

Meeting with Your Legislator

IN PREPARATION

- **Review the talking points.** Familiarize yourself with the issue briefs so that you feel comfortable making your case. Be sure to make AAUW-OR's position clear and keep the meeting focused.
- **Determine roles.** Decide beforehand who will kick off the meeting, who will present the talking points, who will ask for the legislator's support of AAUW-OR's position, and who will take notes.

DURING THE VISIT

- **Make introductions.** Be clear about who is a constituent – legislators are responsive to their constituents! Identify yourself as an AAUW-OR member and provide information about your branch.
- **Provide brief, clear statements about the issues.** Using the provided talking points will ensure AAUW members present a uniform, concise message.
- **Saying "I don't know" can be a smart move.** You don't need to be an expert on the topic. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the staff or legislator you'll find out and get back to them.
- **Listen carefully to responses.** What do staff or legislators say about an issue? Are there questions or concerns that should be addressed? Pay attention to the direct and indirect statements.
- **Ask for support.** After you ask, pause. Let the legislator or staff answer and clarify if the response is not clear. You now know if the legislator supports your position, opposes it, or is undecided.
- **Leave behind materials.** You will receive issue briefs that describe the bills and state AAUW-OR's position. Leave these to your legislator or his/her staff for future reference.

TIPS & TRICKS

- **Take pictures.** Outside of the office or during the meeting with your legislator if allowed. Make sure AAUW materials (like the cover of this handout) are visible in your photos! You can share the pictures on social media; also, e-mail them to shilpi_banerjee@hotmail.com.
- **Be flexible.** Your meeting may take place in a hallway, in the main office, or in another meeting room. You may meet with someone other than your legislator. Your meeting might be cut short, so be prepared to deliver your message succinctly.
- **Personalize your comments and provide local context.** Elected officials often prioritize issues that directly affect their constituents! Personal stories and local examples help illustrate why your issue is important.
- **Be courteous.** The office intern could be chief of staff by your next Lobby Day! Staff get things done on Capitol Hill and you want them on your side. Be polite to everyone you encounter.