

PREPARING FOR ADVOCACY

It is easy to get intimidated when reaching out to an elected official. You may get nervous, flustered, and lose your train of thought. American Kennel Club Government Relations department (AKC GR) works to help prepare you and provide resources to make sure any communication you have with your legislator is a success.

Good preparation is the key to success, and AKC GR is here to help you. Use the following tips to ensure your preparation readies you for your contact:

- **Subscribe -** To AKC GR emails, newsletters, and alerts on www.akc.org, and make sure to check out the [Legislative Action Center \(LAC\)](http://www.akcgr.org) - www.akcgr.org.
- **Follow -** Your local news carefully and watch for the kinds of events that may trigger a dog-related proposal by your local government. *Don't forget to look for public notices on social media. This is where important legislative proposals, meetings, hearings, and details are usually announced.*
- **Familiarize -** Yourself with existing law and the state and local legislative processes in your area.
- **Know -** The rules and procedures for public comment and participation. How can you get on the agenda to speak at a hearing? Are there rules for speaking? How far in advance are hearings announced, and where are such announcements posted?
- **Introduce Yourself -** To your elected officials. Learn who they are, what they support, their personal interests, when they were elected and when they come up for re-election. If there is a new elected official, consider sending them an introductory note prior to any contact related to an issue.
- **Educate -** Yourself about the specific problem in your community and possible solutions. If appropriate, offer an alternative solution. Effective enforcement of existing laws and providing responsible dog ownership education is often the answer. Share AKC education materials on the [LAC](http://www.akcgr.org) and pursue options for distributing them in your community.
- **Involve -** Others. Encourage club members to take an interest in legislative concerns. Share your legislative news with them regularly, so they are prepared to respond when legislative issues arise.

