



Tips for Writing Testimony and Testifying Before a Committee

Be Familiar with the Committee Process

- You can find out more about the committee you are testifying before [here](#). Select the committee from the Senate or House left hand menu. On their main page scroll to the bottom and select ***Witness Guidelines and Committee FAQs***. Each committee has a FAQ sheet to give you information about how to sign up, the times signups are available, etc. Please note, to sign up to give testimony a MYMGA account must be created. Video tutorials can be found [here](#).
- Know the format of how testimony will be given and the meeting time. If in person, know the location of the building and the meeting room. Meeting schedules can be found [here](#).
- The bills may not be heard in the order they appear online. Check to make sure the bill you are testifying for has not been removed from the agenda.
- If possible, consider watching a committee hearing before you testify to become familiar with the process.

Preparing Written Testimony

- Keep it simple. Try to limit to 1 to 2 pages.
- Clearly state the bill number, position (oppose, support, support with amendment), and bill title at the top of the page.
- Enumerate 1 to 3 major reasons for position in bold headers.
- Support opinions with as many facts as possible.
- Keep your language accessible, and avoid using complicated jargon.
- Conclude and offer to be a resource.

Testifying Before a Committee

- When you are called to testify, begin your presentation by addressing the chairperson first, then members of the committee. "Chair _____, members of the committee..."



- For the record, state your name and the organization you represent.
- State your position for the bill being heard and briefly explain.

“Good afternoon Chair _____, and members of the _____ Committee. I am __ (Your Name) __
testifying on behalf of __ (Organization) __. I’m here today in opposition/support/support with
amendment for House/Senate Bill _____.”

- Be knowledgeable of the other side of the story. You may be asked to discuss the differences.
- Typically committee Chairs only allow each person **3 minutes** to give verbal testimony. Do not read your written testimony. Prepare an outline. It is not uncommon for a Chair to cut you off once 3 minutes has ended.
- Thank the committee members and offer to answer any questions. “Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer questions”.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, it is acceptable to say, “I do not know but will get back to you with the information.”
- Be respectful.
- Do not accuse committee members of causing a particular problem.
- Resist the temptation to scold, put down, or insult the other witnesses or viewpoint. This tactic will likely alienate them from the cause.