



## Advocacy Tips 101

### If I am planning a trip to the legislature, how can I visit my Representative and Senator?

- To find your representatives, visit [www.ncleg.net](http://www.ncleg.net) Click on *Who Represents Me?*
- It is best to contact your legislator ahead of time to schedule an appointment. During session, committee hearings are held and their schedules can be quite chaotic.
- You should follow up after your visit. Send them a letter or email thanking them for taking time to meet with you.
- You can also visit the Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate to share your concerns.

### What Do Legislators Want to Hear?

- It's important to be prepared with the message you want to share. We suggest you focus on 3 key talking points. Is there an ask? YES! Be specific about what you want your legislator to do. For example: Vote YES on Raise the Age legislation! Support strengthening the state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- What is your personal story? Why is this issue important to you?
- Leave them a one-page document with your key talking points.
- Send a follow up "thank you" note.

### Preparation—It is always important to do your homework before the meeting. Here's a brief checklist:

- **Materials:** Bring a one-page (or shorter) handout that supports your position. (We will provide this for investing in children).
- **Message:** Practice and prepare your standard pitch prior to the meeting. Keep it simple. But, do be specific in your ask. Don't forget the facts. Share your personal story and let your legislator know why this issue important to you.
- **Background:** It's always good to do a little research on your legislator and know their positions on your issues. Why are they supporting or opposed to your issue? How can you address their concerns with your story?
- **Build the relationship:** The first meeting will likely not be the last time you meet with your legislator, so if it seems appropriate, don't hesitate to connect with them on a personal level.
- **Set a follow-up plan:** It's important for legislators to know that you will be following up with them. Creating a follow-up plan allows you to hold legislators accountable and allows you to continue advocating for your issue.
- **Remember:** Legislators are regular folks just like us. Many were teachers, lawyers or small business owners.