislator why you are lobbying for the legislation at hand, and why you are passionate about that particular cause.

By Phone:

It can be helpful to prepare notes. Be ready to present a statement on the issue, and why it is important to you personally. Personal experience is good, but keep it brief. Be specific about how you would like the Representative or Senator to help. Be prepared to answer questions, but also be honest if you don't know the answer and let them know you will follow up with more information if necessary. Find out how they would like to receive follow up information, whether over phone or email. Give them a chance to reply with their point of view. Be respectful, even if you don't agree. Thank them for taking the time to talk to you.

By Email:

Many legislators get a lot of form emails, and while it is ok to use this form to advocate for your cause, try to find a way to make it more personal. Paraphrase, and then add your own voice to a form email. Keep it short; they receive many emails, and will read through them quickly.

Concisely get to your reason for emailing.

By Letter:

Letters can still be an effective way to communicate your message; however, if the issue is time sensitive, such as a vote on a bill the next day, a call or email may be a better way to get in touch. That being said, you can still mail letters and sometimes this is the easiest way for new citizen lobbyists to make themselves heard. There is time to gather your thoughts and get across your position in a cohesive way. Be sure to include your contact information in case the legislator has follow up questions.