



LOBBY YOUR REPS TO LET NY VOTE

Tips for Effective Lobbying | Tips for Scheduling a Meeting | Pre-Meeting Checklist | Post-Meeting Checklist | Let NY Vote Tracking Sheet | Policy 1-sheet

Tips for Effective Lobbying

- **Remember that lawmakers are human beings.** Begin your meeting with a compliment, if possible. Be friendly, polite, and dress respectfully. The Golden Rule applies to lobbying, too.
- **Never be late.** It's a sign of disrespect that will be remembered when the lawmaker considers your viewpoint. Also, they won't wait around for you. You're also likely to find that the member has left for another appointment.
- **Put in it writing.** Always provide a fact sheet on your issue to lawmakers and their staff. If it's not on paper, it won't be remembered. Plus, staffers need to write memos and floor statements for their bosses. Do the work for them.
- **Do your homework.** Know if the lawmaker has taken a stance on the issue before or if she/he has particular areas of interest or concern.
- **All politics is local.** Share how the issue will affect the lawmaker's district and local reasons for why the lawmaker should take the stance you advocate.
- **Never lie or make up information.** A lobbyist's greatest strength is their credibility—lose that and you're through. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell them you'll try to find out and then follow up promptly.
- **There is strength in numbers and strange bedfellows.** Build coalitions as broad and deep as you can. Mention how many members you have in the rep's district (if it's sizeable) and the number of groups in your coalition.
- **Be a good listener.** It will help endear you to the lawmaker and give you valuable information about the lawmaker's views and concerns. Don't do all the talking; have a conversation.
- **Press for a commitment.** Ask the lawmaker directly if she/he will take the particular stance you support or undertake the task you've requested.
- **Build a relationship.** Try to get to know lawmakers and their staff. Look for common interests, backgrounds, etc. Members and staff are more likely to meet with you again and listen to your views if they know who you are and have a friendly feeling toward you.
- **Say thank you.** Always thank lawmakers for taking time to meet with you and any good stances they take on your issues. Everyone likes positive feedback.
- **Don't forget staff.** They're the eyes and ears—and doorkeeper—for your rep.
- **Be strategic.** Focus your efforts on persuadable "swing" votes. Don't waste your time on avowed opponents or known allies (except to say thanks)
- **Don't burn bridges unnecessarily.** Use confrontation as a tool, not a way of life. Lawmakers won't always do what you want, but they might sometimes if you keep a cordial relationship.
- **The squeaky wheel gets the grease.** Don't expect miracles. However, polite persistence pays off. And remember, the power of the ballot box is yours!

Source: Ohio Environmental Council, www.theOEC.org

Text VOTENY to 97779 to get involved
Visit LetNYvote.org to find out how you can help build the movement

Tips for Scheduling a Meeting

1. Call the district office and ask to speak with a scheduler. Ask to set up a meeting with your legislator in his/her home district. Make sure to let the scheduler know you are a constituent and be sure to write down their name and email address so you can reference it later.
 2. Try not leave the phone call without having a meeting scheduled, even if the meeting is scheduled for 3-4 weeks away. Have multiple options for dates to meet with your legislator ready. Thursdays and Fridays are typically the best times for representatives to be at their local offices.
 3. If the legislator isn't available, ask to meet with a staffer. The best person to meet with is the Chief of Staff or the Legislative Director.
 4. You may be asked to fill out a form before they will schedule a meeting with you. Fill it out completely and send it back as quickly as you can.
 5. If you're asked what you want to discuss at the meeting, you can say "making our elections work better," "voting reform" or "fair and efficient elections."
 6. For group visits, don't worry if you don't know the names of the people who'll accompany you to the meeting. You can say that you would like a meeting for 3-5 constituents and that you'll provide all of their names before the meeting.
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Pre-Meeting Checklist

- Do you know what your "ask" is?
 - Did you pack our attached 1-sheet (with your contact information on it) and any backup (i.e., newspaper article, report, photos, etc.)?
 - Are you ready to refute opposition arguments?
 - Are you ready to "Start where they are, not where you are"?
 - Do you have a personal anecdote to share?
 - Do you have a couple of questions you want to ask?
 - Did you bring along a "thank you" or a compliment to share?
 - Is there a field trip or event upcoming to which you can invite the lawmaker?
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Post-Meeting Checklist

- Did you make the "ask"?
- What did the lawmaker say/promise/question/dispute/request?
- Why does the lawmaker support/oppose/have no position on your "ask"?
- Make a note of:
 - The date, time, and location of the meeting
 - The lawmaker's staff who attended the meeting
 - What teammates who joined you for the meeting
 - What information you shared with the lawmaker
 - What strongly held beliefs, personal experience, trusted sources, etc., that the lawmaker cited to back up their position/actions/votes
 - Mementoes, awards, photos, etc., displayed in the lawmaker's office
- Do you owe the lawmaker any additional information?
- Did you send a follow-up letter, email, or note?
- Did a member of your group report the results of the meeting back to Let NY Vote by completing this [short form](#)?**

Let NY Vote Tracking Sheet

(Print this out, take it with you, and fill out at your meeting)

When you return from your meeting, please enter this information on our [online form](#).

