

# PREPARING TO LOBBY: KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE



## Preparing to Lobby

Regardless of the type of lobbying you choose, preparation is a key component for success.

1. **Figure** out your representatives and windows. Find your elected officials and their office information at [pflag.org/leglookup](http://pflag.org/leglookup). Congress is usually in session from early January until October or November. Take a look at our State Legislative Profiles spreadsheet at \_\_\_\_\_ URL\_\_\_\_\_ for information on state legislative sessions.
2. **Check** your elected officials' voting records, co-sponsorship history, and biographical information at <https://votesmart.org>.

## If your elected official already supports our issues:

**Thank** them for standing up for LGBTQ rights.

**Reiterate** how important their support is to you as a constituent.

**Ask** them to cosponsor legislation that they may already be supporting, if they can. By co-sponsoring a bill, our elected leaders go on record to document their support.

**Find** out how you can help support their efforts to show them that they are not fighting the good fight alone.

## If your elected official is in the "conflicted middle":

**Emphasize** the real impact their support means to real families in their district(s) and state.

**Talk** about how support for LGBTQ issues will affect your family and loved ones.

**Ask** what their specific concerns or hesitations may be about a particular bill, and discuss those concerns.

**Offer** PFLAG and your chapter as a resource for your elected official and their staff.

## If your elected official has expressed opposition to our issues:

**Remember** to have a respectful conversation, keeping lines of communication open. Behave professionally, even if others don't reciprocate. Be mindful of your language; insults and mockery don't persuade.

**Emphasize** how an unfavorable vote on a particular issue will impact your family.

**Challenge** assumptions that votes for equal rights—not extra or special rights—won't be popular. Sometimes speaking to the concept of fairness can be very persuasive to a lawmaker on a particular bill even if it is not popular in their district or state.

**Offer** more information about the issues, and offer PFLAG as a resource.