

CAPITOL LOGISTICS

SENATE - South end 3rd floor

501-682-2902 In-Session; (501-682-6107 Out-of-Session). The Senate usually convenes at 1:30 PM, Monday through Thursday. *Check the Calendar.*

HOUSE - North end 3rd floor

501-682-6211 In-Session; (501-682-7771 Out-of-Session) The House usually convenes at 1:30 PM, Monday – Thursday. *Check the Calendar: sometimes it is in the morning.*

When a Chamber is In Session

The House and Senate usually meet afternoons to vote at 1:30. Check the Calendar. A good time to catch your representative is while they're in session. Tell the staff in front of the Chamber you want to speak to your representative, and they'll show you how to ask. The public is not allowed in the Chamber. Watch from the 4th floor gallery or streamed live: audio on the Senate website, video on the House.

COMMITTEES

Bills are put on a committee agenda showing when they are *supposed* to be heard. However, *just because a Bill is on an agenda for a certain day doesn't mean it will be heard that day. Likewise, though committees have scheduled meeting times and days, those are subject to change with little notice.* While usually held in the morning, a meeting can also be scheduled for late that afternoon. *Check the Daily Calendar throughout the day at: www.arkleg.state.ar.us.*

The public can attend and participate in hearings. The best way to find out when a bill will

be heard is to ask the sponsor or your representative. House committee hearings only are live-streamed on the House website.

Showing Up and/or Testifying

Usually representatives know how they will vote before a committee meets, but constituents appearing at committees ALWAYS makes an impact, even if you don't speak-so few people do! To speak, sign-up as early as possible: they may not get through the list.

Senate Committees and Rooms

At the South end of the Capitol

Education - 207

Judiciary - 171

Public Health, Welfare & Labor - 272

Agriculture, Forestry, etc. - 309

Aging, Children & Youth, etc. - TBA

City, County and Local Affairs - 272

Insurance and Commerce - 171

Revenue and Taxes - OSC*

State Agencies & Gov't Affairs - OSC

Transportation, Technology, etc. - 309

*OSC - Old Supreme Court, 2nd floor

House Committees and Rooms

At the North end of the 1st floor

Education - 138

Judiciary - 149

Public Health, Welfare and Labor - 130

Revenue & Taxes - 151

Aging, Children & Youth, etc. - TBA

Agriculture, Forestry, etc. - 138

Insurance & Commerce - 149

State Agencies & Gov't Affairs - 151

City, County, Local Affairs - "Big MAC" B

Public Transportation - "Big MAC" B

The "Big MAC" building is behind the capitol. Room B is on the 5th floor.

ENTER: Through the Main Entrance only!

PARKING: Limited. Come early. Metered spaces on Capitol Avenue or side streets. Be prepared to walk, get dropped off, or use the shuttle (see first page).

ELEVATORS: One on either side of the main entrance .

BATHROOMS: Lower Level: Women - North end, Men - South end. 1st floor: Same as Lower Level. 2nd and 4th floor- NONE! 3rd floor - both sexes South end.

FOOD AND DRINKS: No water fountains; bring in enclosed container. Food and drinks in Cafeteria on Lower Level, and 3rd floor snack bar (both, limited hours).

MISCELLANEOUS. Enter through the front. Bags are searched. Signs are allowed, but no sticks, and no signs are allowed in committee rooms.



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Updated February 2017



A GUIDE TO BEING AN EFFECTIVE CITIZEN LOBBYIST



POWER OF PERSUASION

CITIZEN LOBBYISTS ARE THE KEY

You don't have to be a professional to lobby.

In fact, your input as a constituent can be more persuasive than high-powered lobbyists or donors. Everyone has the right and responsibility to participate in government. Your voice is powerful and important! Becoming a Citizen Lobbyist is easy and effective when you know the process.

This guide will give you the tools to effectively communicate with and persuade your legislator.

