

Why It Matters

As a member of North Dakota United, you have a valuable voice to share during our current legislative session. While NDU has a strong lobbying team that will be at the Capitol and updating our members, we know from polling that educators are the most trusted voices when it comes to public education in the state.

Advocacy Best Practices

1. Identify yourself – state that you are a constituent or identify your district
2. Be specific and factual – include the name and number of the relevant legislation
3. Make it personal – most important part of citizen advocacy, tell your story
4. Be confident – their job is to represent you
5. Be polite – work on the basis the government and your opponents are open to reason, and you can find common ground
6. Be brief and timely – focus on one argument as much as you can, get to the point, and limit written documents
7. Follow up – answer any questions/send any resources you discussed/thank them for their time

Providing Testimony

Providing written testimony is a great way to get your support or opposition to a bill on the record. Use [this link](#) to learn how to submit your testimony to bills during the legislative session. Please note that testimony is only accepted once a hearing on a bill is scheduled, and testimony is closed shortly before the hearing on the bill starts.

Emailing Your Legislators

Either through our action alerts, which will automatically send messages to key legislators that NDU is targeting, or emailing them directly, we continuously hear that they value your input. If you are a constituent, make sure to include that information as they will be more likely to read and respond to your email as a constituent. The more you personalize your message with stories from your work, the more powerful they are.

Writing a Letter to the Editor (LTE)

Submitting a letter to the editor (LTE) to your local newspaper is a great way to raise awareness about issues important to North Dakota United members. We are eager to support you in your writing process. If you need help, contact Ali Hoffman (ali.hoffman@ndunited.org) or Joel Crane (joel.crane@ndunited.org) to get started. We are happy to help you as little or as much as you would like, whether that is finding a publication, brainstorming ideas, proofreading, or answering any questions you have. Even if you don't need our help with your LTE, please make sure to let us know once you submit it and again if it is published. Below is a helpful outline.

1. Introduction: Present the issue
2. Personal connection: Add a personal or community connection to the issue
3. Statistics: Use data to support your argument
4. Contextualize your argument: Connect ND United's mission
5. Conclusion: Ask readers and policymakers to act

Be sure to be mindful of word limits when you submit your LTE – check the guidelines for your news outlet.

Meeting with Legislators

Meeting with your legislators is the highest-impact advocacy action that you can take all year. Whether you are a seasoned ND United advocate, or this will be your first time setting up meetings, we are here to support you throughout the process — including scheduling, preparing for, and holding your meetings. These meetings can take place in Bismarck, or better yet in your home district. Legislators often go home over the weekends and crossover which is a great opportunity to bring a few members together for a meeting.

1. Introductions
2. Why the issue is important
 - a. Problem
 - b. Solution
3. Why the legislature needs to act
4. The ask
5. Closing/thank you/follow up/questions

Calling Your Legislators

Calling your legislators is a quick and easy way to advocate for ND United directly. If you don't know who your legislators are, you can look it up here.

- 1) Call your legislator. You can find their phone numbers at ndlegis.gov.
- 2) When they answer, say you would like to share your opinion on a particular bill.
- 3) Deliver our **Talking Points on that issue.**
- 4) Ask if the member requires follow-up information.

Host an Event or Fundraiser

Host an in-person or virtual event/fundraiser during the session. Email Ali at ali.hoffman@ndunited.org if you need help getting started.

Event ideas: Phone banks with friends after work, LTE writing parties, or a fundraiser at a local restaurant.