



“In-District” Senate & House Meeting Tips for 2025-2026 Biennium Budget Increase

INTERNAL - to our Network of Programs

You don't have to come to Cheyenne to tell your Members of the Wyoming Legislature what you think – you can schedule a meeting with them in your own neighborhood or office.

Alternatively, you can also invite them to an event that your organization is planning, attend a town hall where they will be or invite them to tour your program and learn more about your services.

The Importance of Meeting Them “in District”

If they're in their home community they would have much more time to learn about you and the unique perspective you have in serving people in your community. Learning who may already have an existing relationship with these legislators will go a long way to making a visit super easy for you. Reaching out to the following people to gauge their interest in doing this meeting with you:

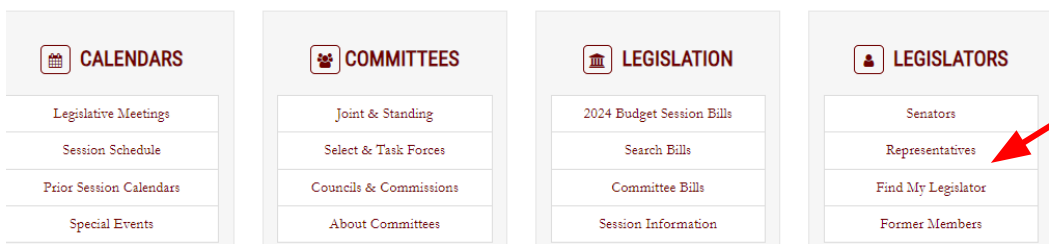
- your board of directors,
- current and former staff,
- people you have served
- and volunteers.

Citizen Legislators: Members of the Wyoming Legislature —Representatives and Senators— do not have staff and are considered a “citizen legislator”. They may have full-time occupations outside their elected office. Some may be retired, too. These elected officials have no staff, although you may find family members assisting them. The Legislative Services Office (LSO) has staff to sit in on committee meetings and draft and amend legislation. They work for the legislature, not any single elected Senator or House of Representative.

As You Contemplate Asking for a Meeting with your Legislator

Know who your Legislator is. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the Legislator and know their political party, committee assignments, support of our issues if you can, and any relevant biographical details. But where do you start?

1. Knowing what “district” your program is in will tell you who your legislators are in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The county your program serves may have several people who have some part of the county. Looking at all the elected people in your county will expand the number you can talk to - they all need to learn what you do!
2. If you enter your program address [in this link](#) (or see picture below and go to wyoleg.gov and click on “Find My Legislator”), you will see who specifically covers your program. Looking at all the elected people in your county will expand the number you can talk to - they all need to learn what you do!



3. If you can talk with others who follow politics in your area, they will have a lot of information to share. Google the person’s name and other identifying information and you’ll see a lot of media attention, especially around previous elections, but also articles about legislative committees they are on and what they have done lately.

How to Schedule a Meeting

When you find your elected Senator and House of Representative, from the website above, click on Senators or Representatives just above the red arrow in the picture on the live website. They'll be listed alphabetically in the House and Senate.

You can either email them by clicking on the small envelope by their name, or call the phone number listed. Be prepared to leave a voicemail, but also, see below, they may be ready to talk to you right then and there and want to know some specifics. Urge them to come visit as they need to see inside the walls of your program if they have never been there. They may be filled with a lot of stereotypes of what your services are, or what survivors are like.

Before Your Visit

Organize a group and plan ahead. The purpose of your meeting is to help your Legislator understand the impact state legislation and funding has on your program and the specific impact of actual or proposed cuts, and in 2023, hopeful budget increases. If possible, organize a group of community partners that can describe the role that your program plays in their work or the impact that they have seen it have in the community. Also, reach out to that list on the first page, a board member, staff, someone you have served, or a volunteer. Some may really want to engage in this process.

Hopefully the Legislator will have time for a tour if appropriate. Appoint someone to be the main spokesperson, but make sure everyone introduces themselves during the meeting. Also, deciding ahead of time who will talk about what can make the meeting go smoothly.

During Your Visit

Be on time and be patient. Email, call or text (whichever seems most appropriate) the legislator if you will be late. If your Representative or Senator is late or the meeting is interrupted, please be patient and flexible.

Thank your Legislator if they have been supportive in the past. If you know they have voted the right way in the past in previous legislative sessions, make sure to thank them. You can look up recent legislation WCADVSA has supported or opposed on our website. Go to www.wyomingdvsa.org, find the "Get Involved" tab, and click on public policy. You can then see how the legislator voted on wyoleg.gov. That takes some time, but knowing this background can be very helpful and will help start the meeting positively and demonstrate your appreciation. Small talk about local events or people you know in common is also great for an ice breaker.

Tell your story to make the case for your ask. Prepare personal, county or state specific stories and statistics to demonstrate how their support has made a difference in their district,

why their support is critical today, and how the current level of funding doesn't meet the need. Keep it simple and above all, non-partisan!

Bring materials to support your request. Be prepared for your meetings with factsheets, materials about your program, stories and statistics from your community, and business cards. There is a specific handout you can follow as you tell your story and make your ask.

Make the “ask”. Your goal is to enlist your Legislator’s support for a state funding increase. After you have discussed the issue, ask direct questions! (*Example: “Will you support the Governor’s special increase for DV/SA programs? Will you ask for what we really need in the budget which is 3 times more than the Governor’s ask?”*)

Be responsive and build a relationship. Be prepared to answer questions. However, if you don't know the answer, please do not feel pressured to come up with something. Respond by saying you don't know the answer, but you will follow up and get back to them.

After Your Visit

Thank them for meeting with you and follow up promptly afterwards. Thank your Legislators for taking the time to talk with you and let them know that you appreciate their work to help survivors. Send a thank-you email and follow up to remind them to support our requests. Be sure to send any information that you promised.

Congratulations. You just made a new friend, and a new partner for your program - someone who can help get you what your program needs.