

Tips for Calling Your Policy-Maker

Legislative offices in home districts, state capitols, and Washington, DC can provide you with services and information. Call your legislator's office to learn the status of legislation, to convey your opinions, or to find out the legislator's opinion on an issue.

A phone call to your legislator or their staff can be very effective in influencing the outcome of a piece of legislation. You can call the offices of any of your policy-makers -- Congressional Representative, State Senator, Governor, or the President -- and ask to have a message delivered to him or her. Some policy-makers have hotlines, which allow constituents to voice their opinions on legislation. Legislators regularly ask their staff to report on the opinions of constituents calling the office and some offices keep track of the numbers of constituents weighing in on either side of a particular issue.

Tips for calling your policy-maker include:

- **Call the US Capitol Switchboard (202)-224-3121** and ask for the office of Senator/Representative_____.
- **Start your call by saying, "My name is _____, and I am from_____."** End your call by saying, "Thank you." (Some offices may ask for your full name and mailing address so they can follow up with you on the issue.)
- **"Please let the Senator/Representative/President know that I support/oppose (bill number and title)."** For your information, you may want to ask what the legislator's opinion is on this issue.
- **"I would like to urge him/her to vote for/against this provision because: (give one or two reasons)."**

If you would like to discuss a bill in greater detail with your legislator, ask the staff person taking your opinion to relay your name and telephone number to your policy-maker or a legislative staffer and ask that your call be returned.

