



Advocacy Tips

Thank you for helping KAIROS advance its advocacy work! Here are a few tips to help optimize your engagement with elected officials.

Just One Ask (maybe two – but that’s it!)

It’s tempting, when sending a message or meeting with an elected official, to give them a long list of actions that you would like them to do. We urge you to please resist this temptation. The elected official will not know what to focus on. Multiple messages equal no message.

Make one ask only, two if they are related. That ask, if realized, **should serve as a big catalyst for change**. KAIROS will always focus on one to two asks for an action. Please be sure to bring with you KAIROS’ Leave-Behind – a one-page document that highlights the ask to leave with the elected official or aide when you meet them. If you are working on a specific KAIROS action, the Leave-Behind can be accessed from that action page on KAIROS’ website.

KAIROS is engaged in multiple actions related to various areas of its work, whether it be Indigenous, migrant or gender rights. When meeting elected officials as an KAIROS representative, focus on one area and action. If you are working on another action, ask to meet separately for that. Always be clear on the meeting focus.

Build a relationship with elected officials (and their aides)

- Hone a working relationship with your elected officials (federal or provincial) to educate them on the issue and to help you advance your ask in Parliament or the Legislative Assembly.
- Provide them with resources in which they express interest (avoid giving them too much material. Be selective).
- Ask them questions on where they stand on the issue, and their advice on advancing your ask in the legislature and government.
- Listen attentively. Take lots of notes during the meeting so you know how to engage with them in the future (see resources below).
- Always be polite and persistent. The elected official may not know as much as you do about the issue. This is your opportunity to educate them and keep them informed.

To assist you:

[First Meeting Outline](#)

[How to Take Great Notes in a Lobby Meeting](#)

[Notes Template for Meeting Elected Officials](#)

First Meeting Tips

- The primary objective of your first meeting with an elected official is to get another meeting with them – or at least plan next steps. If you asked them to inquire about something, ask when it would be best to follow up.
- Do your homework. Find out all you can about the official from their website and through openparliament.ca. Find out what you have in common.
- Call the constituency office to set up a meeting in the riding. When the House is in session, expect to meet on a Friday when all MPs, MLAs/MPPs are in their constituency offices.
- It's best for a constituent to arrange a meeting with an elected official. If the official holds a position in a ministry or committee related to your issue, or if they champion your cause, reach out to them, even if they do not represent you in your riding.
- Be patient and persistent when scheduling a meeting. Send an email, and then follow up with a phone call. Sometimes a meeting can be scheduled right away, sometimes not. Don't give up.
- Be punctual for the meeting and respect their time. Assign a time keeper to inquire about the time you will have with the representative, and to let everyone know when five minutes are left to wrap up. Respecting the official's time goes a long way towards building a good relationship.
- Following the meeting, send a handwritten thank you card.

Media and Social Media

Amplify your message through traditional media and social media.

- Write letters to the editor, and send your published letters to your elected official – either through email or by tagging your elected officials on Twitter or Facebook. Most politicians use these social media channels.
- Send elected officials editorials and columns that support your ask.

To assist you:

[Letter-to-the-Editor Tips](#)

Questions? Ideas? Please contact:

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