

# GUIDE TO PREPARE TO SPEAK AT A HOUSE COMMITTEE MEETING

## Introduction:

A key step in the process of passing a bill is to discuss it in a committee. In a committee meeting, lawmakers listen to the perspective of people like yourself. An example testimony is linked in the QR code and we offer recommendations below to help you prepare to speak at a committee meeting.

EXAMPLE TESTIMONY:



## In Preparation:

**Know the agenda:** The agenda is posted online. Once a committee meeting is scheduled, a list of the bills that the committee will be discussing will be accessible. The committee cannot discuss bills that are not on the agenda.

**Speaking:** Anyone has the opportunity to speak. As a member of the public, you'll have about 2 minutes to share your thoughts. The committee can also invite people to speak. If you are an invited speaker, you will get an invitation directly and you'll have about 5 minutes to share. We recommend:

- **Preparing two versions:** Create a summarized version that covers your points to use when speaking. Prepare the second longer version to elaborate further.
- **Typing, printing, and signing your remarks:** This is a tangible message to lawmakers, which they and their staff can reread and follow-up on. It's recommended to bring **20 copies:** one for each of the 15 committee members and 5 extra to share as needed.
- **Practice sharing your thoughts:** Time yourself so that you can share within your time limit. Focus on the most important points.



## Day of Committee Meeting:

**Parking:** Park at the Capitol Visitors Parking Garage. Parking is free for the first 2 hours and \$1 for each half hour thereafter. Maximum daily charge is \$12.

**PARKING:**



### Sign-up using one of two options below:

1. When you arrive, at one of the kiosks located in the Capitol extension
2. Connect to the capitol Wi-Fi network. Once you do so, scan the QR code at the right and sign-up.

Once available, familiarize yourself with:

- The correct bill number
- Committee hearing the bill
- Time and location of hearing

**SIGN-UP:**



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**While waiting to speak:** Prepare for a long committee meeting. The order of speakers is not usually published, so many feel uncertain about leaving the committee meeting room. You have the ability to watch the meeting remotely by visiting: [house.texas.gov/video-audio/](https://house.texas.gov/video-audio/)

**Maximize your impact:** While you are waiting, we recommend you visit your legislator or their staff. It's likely that your Senator or Representative does not serve on the committee hearing the bill, but legislators love to connect with their people. We recommend that you find your two legislators and then stop by their office. Before you leave, take a group picture with your lawmaker and share it on social media!

Last, if the meeting is taking too long and it looks like you will need to leave, we recommend visiting the committee members' offices. When you visit with the Representatives staff, you can give them your remarks and offer them the thoughts that you would have delivered in the meeting.

**As you have questions, please contact us! We can help answer any questions you may have.**

