Advocates for your profession is important. You may be called on to provide testimony before a legislative committee, communicate with your representative or senator on issues, or give a presentation at a town hall. This TPA Advocacy Tip Sheet is intended to offer some helpful reminders.

Best Practices

Be prepared. Know what's needed and expected. What bill or topic are you speaking about? Are you speaking on (as a subject matter expert), in support (of a specific piece of legislation) or against (opposing the bill). Is there a time limit? Can you submit written testimony? Where and when is the hearing, meeting or presentation?

You don't have to be an expert on everything. Speak about what you do know. Come armed with facts. Be confident and be prepared to share your professional expertise and your personal story (why and how a bill could impact your profession, your patients, etc.).

Start and stop on time. Whether it's a meeting in a legislator's office, testimony before a committee or a presentation during a town hall, be sure to determine how much time you have. Prepare your remarks accordingly. Be respectful of the member's or staff member's time and your own!

Staffers matter. If you're taking part in a Capitol Day or visit with an elected official in Austin or in their district office, you may end up meeting with a staffer instead. Don't be disappointed. Often staff members have great influence over legislative decision making and are often more well versed in your issue.

Do's and don'ts during a legislative visit or testimony.
Maintain eye contact. Tell the truth. Be accurate. Keep promises, e.g. follow up with requested information. Avoid jargon. Report back to Texas Psychological Association staff and leadership with what you learned or experienced.


Show gratitude. A handwritten note, formal letter or simple email thanking the member for their time and interest in your issue is important.

Questions? Jennifer Waisath Harris, TPA's public relations and communications consultant is here to help. jharris@jwhcommunications.com | 512-773-1768