Legislator:

District:

Staffer met with:

Meeting date:

Meeting time:

Meeting location:

Your contact info:

Groups or individuals participating:

Script (feel free to make your own)

In order for our democracy to work, every eligible New Yorker deserves access to register and vote in our elections. New York is far behind the rest of the nation in terms of voting laws and it's time to catch up. As a member of the Let NY Vote coalition, I want to see the following passed immediately in 2019, as equitable, accessible, comprehensive and fully funded legislation. What are your positions on the following?

<p>The Legislator's Position on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Voting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports WITH at least 2 weekend's and some evenings <input type="checkbox"/> supports WITHOUT at least 2 weekend's and some evenings <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know • Automatic Voter Registration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports DMV PLUS other agencies <input type="checkbox"/> supports DMV ONLY <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know • Restore voting to people on parole as an automatic measure (does not require additional steps other than to re-register) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports WITH funding <input type="checkbox"/> Supports WITHOUT funding <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know • Flexibility to change your party <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know <input type="checkbox"/> How close to election day? <p>_____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidating state and federal primaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same day registration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know • The Voter Friendly Ballot Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> supports <input type="checkbox"/> opposes <input type="checkbox"/> doesn't know <p>The legislator has agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor a bill <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter to the Speaker <input type="checkbox"/> Write a letter to the editor <input type="checkbox"/> Include position in constituent newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Host a rally <input type="checkbox"/> Host a town hall <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> Other <p>_____</p> <p>Notes</p>
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If you are told that they support/co-sponsor a bill, say:

That's great. But supporting a bill isn't the same thing as passing a law. I want to be sure that [Assemblymember/Senator] is a champion for reform, arguing in conference and doing everything possible to be sure it becomes a law. Will they advocate for Voting Reform on the floor of the [assembly/senate]?

If they have skeptical questions: [we have answers](#).



LET NY VOTE

NEW YORKERS NEED FREE, FAIR AND SECURE VOTING. Unlike many other states, our antiquated laws discourage voting and deny citizens the freedom to vote. New York must be a leader in voting rights, not an excuse for voter suppression. Now is the time.



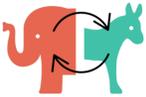
EARLY VOTING

Early Voting is needed to make voting equitable and accessible for all eligible New Yorkers. **It must include a minimum of 2 weekends and some evenings.** Funding should be included in the bill so it can pass before the budget session.



AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

In New York, it is essential that Automatic Voter Registration is **implemented in governmental agencies not limited to the DMV** (e.g., Medicaid, etc).



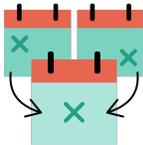
FLEXIBILITY TO CHANGE PARTY AFFILIATION

New York has the most restrictive deadline in the country - **the change of party deadline must be shortened** to allow people to make an informed decision.



PERMANENTLY RESTORE VOTING TO PEOPLE ON PAROLE

Restoring voting rights for people on parole needs to be codified in law, so **restoration is automatic and does not require additional steps other than to re-register.** It must include and fund implementation, education, information and directions in alternative formats. This is the first step toward ensuring that New Yorkers incarcerated for a felony conviction never lose the right to vote.



CONSOLIDATED PRIMARIES

New York is the only state with two primaries, which is confusing for voters and a waste of taxpayer money. It's time for New York to act responsibly and hold **one primary for congressional and state offices, preferably in June.**



SAME DAY REGISTRATION

It's time to **amend New York's constitution to allow Same Day Registration** to boost our woefully low voter turnout and allow voters to correct inaccuracies or make changes in their voter registration when they go to vote.



READABLE, WELL-DESIGNED BALLOTS

New York needs legible, clear ballots. **The Voter Friendly Ballot Act**, written in consultation with specialists in the fields of graphic design, user experience, and disability accommodation amongst others, should become law in 2019.

Who is Let NY Vote? Let NY Vote is a statewide coalition of grassroots groups, established organizations, unions, and everyday citizens fighting to modernize New York's elections. Our goal is to pass simple solutions to improve our elections and make registering and voting more accessible and equitable for all eligible New Yorkers.

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