

Writing Legislative Testimony



Testimony Introduction

Say Who You Are

Begin by introducing yourself, including your full name and any relevant affiliations (e.g., organization or community group).

Clearly state your purpose for testifying and your connection to the issue at hand.

Give an Overview of Your Main Points

Provide a brief summary of the main points you will cover in your testimony.



Testimony Body

Organize Key Points

Start by clearly defining the issue or problem the bill addresses.

Present data, research and statistics that support your stance.

Offer clear, actionable recommendations related to the bill.



Support with Data and Anecdotes

Include specific figures and findings from reputable studies or reports that reinforce your argument.

Share personal stories or experiences that illustrate the impact of the issue.

Address Counterarguments

Identify common counterarguments or concerns related to your position.

Offer well-reasoned responses to these counterarguments, explaining why your perspective remains valid.

Testimony Conclusion

Summarize Key Points

Recap the main arguments and evidence presented in your testimony.

Call to Action

Clearly state what you want the committee to do as a result of your testimony. This might be to vote in favor of the bill, reject it or consider specific amendments.



Tips to Remember

The testimony is public so avoid confidential information.

Make sure your testimony is clear and to the point.



Write in straightforward language to ensure your message is easily understood.

While maintaining a factual basis, don't shy away from appealing to the committee's emotions. Stories of personal impact or hardship can be powerful.

Time your testimony to ensure it fits within the time limit.

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Register to Testify at the Georgia State Capitol

1 Find the Bill



- Go to the official Georgia General Assembly website at www.legis.ga.gov.
- Click on the "Legislation" tab or link to access information about current bills.
- Use the search bar to enter keywords related to your issue (e.g., "STEM education").

2 Check Committee Schedule



- Go to the "Committees" section on the website.
- Select a relevant committee (e.g., House Education).
- Look for the committee's hearing schedule to see when the committee will discuss bills.
- Alternatively, press "Upcoming Schedule", and check the agendas of upcoming Education Committee meetings for bills of interest

3 Plan Your Visit



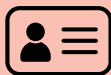
- Arrive early to ensure you get a chance to speak.
- Hearings are held in CLOB (Coverdell Legislative Office Building) or CAP (State Capitol Building).
- Check notice boards outside the offices of the Clerk of the House (309 CAP) and Secretary of the Senate (353 CAP) for up-to-date times and locations.

4 Sign Up to Testify



- Upon arrival at the committee room, find the sign-up sheet provided by the committee staff or chairperson.
- Write your name on the sign-up sheet and indicate whether you are "for" or "against" the bill if asked.
- After registering, wait for the committee chairperson to call your name to testify.

5 Bonus Tip: Contacting Legislators During Full Sessions



- During session, if you need to speak with a legislator directly, fill out a "request to meet at the ropes" slip.
- These slips are available in wooden stands outside the House and Senate chambers on the Capitol's third floor.
- Deliver the slip to the page desk outside the chambers. A page will take your message inside to your legislator.

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Tips for Delivering a Testimony at a Public Hearing

Keep your statements focused and to the point. Aim to present your main arguments within the allotted time of two to three minutes.

01



Speak clearly and at a moderate pace. Ensure your voice is loud enough to be heard by all committee members.



02

Make eye contact with committee members as you speak.

03



Practice out loud to make sure your sentences flow smoothly when spoken.



04

Provide clear and concise answers to questions. Long-winded responses can lose the attention of the audience and muddle your key points.

05



If you are asked a difficult question, take a moment to collect your thoughts before responding. Avoid raising your voice.



06

Connect your responses to questions to the main messages or themes of your testimony. This helps reinforce your overall argument.

07



Maintain respect and avoid personal attacks or dismissive comments.



08

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