

ADVOCACY

AAUW NC



Thank you to Kay Paksoy who prepared this information for use on April 9 Advocacy Day for NC Women United

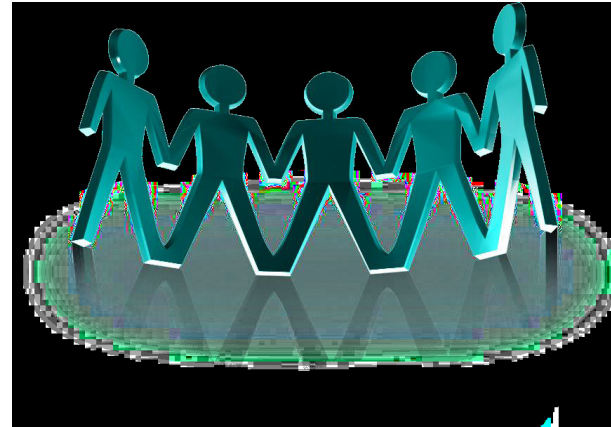
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Why advocate?

- Being a Representative or Senator is a PART TIME job in NC!
- We are the experts on the issues affecting women and girls.
- We can relay messages of problems going on in specific legislative districts (our communities).
- We can help influence decision making because we know how to look at an issue from a community perspective.

- **We** are the constituents
- **We** are the voters



• Legislators are in office to represent their districts and **we** need to have a voice in the representation.

How can you influence legislation?

- Help write a bill/draft language to an issue
- Attend a committee meeting to speak on behalf of the bill OR provide your legislator with information to share at a committee meeting
- Write a letter or email to your legislator; schedule an in person meeting or talk on the phone
- Educate others that should be involved on the issue

Lobbying Dos

- 1.DO** be TRUTHFUL. You want to gain respect from the legislator.
- 2.DO** relate the issue to the specific district of the legislator—present the need.
- 3.DO** show knowledge on both sides of the issue.
- 4.DO** admit if you do not know the answer. Respond that you will get back with the legislator as soon as possible and get the accurate information.
- 5.DO** show interest in getting to know the legislator's staff.
- 6.DO** follow up the visit with a thank you note, email or phone call.

Lobbying Don'ts

1.DON'T LIE.

2.DON'T be disrespectful to the legislator who does not agree with your position.

3.DON'T argue with the legislator.

4.DON'T overload the legislator with too much information. General rule of thumb- one visit, one issue.

5.DON'T let the conversation get sidetracked from the point. Keep everyone on topic.

6.DON'T assume they know the issue you are talking about. Give them ALL the information, even if it seems redundant.



How do I advocate?

- Visit your legislators- both in Raleigh and back in your district
- Phone calls
- Email
- Hand write a letter
- Join other groups and coalitions that fight to make a difference

How will the legislator respond?

- One of three ways:
- -Supportive- offer to be present at meetings or provide more information. *Ask what YOU can do for THEM on this issue*
- -Opposed- listen to their points, share your points and find common ground. They may consider your opinion and lessen their opposition.
- -On the fence- what you say may influence their decision. Ask how you can help formulate their vote- give more info, share stories, follow up with an email, etc.

Thank you notes

- After every legislative visit, you should follow up with a thank you note
- You can write out the note and leave with the legislator BEFORE you leave or send when you return home

If the legislator is not there

- Reschedule an appointment
- Leave material/information with a staff member
- Or schedule a phone call
- Confirm the rescheduled appointment prior to the date

Find more about your representatives:

- www.ncleg.net > [Who Represents Me](#) (enter your address in the House and Senate maps, click in the map to select the indicated district, and then click the “open member page”)
- You can also find your districts at the [State Board of Elections > Voter Lookup](#) page. Then use the [House Member List](#) and [Senate Member List](#) to get the member names and links to the page with their contact info, voting records, and more.
- Once you have the representatives’ names, the “View Member Info” dropdown at the top of www.ncleg.net is your gateway to more information about them.

Summary

- Find out about AAUW Issues by going to www.aauw.org/issues/
- Find out what's happening in the NC Legislature
- Study the issues and be brief
- Make an appointment with the legislator
- Make the visit, ADVOCATE, and write a “thank you” note
- Keep in touch with the home office and attend Advocacy Day in Raleigh