



RAMSEY FARRAR RUSSELL & SMITH
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



Legislator Meeting Etiquette and Reminders

The point of holding meetings and talking with legislators is to talk to them about issues that are important to Tennessee REALTORS® and to persuade them to vote on legislation that is in the best interest of our members and the public.

- It is also important to be familiar with talking points and issues days before the meeting. Being well prepared and timely will make a great impression and show how professional and serious you are as an advocate for Tennessee REALTORS®.
- Be on time for the meeting (whether virtual or in-person). A good rule of thumb is to show up prepared 10-15 minutes before the meeting is scheduled to start.
- Stick to the Key Issue(s) established for the meeting. This will help maintain the focus and keep from getting off topic.
- Keep to your scheduled time and if possible, keep it short and sweet. Legislators, especially while in session, have a very busy schedule. Always make sure you quickly and effectively communicate your point.
- **Never exaggerate or misrepresent facts!** If you don't know something, that's OK—but it's not OK to exaggerate or misrepresent and/or make up facts! If you don't know something let the legislator know that you are not sure but that you will circle back with them when you have the answer or facts needed.
- **Never argue with a legislator and, most important, always remain respectful and professional.** Remember, you are representing more than 30,000+ Tennessee REALTORS®.

- A great way to create bonds between you and the legislator is to give them a personal, real-world anecdote that effectively illustrates the issue. This can be significantly effective when expressing the urgency and importance of an issue. A plus: this helps to build that personal relationship between you and the legislator.
- Here is an example:

If the state business tax increased, it will cost me and my fellow REALTORS® thousands of dollars each year and will result in some of us to either having to close shop or lay off employees.

This can be more effective than giving big numbers like:

This tax increase will cost REALTORS® an estimated \$10 million a year.

- At the end of your meeting, be sure to **thank the legislator** for their time and for the opportunity to speak with them about important bills and issues related to real estate.
- Thank you!