

# Kansas WEALTH Day of Advocacy and Education



## TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### DO

- ✓ Make an appointment
- ✓ Dress neatly
- ✓ Introduce yourself
- ✓ Stick to the subject at hand
- ✓ Be curious
- ✓ Acknowledge if you don't know something
- ✓ Be honest
- ✓ Know something about the official
- ✓ Be cordial to the assistant
- ✓ Be on time - but be prepared to wait
- ✓ Know the bill number/name and something about it
- ✓ Call or write in a summary of the meeting
- ✓ Thank the public official for the meeting
- ✓ Enjoy your visit - you are making a difference!

### DON'T

- ✓ Be angry
- ✓ Be hostile ("I'm a taxpayer!")
- ✓ Threaten ("You'll pay for this at the polls!")
- ✓ Be afraid to be confident
- ✓ Have a lot of material (It will never be read)
- ✓ Lose credibility (It will affect everyone who lobbies on the same subject after you)

### POINTS TO KNOW

- ✓ Most public officials are happy when their constituents visit - they'll be friendly
- ✓ Public officials want people to like them
- ✓ You pay their salary, they work for you
- ✓ Cultivate a good rapport with the assistant and staff - they can be very helpful

Follow up with your legislators by writing them a WEALTH Day Thank You note, and remember to complete your WEALTH Day passport. Drop both your Passport and Thank You's in the box to win prizes!

### **EDUCATE**

- Research your topic. Do your homework. Connect with relevant organizations, like WEALTH Day sponsors.
- Public officials want **authenticity**. They want to hear from individuals, particularly their constituents.
- **Encourage people to get involved. Speak up!** Whether it's letters, emails, or phone calls, get engaged!

### **ADVOCATE**

- Be polite and respectful. Even if you don't agree with your legislator, think about them as a person. **They care about Kansas** or they wouldn't be serving—that's something that we like to keep in mind.
- **Engage in a way that works for you.** Personal visits and phone calls are really impactful when you're talking about issues that matter to you.
- If you don't know who represents you at the Statehouse, go to [openstates.org](https://openstates.org) and type in your address. It will list your state representative, state senator, and congressional representation.
- **Personal letters** are more effective than emails. If legislators get five letters on a given issue you are worried about, that would be a landslide for a lot of them.

### **INTEGRATE**

- Find common ground.
- When legislators return home on weekends, many of them have coffees or other public meetings. Attend these events. **Local interactions** are just as important as visiting the Statehouse.
- **Share your concerns and stories with your elected officials and the people in state agencies** that represent your interests. Work with WEALTH Day sponsors to identify relevant agencies.
- When your local legislator is at home, meet up with them. **Connecting personally is always the most powerful way to advance the things that we care about.**

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## Looking for more ways to get involved?

### **Become a Climate + Energy Voter Ambassador!**

- Join a group of Kansans mobilizing on climate and energy issues!
- Host a Climate + Health Declaration Signing party!

### **Develop Leadership Skills**

- Run for a Local Office.  
<https://candidatebootcamp.com/how-to-run-for-political-office-2019/>
- Join the Kansas Environmental Leadership Network. Email [kel@climateandenergy.org](mailto:kel@climateandenergy.org).

### **Engage and Educate on Climate Issues**

- Start a conversation about WEALTH issues that concern you. Listen to other opinions.
- Volunteer to speak at your church, social group, or public climate issue event.
- Form a climate issue book club (or suggest climate titles to your current book club).

### **Host Educational Events**

- Ask relevant organizations to hold public forums.
- Host a dinner or happy hour in your home to talk about climate issues.
- Create a climate discussion group.

### **Organize and Mobilize**

- Attend advocacy events.
- Give testimony, write letters to the editor, and connect with your legislators on pressing issues.
- Show up and bring friends to advocacy events.

### **Achieve Policy Impact**

- Sign up for CEP Action Alerts - <http://bit.ly/CEPSignUp>
- Stay informed on legislative events via Kansas Rural Center's Policy Watch. <http://bit.ly/KRCPolicyWatch>
- Follow legislative bills and contact your legislators to express your support/opposition. <http://bit.ly/2019KSleg>
- Use personal stories and experiences to explain why these bills are important to you.
- Attend press events and rallies for specific bills.

### **Connect with Elected Officials**

- Write personal letters to your legislators about climate related issues important to you.
- Schedule meetings with them in Topeka or attend meetings they hold back at home.
- Write a thank you to them when they vote in alignment with your issues.

### **Register Voters**

- Ask your friends and family if they're registered.
- Send people to [KSvotes.org](http://KSvotes.org) (and encourage them to request a mail-in ballot).
- Volunteer to help register people to vote.
- Follow and support 'Day of' Voter Registration bills in the Legislature.

### **Get out the Vote**

- Ask friends and family about their voting plan; follow up with them on voting day!
- Volunteer to give rides to underserved communities on election day.
- Encourage friends and family to request mail-in ballots at [KSvotes.org](http://KSvotes.org).
- Normalize voting – talk about it on social media.
- Sign up for TurboVote; encourage peers to also.

### **Defend, Protect, and Expand Voting Rights**

- Ask your legislators to introduce and support 'Day of' Voting Registration bills.
- Follow re-districting measures and voice your support or opposition to them.
- Find and support organizations involved in efforts that interest you.

For more information email [takeaction@climateandenergy.org](mailto:takeaction@climateandenergy.org)