

## Tips for Effective Advocacy

### Pre-meeting planning:

- 1) Review College and Chapter priority list if available. Study background information (ACP position papers, policy materials, other references).
- 2) Become familiar with your LOCAL representative and senator: Political party, committee assignments, priorities including what bills they may be sponsoring.

### Delivering the message:

- 1) Go in meetings with a purpose and agenda. Review assignments if you are with a group and practice if needed.
- 2) Be prepared for the unexpected: Who you will talk to (legislator versus staff), where you will talk (private office versus busy waiting room), and how much time you will have.
- 3) Keep introductions brief to save time.
- 4) Describe ACP and your practice (if applicable).
- 5) Review agenda items with legislators and be specific on what you are asking them to do: Support/sponsor/co-sponsor a bill or issue. Be direct but polite when asking if they will help.
- 6) Personalize your remarks if you can: Stories and real-life situations can make the issue more credible and easier to remember.
- 7) End visit by soliciting legislator/staff opinion on the issue. Be respectful if disagreement. A friendly exchange of ideas may be the start of a productive relationship.
- 8) Leave printed materials behind (Chapter/ACP fact sheet and priority list) and thank legislator/staff for their time. Carry extra business cards if you have them.

### After the meeting:

- 1) Send a follow-up thank-you letter or email to legislator/staff recapping meeting. Include what action was being asked. Offer to serve as local resource on health-related information if comfortable.