

SUGGESTED MEETING APPROACH

Thank you for agreeing to meet with your legislator. Keeping an open line of communications and demonstrating the impact our industry has on their district is critical for our ongoing advocacy at both the state and federal levels.

Below please find a suggested approach for your meeting. This is not a script and every meeting will have different flow. The main objective of your meeting is to make a personal introduction and to provide general information about our industry. At the end of the meeting the legislator should know a little more about an industry impacted by the legislation they consider each year. Additionally, they will have a point of contact to use as debt collection matters come up.

Suggested meeting handouts include:

1. ACA Industry Handouts (fact sheet, econ impact, landscape, who regulates...)
2. Any appropriate company brochure
3. Your contact information
4. Any other issues you deem appropriate

This outline should not be used as a handout. It is only meant to help you prepare and feel more comfortable discussing issues you are already familiar with.

General Meeting Outline

- Introduce yourself, your company and your state unit (Discuss types of clients and employees – economic impact). Remember your clients and employees vote and pay taxes too.
- Share the handouts explaining our industry's impact on the economy. Let them know that the work we do saves every American household more than \$700 per year.
- Explain the processes you use to collect (aka Collection 101). Most lawmakers, at no fault of their own, do NOT know what you do, who you do it for or how you do it. Explaining how you run your business and the hurdles you face is a critical component of these meetings. Once a lawmaker has a good understanding of how an industry works they can actually make informed decisions about future legislation.
- Discuss the regulatory environment and litigious environment you deal with every day. **Share the one page handout on "A Highly Regulated Industry."** Try to balance this conversation by demonstrating the many hurdles you face without complaining. The idea here is to explain that this industry is a highly regulated at all levels of government.
- Offer to be a resource for any debt related questions or issues that come up in the future. Whether it is pending legislation or constituent questions/complaints... The goal is to open up and maintain a line of communication open.

- Invite the legislator to tour a local debt collection facility and to see firsthand a collection floor works and how the validation process works. If your facility is not appropriate for this type of visit, your unit and ACA will work to find one that works for the legislator.
- Remember that you are the expert when it comes to debt collection. Feel free to disagree and correct any misperceptions the legislator has about the industry or collection process but do it in a respectful way. Keep a future line of communications open.
- “I don’t know” is an acceptable answer. You want to build trust not give bad answers. Offer to help find the answers. ACA and your unit will work to find the answer for you. This follow up conversation provides a perfect opportunity to continue to develop this relationship.
- **Provide your contact information and any materials regarding your company** you feel are appropriate. Mention the name of your unit lobbyist if you have one. Most legislators will know them and will use them as a resource if issues come up.
- If there is a specific issue or piece of legislation, explain the impact it will have on your company, your employees and your clients. Ask the legislator if they can help pass or defeat the legislation. Do not be afraid to ask! If you don’t ask, they will likely not feel compelled to act.