

Meeting with Your Legislators

Constituent Lobbying for a Constitutional Amendment

Holding our elected representatives accountable is the best thing citizens can do to ensure a democracy that is of, by, and for the people.

If politics is really about who you know, then it's critical that your team build a strong relationship with your elected officials. The best way to start a relationship is an in-person meeting.

Scheduling the meeting

To schedule a meeting at your representative's in-district or in-state office, find direct contact information on your legislator's official website. Once you are connected to the office, ask to speak to the scheduler. Identify yourself as a constituent, and explain the purpose of the meeting.

Before the meeting

Call the office directly and set up an appointment. Be sure to mention that you want to discuss a constitutional amendment to reverse *Citizens United*.

If your legislator is not available, ask to meet with a legislative aide. The staff members can be valuable contacts, and often advise elected officials on issues that matter to constituents.

Prepare talking points. On a small index card, write three talking points that you want to bring up during the meeting. On the back of the card, write exactly what it is you want to ask the legislator to do.

The day before your appointment, call to confirm the meeting and provide a list of constituents who will attend with you. Aim to have at least two and no more than five people at each meeting.

During the meeting

Identify yourself as a constituent. It is not necessary to mention whether you voted for the official or not.

Find common ground to begin on a positive note. You might say, "I am proud of Sen. Smith for supporting stronger disclosure laws and believe that the constitutional amendment is just as important for our democracy."

Be specific about what you are asking your representative to do—introduce, vote for or against specific legislation, etc.

Be concise and show respect for the limited time available for the meeting. Get right to the point.

Be honest if you don't have answers to some questions. Make note of the question and follow up after the meeting.

Provide resource materials such as petition signatures, news articles, or your own written statement for reference.

After the meeting

Send a personal thank you note to the representative or staff member with whom you met.

Provide answers to any questions left unanswered and include any updates on the issue since your meeting.

Track the issue and follow up when your legislator does (or does not) take the action you want. Hold them accountable for their vote or action.