



Give Effective Legislative Testimony

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Legislative Grassroots Training

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Keys to Effective Advocacy

First and Foremost:  
Understand your Audience



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What Impacts Our Audience?

1. Time
2. Lack of expertise
3. Voters
4. Facts
5. Media
6. Personal Experience



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- Oil Tanker, Insiko abandoned 220 miles from Hawaii
- Hokget left on board
- \$300,000 was spent to save the dog
- “We are best able to respond when we are focused on a single victim.”

ACLF

AAFP LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

NCCL

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## Delivering your Message-Testimony

- Form
- Delivery
- Mechanics



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## Form

- Frame the message
  - Start with shared value/common ground
- Outline of Presentation
  - Problem
  - Solution
  - Action



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## Delivery

- Content of Message
- Words
- Inflection/emotion
- Body language



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## Famous Study on Effectiveness of Spoken Communications

- 7% of meaning is in the words that are spoken
- 38% of meaning is paralinguistic-the way the words are said
- 55% of the meaning is in facial expression



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## Mechanics

The Art and Science of Legislative Testimony



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## Not what you think

- Not fact finding
- Rarely are the factual assertions you make taken at face value as true because...
- Two exceptions



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## So why is it important you show up?



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## Goal

- #1 You care
- Truthful/Credible
- Competent /Knowledgeable



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## Mechanics

- Name and Where From (Recognize Your Legislator)
- State Purpose
- State Reasons
- Tell Story
- Sit Down



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## Dos and Don'ts

- Answer question and only question
- Stay within yourself
- KISS: Avoid Jargon
- Difficult questions



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## Dos and Don'ts (cont'd)

- Don't get defensive; keep cool
- If no one listening; keep going
- Don't read statement
- Prior legislatures



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## Dos and Don'ts (cont'd)

- Know when to keep quiet/watch crossfire
- Don't tell them what they can and can't do
- Don't ever say "As I said earlier" or "We will get to that later"



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## Dos and Don'ts (cont'd)

- Visual aids OK ...maybe



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## Dos and Don'ts (cont'd)

Big Rule ... "I don't know but I will get back with you by (time certain)"



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## Testimony

How not to do it.



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## Contact Information

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