



Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce

Advocacy Committee

Legislative Testimony

Testifying in front of, or submitting testimony to, legislative committees is the way in which you can have the most influence on the laws which affect your business, your livelihood, and the lives of your employees here in Maine.

Having well-crafted testimony is crucial to maximizing the impact of your argument for or against proposed legislation.

Drafting Effective Legislative Testimony

1. Understand the Context

- Research the bill under consideration.
- Familiarize yourself with the legislative committee
 - Members
 - Process
 - Past bills of this kind
 - Watch previous hearings
- Identify key points which you would like to focus on regarding proposed legislation.

2. Structure Your Testimony

- Clearly and concisely introduce yourself and your stance
- Think about what it is that you want from this testimony
- Logically construct the body of your argument
 - Use evidence, data, credible sources, and experts for your points
 - Personal experience and anecdote are applicable when appropriate
 - Make an emotional connection with your audience
 - Address potential counter arguments
 - Be respectful
 - Use reason
- Conclude with a strong summary and call to action

3. Use Clear and Concise Language

- Avoid use of jargon and technical language
- Write in plain language a novice could understand

4. Practice and Rehearse

- Rehearse your testimony to ensure clarity and confidence
- Practice in front of others for feedback
- Time yourself, and make sure you can complete within the allotted three-minute slot

5. Submit Your Testimony

- Submit testimony online via the State's submission portal
 - Ensure document is in the correct format (Word (.doc, .docx), PDF, or .txt)
 - [Submission Portal](#)
- Bring 20 printed copies with you to testify

6. Prepare for Questions

- Expect questions from the committee following your testimony.
- Be ready to provide additional information or clarification
- Remain calm and respectful throughout
- It is okay to not know the answer to a question and to admit that
 - In this instance, offer to do research and to get back to the committee so they will have their answer before work session

7. Attend the Hearing & Testify

- Arrive early to the committee on the day of the hearing and sign in when appropriate
- Dress professionally
- Wait until your turn to present testimony and take notes on testimony delivered before you to
 - Avoid repetition
 - Provide insight and clarity on questions those before you may not have been able to answer
 - Respectfully challenge any claims made by an opposition before you

