

# **How to Talk to Legislators- Do's and Do Not's**

**Suggestions from APTA MI Lobbyist, Evie Sweeney and Representative Julie Rogers, PT**

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## **1. All Politics are Local!**

- Local constituents are always the most impactful. Legislators want to meet and speak to folks from their district so personally connecting with your local Senator or Rep is always the most impactful.

## **2. Avoid Politicizing an Issue!**

- Speak from a factual, honest perspective. Patient care is apolitical - it never helps to alienate a member by infusing one's personal politics into a healthcare issue. Don't make it a partisan (Republican or a Democrat) issue!

## **3. Know your Audience!**

- Research your legislator ahead of time. Know what their background and profession is and know what committees they are on.
- Address the legislative member by their title (Representative or Senator) and use yours in all communication.

## **4. Share Your Story!**

- Legislators want to know how to help. Just like building a relationship with a patient, connect with your legislator. Share a personal story about how the topic you are concerned about impacts you.

## **5. You are the subject matter expert!**

- Do not be intimidated meeting a legislator when the topic of discussion is what you know best! Their only understanding of the profession may be a personal experience or that of a family member. No one can speak more factually to challenges or experiences within the profession than the person who experiences it! (PT/PTA/student)
- Provide easy to digest, non-medical terminology; think of it as a "PT 101". It is possible that you are the first to educate a legislator on a subject matter.

## **6. Educate on Your Profession!**

- Provide brief, easily digestible facts about the PT profession and what differentiates a PT from other similar professions- what makes PT unique and special!

## **7. Provide a Leave-Behind!**

- Provide the "APTA MI Legislative Quick Facts for Legislators" Leave Behind before you go!
- Give your legislator your contact information!

***Thank You for Your Interest and Desire to Help Move Our Profession Forward!  
Join the APTA Michigan Legislative Advocacy Committee and Get Involved Today!***

If you have any questions or want to get more involved, please contact the APTA Michigan Legislative Director, Abigail Skallerud ([abigail.skallerud@gmail.com](mailto:abigail.skallerud@gmail.com)) or [contact@aptami.org](mailto:contact@aptami.org)