

Welcome to the Vermont General Assembly

Tips to testify for a Legislative Committee

Getting to the State House

Address: The State House is located at 115 State Street, Montpelier

Parking: There is metered street parking on State Street and surrounding area

Room Number: In advance of the meeting, the Committee Assistant will give you a room number where the meeting will take place. This room number is also on the Agenda, which can be found on the [website](#)

Getting Around: If you need assistance locating the Committee Room, ask staff members in the Lobby of the building or in the Sergeant-at-Arms office. There is an [accessible entrance](#) on the west side of the building

In-person Attendance

- Arrive to Committee room 15 minutes in advance of testimony
- The Committee Assistant will provide a room number, which is also on the Agenda. [Here is a link to the floor plan of the building](#)
- If you arrive to the Committee Room and the door is shut, open the door and find a seat

Remote Attendance

- The Committee Assistant will provide a Zoom link 24 hours before the hearing. *Do not share this link with others*
- Sign into the Zoom meeting 15 minutes before scheduled testimony
- Only people who have been invited to the hearing will be admitted to the Zoom room
- Mute and turn off video until it is time for you to testify
- The Committee Assistant will allow you to share your screen when it is your turn to testify. Open documents on your device prior to testimony to ensure a smooth transition

What is testimony?

- Testimony allows lawmakers to hear perspectives and experiences on issues connected to legislation
- Lawmakers depend on testimony to develop an understanding of issues and how future legislation will affect the state overall
- Note that it is also possible to provide written testimony to Committees if verbal testimony is a challenge

Accessibility

The Vermont General Assembly is committed to making its building and its many programs, services, and activities [accessible all to staff and visitors](#). The following services and programs exemplify the services provided to people of all ages and abilities at the Vermont State House: Captioning, Large Print Documents, Assistive Listening, Communications Access Real-time Translation (CART), American Sign Language, Mobility Assistance Services.

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Organizing Testimony

- Thank the Chair and Committee for the opportunity to testify
- State name, position and organization for the record
- Clearly state argument and use supporting evidence
- If referencing a bill number, use most recent version of the bill, which can be found on the [website](#)
- Conclude by restating your position and thanking the Committee
- Note: All hearings are open to the public and livestreamed to YouTube

Consider the following

 **[Know the process](#)**. Be familiar with the committee's members, key bill sponsors, how much testimony the Committee has already heard on the bill or issue. All prior testimony can be viewed online on the Committee's webpage

 **Know the purpose**. The Committee Assistant who invites you to testify will give you an idea of what the Committee wants to hear about and will tell you how much time you have for your testimony

 **Check the schedule**. Be advised that schedules can change quickly and without notice. Each Committee's Agenda is updated online in real time

 **Send documents**. If you have documents to accompany testimony—this could be slides with data, additional handouts, written testimony, or more—send them to the Committee Assistant as a PDF at least 24 hours in advance of testimony. Documents will be posted to the Committee's website and shared with the Committee

Remember:

- Be clear and simple
- Be brief; time may be limited
- Be specific, use evidence to support main points
- Be prepared to answer questions following testimony
- Committee Assistants understand the process and are there to help; if you have questions, please ask