



### 12 TIPS FOR TESTIFYING IN LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Sometimes grassroots advocates are needed to testify at the State Capitol. Here are some tips for testifying in legislative committee meetings should the opportunity arise (these tips can be tailored to local School District Board of Education meetings and other public meetings that offer open forums).

1. Be prepared to wait around. Calendars change often and unfortunately they are often difficult to anticipate.
2. Be sure to sign up to testify when you arrive (write your name clearly and indicate if you support, oppose or are neutral on the bill).
3. When you are called, state your name, and who you represent.
4. Wait to speak until recognized by the chair (this is true for beginning testimony, as well as responding to questions from committee members).
5. Address the chair of the committee as "Madame Chair or Mister Chairman" and all other committee members as "Representative...."Or "Senator..."
6. Begin testimony by stating clearly what your position is and why. e.g. "Citizens for More Fun supports HB 001 because it strengthens public school choice options in Colorado..."
7. Make notes to remind yourself of the most important points you want to make in your testimony.
8. When your testimony is completed, remain seated to see if members have questions.
9. Keep your testimony DIRECT (state your points clearly) and BRIEF (2-5minutes).
10. When your testimony is complete and there are no questions, the committee chair will excuse you. At this point you can simply say "thank you" and return to your seat.
11. If you have handouts, bring enough for each member and staff. You should bring at least 15 copies for House Committees and 10 copies for Senate Committees. You may bring extra copies for the public if you wish to distribute the materials.

These tips came from the Colorado CAN Grassroots Advocacy Toolkit. Read the Toolkit [here](#).