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Attachments: [TalkingPolicyMakers.docx](#)

For Distribution: Talking to Policy Makers

The below/attached is a result of a number of requests from Regional Members regarding what they could do to more actively involve their elected officials in their services and/or operations. Compliments of **Craig Hoepfner, Chair – WPRA Public Policy Committee**.

Talking To Policymakers

As a park and recreation professional your involvement is needed at the local, state, and federal levels to communicate the vision and mission of the profession.

The target audiences for WPRA's advocacy efforts are locally elected officials, state & federal legislators, and state and federal administration officials.

Tell the policymaker what your agency/department is doing to address a problem important to the community or organization: This establishes that your agency/ department is doing essential work for the community/voters/constituents.

- Be specific and tell your story in quantifiable terms—how many kids are off the street because of your programs? How many kids receive before and/or after school care in a safe environment supervised by caring and trained adults? How many patients are sent home more quickly? How many seniors are active in your community due to your programs?
- Highlight your efforts in public safety (intervention and prevention programs); health & wellness; tourism; economic development; and environmental stewardship.
- Share what is happening to your programs and services due to changes in agency funding—what facilities or programs are not available or have reduced hours? What is the impact of those reductions on individuals? Are your facilities as safe (rehabilitation issues, ADA implementation)?
- Highlight your partnerships with other agencies, organizations and departments. Show you are working with a variety of agencies/community organizations. Schedule an appointment with the policymaker: State legislators are usually in their home district Thursdays/Fridays. Call their office and speak to the staff who schedules appointments. They will try to get you to meet with one of the legislator's field staff... so start there. You may have to call several times to get an appointment—do not give up! Remember the job of the scheduler is to ensure the policymaker is meeting with key people... you are a key person!
- Invite the policymaker to your facilities or programs, especially dedications. Invite them to speak.
- Tell the policymaker how you can help them on policy issues and educate them about the value and benefits of park and recreation services.

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