



TIPS and TOOLS FOR CITY OFFICIALS

Legislative Communication and Advocacy

Ways to Stay Informed on Metropolitan City Issues

- Read Metro Cities newsletter including “**Bills of Note**” each week.
- Respond to action alerts on bills/issues affecting cities.
- Use social media to follow issues, policymakers, organizations.
 - @MetroCitiesMN
 - Assume everything you post can be shared widely. Keep it positive!

Tips for Communicating with Legislators

- Get to know them!
 - Develop working relationships and communicate regularly.
 - Reach out to newly elected lawmakers who represent the city.
 - Keep communications friendly, concise, timely and relevant.
 - Consistent messages and themes are helpful in advocating for city priorities in meetings, emails or handouts.
- Invite your legislators to a City Council meeting.
 - Inform them about specific issues of interest and let them know what is important to your city.
- Be polite! *Please* and *thank you* go a long way.
- Figure out their preferred method of communication.
 - Phone/email/social media
- Stay in touch!

Tips for Providing Effective Testimony

- Be informed on protocols for testimony (speaking through the chair, being mindful of time limits, et al). Metro Cities staff can help with testimony protocol and preparation.
- Be brief and to the point in your testimony. Avoid repeating comments that have been made by previous testifiers.
- Make sure to tell *your story*. Use specifics to convey your point(s).
- Anticipate questions.
 - It is okay to say that you plan to get more information if you cannot answer a question. Don't try to guess.

