

Welcome to TRTA Day at the Capitol March 26, 2025

Why are we here? This is a day of interactions with elected leaders and their staff members.

What is our message? Our message is **THANK YOU** for hearing us and helping retirees during the past session. We are now asking for continued help with our priorities as we fight inflation.

What are our focal points? 1) We want to be heard, seen and respected. 2) We are better together speaking as one voice. 3) Attitude is everything and is crucial to our success.

EFFECTIVE DIRECT ADVOCACY TIPS

Elected officials expect to be contacted and actually need to be contacted in order to do their job well. They may be helping you, but you are also helping them. Because you are a volunteer, your opinion is more valued and you represent what you believe. Assure you are heard with the following suggestions:

IDENTIFY YOURSELF: Explain you are a constituent from their local area and/or represent other retired educators who are constituents. Leave your contact information or business card if possible.

PROTOCOL: Address the elected official using a proper salutation (for example, Senator Harris or Representative Smith). Always carry your business cards if you have them.

BREVITY: Effective presentations are short, emphatic and to the point. Explain the issue and state why you believe there is a need for some specific legislation to address the problem.

ACCURACY: Always provide accurate information. Your credibility depends on accuracy. If you do not know an answer to a question, respond with "I don't know, but I will find that information for you" rather than guessing.

FOLLOW UP: Take note of any questions or concerns your legislator mentions and try to provide additional information based on those inquiries. TRTA staff is happy to follow up with the legislator in answering any queries or sending additional information about TRTA issues.

COURTESY: Be polite, not demanding. We are asking for their support, now and in the future.

APPRECIATION: Thank the elected official. Too often, we ask elected officials to act in our interest, but we fail to express our appreciation. A hand-written note of gratitude is much appreciated and remembered.

FOLLOW-UP: Letters, Telephone Calls, and Emails are all VERY effective. TIPS:

- **Letters:** Should be handwritten and one-page (no form letters). Stay on message. Ask for their support.
- **Phone Calls:** Always identify yourself, speak to the issue and stay on message. Do not digress!
- **Emails:** Once again, stay on message, write to the issue and ask for the legislator's support.

Stay positive. Stay alert. Have fun!

Take pictures and post them on social media back home.

Stay informed with the TRTA *Inside Line* and Action Alerts.