MARK’S TOP TEN LIST FOR COMMUNICATING WITH STATE LEGISLATORS*

1. Know what it is you want to talk to them about
2. Be on time
3. Introduce yourself – what are your credentials
4. Get to the point – you may only have 10 minutes – prioritize what’s most important and stick to your talking points (you have prepared talking points right?)
5. Leave paper. Short, to point and in priority array with contact number
6. Localize the issue – how does this legislation make your City better – or worse—and it’s ok to be passionate (but no crying please!)
7. Tell your legislator who is on the other side (be nice about it)
8. Close the deal – ask support or ask if more information is needed – try to get a commitment
9. Ask who on staff your can communicate with on future on this issue and follow-up quickly
10. Send a thank you note – no matter what (all ‘thank you’ letters get read) and be sure to ask in the note “if there is anything I can do to be helpful to you..”

AND DON’T – talk politics; embellish, overstate or make ultimatums; don’t guess

*And if you’ve waited until session to have your first face-to-face you’re too damn late! Talk to them pre-session and talk to them early in session and them talk to them again!

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