

TIPS FOR MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS

While it may sound intimidating, a five-minute meeting is all it takes to build a valuable relationship with a legislator. Legislators want to hear from constituents, and face-to-face meetings in the district are much more effective than form letters, e-mails, etc. When meeting with your legislator:

- Introduce yourself.
- If asked why you wanted to meet with them, state that you are becoming more active in your state organization's legislative efforts.
- Briefly explain what it is that you do as an audiologist or SLP.
- You may give them copies of any brochures or fact sheets on SLP and audiology services that you feel will be helpful.
- Make them aware of the inequity in the situation regarding the salary supplement for public school audiologists and SLPs. While nationally certified guidance counselors, school psychologists, and classroom teachers receive an annual salary supplement in recognition of their achievement, school-based audiologists and SLPs do not. Act 952 of the 2003 Legislative Session provides for recognition of national (ASHA) certification, but the appropriation to fund a salary supplement for audiologists and speech-language pathologists in Louisiana schools has not been made.
- Try to ascertain their position (support or opposition) on funding for the salary supplement.
- Tell them you will be contacting them again during the session. You might ask your legislators if they object to being contacted via e-mail.
- Leave your business card, or write your name and a way to be contacted on the information you provide to the legislator.

AFTER THE MEETING:

- After you've met with your representative or senator, please complete the [Legislative Contact Form](#), or send an e-mail to legislation@lsha.org with the legislator's name, your name, the town in which you live, where you work, and whether the representative or senator is supportive of funding for the salary supplement.
- Follow-up by sending them a thank you note for meeting with you.

DO NOT:

- Try to impress the legislator with professional jargon, demean the role of other educators that receive the salary supplement, or take a negative or argumentative approach.
- Ask the legislator to support a bill which is already a law. Act 952 passed four years ago and was a major legislative accomplishment. National (ASHA) certification of public school speech-language pathologists and audiologists has already been recognized by the Louisiana legislature. What has not occurred is funding for the salary supplement. Funding would be accomplished by inclusion of the salary supplement in House Bill 1 (the annual budget for the State of Louisiana).