

# Tips for a Successful Meeting with a Legislator

- ⌘ **Be on time, flexible and friendly.** Arrive early and be willing to wait. Delayed appointments can be very beneficial if they give you time to get to know the member's staff. Meeting with staff can be as productive as seeing the Senator or Representative personally. Flexibility is important because schedules get juggled at a moment's notice. You may meet with a legislator in their office, outside the chambers or hearing rooms, or even in the hall walking between appointments.
- ⌘ **Ask for support.** Your Representative, Senator or a member of their staff should be able to give you an indication of the legislator's level of support for a community college priority. It is appropriate for you to ask for their position.
- ⌘ **Ask about a legislator's priorities.** As with any good relationship it is important to have give and take. Ask your legislator what his or her priorities are. This is an excellent opportunity to find out more about them and their agenda. It can also be an opportunity to work together on additional issues.
- ⌘ **Be positive, friendly, and brief.** Stick to the issues and facts and don't overstay your welcome. Legislative offices are friendly places but they are also places of intense activity.
- ⌘ **OCCA.** Remind legislators and their staff that the Oregon Community College Association which represents your interests is headquartered in Salem and OCCA staff is always willing and able to provide information on issues that impact the colleges in their district.
- ⌘ **Photo Op.** Ask to take a photograph with your legislator so that the public information officer at your college can send a news release and picture to your local newspaper for publicity. This helps to communicate to your community that you are actively working on their behalf as well as to remind your legislator that folks back home care about community college issues.
- ⌘ **Get business cards.** Ask for business cards of any staff member you talk to for easy reference when writing your thank you letters. Remember to leave your business card and college information when you are visiting their office.

Adapted from material provided by ACCT & AACC.