

How to Write a Fact Sheet

A fact sheet is THE most important thing to have. It is a summation of your issue that you will hand out to everyone - legislator, staff person, and sometimes the opposition. Legislators do not have a lot of time, and are not going to read a book on each piece of legislation - they will barely glance at one page. Fact sheets need to capture their attention and get the main points across.

Below are some pointers:

- Write as little as possible to get your point across. Can you read the main points in 5 seconds before it hits the waste can?
- Explain the basic intent
- List the supporters besides yourself
- Pretend that you have never heard of this issue before. How can you present it in 20 words or less?
- Try to use only part of one page. Make print large enough to be easily read. Highlight important details.

How to Testify Before Committee

Testimony can be a powerful opportunity to share your voice with legislators. It gives you a chance to share your story and a chance for the legislators to ask questions. Personal stories carry the most weight with legislators, and proper delivery of testimony is key. It is ideal to have lobbied all of the legislators on the committee before giving testimony; this way you can address particular concerns in your testimony, and expect what questions will be asked (and prepare ways to respond).

Below are some pointers:

- Testify only if your testimony is needed. If the legislators are anxious to vote – do not waste their time by testifying – a quick vote can be a very good thing.
- Do not READ your testimony. Write down some key points and speak from the heart. Reading off a page with no eye contact, and stumbling over words does not sound very good. Know your key points, and just use notes.
- Share personal reasons for your support or opposition to the legislation. Do not repeat statewide data as the legislators already know this.
- If you know what some objections to your stance are, prepare some responses that you can use if the legislators ask you a question.