Contacting your legislators

1. Email or call your two Representatives and one Senator. Most likely you will reach their Legislative Assistant (LA).

2. Let the legislator/assistant know that you are a constituent and that you would like to schedule a time to meet with Representative/Senator __________________ about several children’s health priorities.

   You can mention that you are with the WA Chapter AAP or not.... Your call.

3. Offer to meet wherever is most convenient for the legislator. If it is during the interim, you can meet in your home district. During session, legislators are in Olympia.

   You could also offer to have the legislator come to your practice (if appropriate) for a tour... just to see how a pediatric practice works from the inside!

4. If you get a voice mail and/or don’t hear back, wait about 4-5 days and follow up.

5. It is important to identify that you know that Rep./Sen. ____________________ is very busy and don’t want to bug them but would love to get on his/her calendar if at all possible.

   NOTE: Legislative Assistants are the entrée to your legislators so developing a relationship with them is also very important. If either during the interim or during the session the Legislative Assistant indicates that the legislator may not be able to meet but they would be more than happy to meet with you, it is a good idea to take them up on it! It generally won’t happen but definitely could.

6. Be patient but persistent!

Preparing for and attending the meeting(s)

1. Make sure you have the [WCAAP legislative priorities](#) one pager and any briefing papers available on the relevant subjects.

2. Check to see [how they voted on bills](#) that you are concerned with and if appropriate, thank them for their support.

3. If you are meeting your legislators for the first time, it would be good to look at their website so that you can learn a bit about them.
4. Talk a bit about yourself, how long you’ve been in practice, where you practice, etc..... It is good to get to know your legislators but don’t want to spend too much of what is probably limited time on this!

5. Discuss the priority one pager and briefing papers.

   Feel free to focus on the priority (priorities) you are most familiar with/passionate about.

6. Keep an open dialogue, even if you don’t agree with their perspective.

7. If you indicate that you will provide follow up information, make sure to do so.

8. Let us know how your meeting went (just a quick email would be fine!) and if there is anything you would like us to do by way of follow up.

Remember to never burn a bridge.... With the LA or legislator!

If you do not know the answer to a question, be honest and let them know that you will find out and get back to them. The legislative committee can help you find these answers.