How to Deliver Effective Testimony Tips from Public Health Advocacy Experts

Testifying before policymakers is a critical advocacy skill that you can expect to use at some point in your career. Your testimony can establish you as objective, credible, and trustworthy, which can position you as a valuable expert for the future. Here are our best tips for providing effective and memorable testimony.

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As a public health champion, be prepared with solutions to the issues you're presenting.



Know your audience.

Always have an "ask".

You need to have a deep understanding of the decision makers you're trying to reach - what has shaped their beliefs, opinions, and actions.



Know your message.

Stay focused on a few key points, and don't bury your message in too much data.



Be concise.

Take your time, be deliberate, and stay focused on your key points.



Approach written and oral testimony differently. Oral testimony should be more concise, engaging, and dynamic.







Try not to read your testimony.

Use the text as a reference for all the practice and preparation you did. If you need to, read your text and glance back up.



Be prepared and practice.

Be prepard for difficult questions and possible misinformation. You'll need to redirect the conversation back to your message.



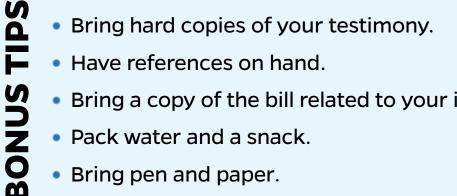
Handle emotional challenges with grace.

Aim to be polite and composed, even when receiving negative questions or comments.



Be intentional in your presentation.

How you represent yourself and your issues affect how your message is received.



- Bring a copy of the bill related to your issue.
- Pack water and a snack.
- Bring pen and paper.