TIPS FOR BEING A CITIZEN LOBBYIST

- ⇒ Stay in touch with your legislators.
- ⇒ Let them see you as an informed and engaged member of their community.

Communication Skills and Types

- Know your message and keep to it.
- Make your point politely and avoid being argumentative; otherwise you may lose credibility and another chance to be heard.
- Every contact should include a call to action and/or learning their position.

Ways to communicate with your representative:

Meetings – Establishes a personal relationship.

Emails - Quick message and response.

Letters - Rare and attention-grabbing.

Calls - Most useful when a vote is pending.

Any kind of communication beats none at all!

THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The Legislature meets for at least 60 days beginning in January, every odd-numbered year; budget sessions are in even-numbered years.

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

- The 100 members of the House and 35 members of the Senate comprise the General Assembly, also known as "the Legislature."
- A Bill is drafted and filed by a lead sponsor.
- Bills are sent to a Committee in the sponsor's Chamber for a hearing (See Committees).
- If it passes the Committee (simple majority), it goes to the full Chamber.
- Most Bills pass a Chamber by a simple majority, 51 in the House and 18 in the Senate.
- If it passes, it goes to the other Chamber to start the process over.
- If both Chambers pass it, it goes to the Governor .
- The Governor must sign, veto, or refer the Bill back to its original Chamber within 5 days.
- The Legislature can override the Governor's veto by a majority vote of both Chambers.
- If the Governor takes no action within 5 days the bill becomes law.

State Capitol Hours

- Open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.
- Open 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekends.

Parking & Directions

[2016 Session Parking & Shuttle Map](#)

The Arkansas State Capitol
500 Woodlane Street
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

[Click here for map and directions](#)

COMMUNICATING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

GENERAL COMMUNICATION RULES:

- Know why you're contacting them.
- Tell them you're a constituent.
- Refer to the Bill number (HB ___) and a brief description of the issue.
- Outline your talking points; set goals.
- Be concise and to the point. Make your ask! ("Please vote for/against ...")

MEETING FACE-TO-FACE

- Prepare (see "Rules" above):
- Request a meeting in writing with specific times.
- Confirm by phone call, email, or both.
- Plan the meeting. If bringing others, plan who will say what.

During your meeting

- Be prompt.
- Introduce yourself (and others);
- Thank him/her for meeting with you and for votes he/she has made you liked.
- Avoid bringing more than three people. Make different points; don't be repetitive.
- Provide personal and local examples of the Bill's impact.
- If asked for information you don't have, say you will get it ASAP, and do it!
- Personalize your relationship if possible: The closer your legislator feels to you, the more powerful your argument.
- Discuss, but don't argue.
- If he or she hasn't taken a position yet, they likely won't do so in a meeting.
- Ask when you should follow up to learn their decision.

READ, WATCH AND TRACK A BILL

- ⇒ Find Bills the ACLU is following at: acluarkansas.org/en/legislation
- ⇒ Find Bills on the state legislative website: arkleg.state.ar.us
- ⇒ Search Bills by words, sponsor, or Bill number.
- ⇒ To track a Bill, use "Personalized Bill Tracking" on the "Bills and Resolutions" page.
- ⇒ Bill Status History shows where the Bill is in the process, and whether amendments have been added.
- ⇒ Don't just read the title: titles can be misleading. Read the whole Bill to understand its intent.

WRITING (same as above, and...)

Be brief and concise: one page and one issue, using your strongest points. Request a vote and a reply — then follow up.

Follow Up!

If you get a reply that supports your position, write a thank you note and offer to help if you can. This can help you later.

If you get a reply against your position, thank them for responding — but don't give up. Briefly, further explain your position without arguing, and say you hope they'll reconsider.

CALLING (same as above, and...)

If you call their office, keep the call short, to the point and ask for a response.

You can also call the House or Senate to leave a message to ask a legislator to Vote Yes or No on a particular Bill (leave your name and address). This is especially useful if the Bill is being voted on that day or the next.