



## OAESV Eighth Annual **VIRTUAL** Advocacy Day to End Sexual Violence

**#embraceyourvoiceohio – on the phone!**



### **Tip Sheet on Policy Conversations**

#### **I. Know the Lawmaker's Background:**

Ohio lawmakers bring an array of experiences to the Statehouse floor. Many are current or former teachers, farmers, lawyers, nurses and doctors, finance professionals, judges, and small business owners. It is extremely helpful to review the lawmaker's biography ahead of the meeting to anticipate the lens through which the lawmaker will analyze the topic. For example, a former prosecutor will likely view your content through a criminal justice perspective, where a former teacher will likely think of the direct impact on children and families.

#### **II. Embrace your own Expertise:**

Lawmakers lean on their own experience when evaluating policy, but they also recognize and value experts across various fields. This is a topic on which few lawmakers can claim professional expertise. They know you are an expert and they want to learn from your experiences and perspective.

#### **III. The questions may not always align:**

Because lawmakers bring varying perspectives, their questions are often rooted in their professional experiences. They may ask about potential alternatives or additional possible solutions to problems, not to disparage the original idea, but to provide additional help. This is especially common when lawmakers have criminal justice experience. It can be helpful to say "I think that could potentially be quite helpful, I will let our partners at OAESV know and they will connect with you to follow-up." Should a suggestion arise, please record it in your survey so that OAESV knows to reach out.

#### **IV. Don't Worry about Filling Time**

With daily COVID-19 changes across the state government and staffers juggling home and work lives, teams are very busy and will appreciate brevity.

#### **V. Acknowledge the Current Situation**

It is important to acknowledge that lawmakers are working in an unprecedented situation and to show appreciation for their adjustment to working on issues from home. This can be a brief "thank you" in your introduction, or an acknowledgement that non-COVID matters will not receive committee attention for quite some time.

#### **VI. Send a thank you email and follow-up if they request further information**

OAESV has provided group leads with text for email thank you notes. You can also send an individual note – if you need information on how to reach the aide or lawmaker you spoke with, please do not hesitate to ask OAESV for assistance. If the lawmaker asks for information, do your best to follow-up and let OAESV know if we can support you in this endeavor.

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