



# Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce Advocacy Committee

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## Public Hearings & Work Sessions: How to Get Involved

Once a bill (LD#) is assigned to a committee, it goes through two main phases:

1. **Public Hearing** – This is when members of the public, including business owners and community leaders, can **share their support, opposition, or concerns** about the bill.
2. **Work Session** – This is when committee members **discuss, debate, and potentially amend** the bill before voting on whether it should move forward.

Both are open to the public and offer important opportunities for you to make your voice heard.

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### 1. Public Hearings: Your Opportunity to Speak Up

A **public hearing** is often the *only* chance to provide testimony on a bill before it moves forward. Anyone can testify—in person, via Zoom, or in writing.

**At a public hearing the committee listens but does not respond to or debate those giving testimonies.** Each speaker is typically given **2-3 minutes** to testify in support of, in opposition of, or neither for nor against the bill.

Testimony is recorded and becomes part of the official record.

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### 2. Work Sessions: What to Expect

During a work session, committee members will **discuss the bill in depth, consider public testimony, propose amendments, and vote on a final recommendation.**

**The public cannot speak during a work session, but you're encouraged to watch.** This is where many key decisions are made.

The committee will vote on one of the following:

- **Ought to Pass (OTP)** – Support the bill as written
- **OTP As Amended** – Support the bill with changes
- **Ought Not to Pass (ONTP)** – Oppose the bill
- **Divided Report** – Committee is split; multiple recommendations go to the full chamber

That recommendation moves with the bill to the full House and Senate.

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### 3. How to Find Hearings and Work Session

- **Check the Weekly Legislative Schedule**

<https://legislature.maine.gov/house/documents/weekly-schedule/>

- **Visit Committee Pages**

<https://legislature.maine.gov/committee/>

- **Watch or Listen to Public Hearings Live**

<https://legislature.maine.gov/Audio/#220>

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#### **Helpful Tip for Members: Timing is Key**

Public hearing dates are usually posted just **a few days in advance**.

Check the legislative calendar early in the week (typically posted on Fridays) and act quickly if you want to speak or submit testimony.