

CALLING LEGISLATORS

Often the most immediate way to communicate with a legislator is by telephone. You should make your voice heard because you are a citizen and you have something to say – and that is valuable.

To find out the telephone number of your senator or representative, you may either:

- Visit www.legis.state.pa.us and search for your representative or senator, or type in your zip code to find out who your legislators are.
- Look in the blue pages of your local phone book.

Before you call:

1. Do your homework. Have the correct information and NASW-PA approved key message on the issue. If you have questions about a position NASW-PA has taken, e-mail Benny (bbrown.naswpa@socialworkers.org).
2. Have a firm, clear idea of the point you want to get across.
3. Organize your facts and arguments. Consider writing notes or a script.
4. Be clear about the action you want your legislator to take.
5. Call the office of the elected official during business hours.
6. Calls to the State Legislators should be made to their Capitol office during legislative session and to their district offices during recess.

During the call:

1. Remember that a staff member, not a legislator, often takes telephone calls. Ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue on which you wish to comment.
2. Identify yourself as a constituent, not just a voter. Give your own name (not NASW-PA's name), address and district.
3. Tell the aide you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative (name) that I support/oppose (SB___/HB___)."
4. You will also want to state reasons for your support or opposition to the bill. Ask for your Senator or Representative's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.
5. If you are speaking to the legislator, be persistent, but polite.
6. Indicate your appreciation for past votes on the issue, if possible.