

TESTIFYING AT A PUBLIC HEARING

INFORMATION ON PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Times for all Public Hearings will be posted in 3 locations; you can check them upon your arrival;

- 1) On the committee room door,
- 2) In the rotunda on the 3rd floor,
- 3) Youth Governor's Office

PREPARING TESTIMONY

If you plan to speak at a public hearing, it is often useful to prepare and distribute your comments in written form. This helps you make clear and concise comments, and ensures that committee members who are not present at the public hearing have the opportunity to receive your input.

In preparing testimony, written or oral make sure you introduce yourself, and if you represent an organization, give the name of that organization.

State whether you support the bill, oppose the bill, or are offering suggestions to improve it, and then explain your reasoning.

PUBLIC HEARING PROCEDURES:

Speaking Order: At the beginning of each hearing, the presiding committee chair will call the public hearing to order and announce the bill to be heard. The legislator who sponsored the bill will introduce the bill, after which, the presiding chair will ask if any co-sponsors wish to testify. Once the sponsors and co-sponsors have had the opportunity to speak, public testimony is invited. Generally, the public may present testimony in one of three categories in the following order:

- a) those favoring the bill
- b) those against the bill
- c) and those neither for or against the bill but who wish to offer information on the bill

NOTE: The committee will be hearing several bills; the hearings will run in the order that was listed on the posted calendars. However the schedule is subject to change and the length of the hearing on most bills is difficult to predict.

Your turn at the Podium: When it is your turn to testify, advance to the podium and sign in. Address the committee as follows: " Senator Smith, or Representative Jones, introduce yourself, indicate if you represent any organization, and then whether you support, oppose, or neither support or oppose the bill. If others speakers have made your point, let the committee know that you agree with the previous remarks of the speakers, but try to avoid repeating the testimony of other speakers. When you finish, remain at the podium for a moment, in case committee members want to ask you questions.

Comings and goings: Many hearings will have situations when a member must leave for business with other committees. When members of the committee are away, your written testimony can get information to them

Decorum in Committee Proceedings: Please direct you comments to the committee, not to the audience, and give your courteous attention to other speakers, regardless of their views. Don't applaud or indicate pleasure or displeasure with anyone's remarks. Only members of the committee may ask questions of persons who testify.

Work Sessions: After the public hearing, a work session is scheduled at which the committee members discuss the bill and decide whether to recommend its passage. The public may speak at a work session only if a committee member requests further public input and the presiding chair grants permission. Work sessions on a bill are held in our program after the public hearings. Make sure you ask when the work session on the bill will be held.