

## TESTIFYING AT THE STATE HOUSE

### Testimony can be used to:

- Deliver a Message
- Set the Record Straight
- Impact Policy/Legislation
- Ask the Legislature to Consider a Perspective
- Generate Coverage of an Issue

### Tips for testifying:

- **Arrive early.** If you think you will want to ask a question or make a comment, arrive early and put your name on the sign-in sheet.
- **Practice before-hand.** The more confident and concise you seem, the more likely your testimony will be remembered.
- **Keep it concise and direct.** Your job is to offer a viewpoint or ask a question and put it back to the committee to further debate/discuss. Choose one issue and stick to it. If you have short comments to make in addition, be sure “the ask” for them to support or defeat legislation is the last thing you say.

### General format for testifying/making a comment about an ISSUE:

1. Thank the committee chair for allowing you to speak.
2. State your name and hometown (or, say that you grew up in town X if that’s more relevant to the program and topic at hand) and the issue you are here to address.
3. Share your personal story or perspective - why you are interested in/credible on this issue?
4. State a few facts that support your position.
5. Make “the ask” that the legislator support or oppose [insert legislation name].
6. *Optional.* Tell the committee that you are happy to answer any question they may have.

