

Disabilities Leaderships Coalition of Alabama

Advocate with Us at the State House:

March 15, 2023 Alabama State House 11 S Union Street

Partner advocates and organizations from across the state to bring together hundreds of voices with a united message for our Alabama elected representatives.

REGISTER

Step One

Register by March 3rd to receive a boxed lunch and water
Use this link or QR code:

tinyurl.com/DLCAadvocacydaysignup



Step Two

Find your representatives and save their contact information in your cell phone and below.

Go here to look them up:

<https://alarise.salsalabs.org/contactelectedofficials/index.html>

State Senator: Name: _____

Address: _____

Office Number _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

State Representative (House) Name: _____

Address: _____

Office Number _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Step Three

February 28 - March 10 - make an appointment with your legislators on March 15th by calling and emailing.



Sample phone script for calling your legislators to make an appointment:

Hello, Representative/Senator _____'s office.

You: May I please speak to the office's scheduler?

You: Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling today to make an appointment with the

Senator/Representative _____ or a key staff person for Wednesday,

March 15th between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. I am his/her constituent from

_____. I will be at the State House with other Alabamians bringing awareness to disability related issues.

Sample letter for scheduling an appointment with legislators:



(Representative or Senator) _____

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Senator/Representative _____,

I am writing on behalf of _____ . I am (write something here about you as a person with a disability or the group that you're representing). I would like to meet with you on Wednesday, March 15th at your office in the State House. Because you are my local representative, I believe that you could make a difference in the issues for Alabamians with disabilities. Advocates with Disabilities Leadership Coalition of Alabama will hold a rally at 10:00 a.m. on the State House Steps. Please let me know a time and location that is convenient for you, we would like to meet between 10:30 and 12:00 or 1:00-2:00.

Thank you. Sincerely, (sign here)

Step Four

Become familiar with DLCA priorities scan the QR code:

1. Colby Act for Supported Decision Making
2. Exton's Law- End Organ Transplant Discrimination
3. Alabama Department of Mental Health Budget Request



STEP FIVE

On March 10th, email and call your representatives to remind them you will be at the State House on Wednesday, March 15th. Review the event agenda/schedule.

STEP SIX

Get ready for March 15th.

List the top three issues you want to address in your meeting.

For each issue, outline the major concerns you/your group has and what you'd like to see your representative do about it (THE ASK). Now that you've done your homework, it's time to outline your issues and make suggestions as to what you think your representative should do about it.

Issue 1:

What do you want your representative to do about it?

Issue 2:

What do you want your representative to do about it?

Issue 3:

What do you want your representative to do about it?:

STEP SEVEN

The March 15th Meetings-

Legislators almost always do try to meet with their constituents. Don't turn down the opportunity to meet with a staffer.

REMEMBER

- Senior staff wield considerable power.
- Senior staff often are able to give more time and attention to issues than legislators can.

During the Meeting

It is acceptable to meet as a delegation/group but remember that small meetings will allow for more detailed discussion of an issue. This includes frank comments from the legislator about the dilemma he/she faces in making choices on the issue.

REMEMBER:

- If you go as a group from a district, appoint one delegate as the main spokesperson.
- The group should meet at least briefly in advance to prepare for the visit.
- Be certain that members of the group agree on the objectives for the meeting and on the points to be addressed.
- Provide information, both orally and in a fact sheet that you leave with the legislator.
- Include a brief description of your issue in the fact sheet, why it is important to your organization, and the action that you want the legislator to take.
- Give a copy of the fact sheet to the legislative aide as well.

After the Visit

After the visit, **write a letter of thanks or follow up with a call** to the legislator. Be sure to remind him/her of any agreements reached and provide any information that you promised.

March 15th General Information

The Alabama State House is located at 11 South Union Street, Montgomery, AL 36130. For House information, call 334-261-0500. For Senate information, call 334-261-0800. The State House visitor entrance is located at the front doors of the building facing Union Street. An alternative entrance is located on the south side of the building facing Washington Avenue. **This alternative entrance is for handicapped or physically disabled visitors, or for special events or occasions.**

Everyone must go through the front door of the State House and through the metal detector. Your personal belongings, such as a purse, wallet, cell phone, coins and anything metal, must be placed on the conveyor belt and X-rayed. **Signs, placards, posters, poster boards, balloons, musical instruments, noise-making devices, laser-pointers, art supplies, cannot be brought into the State House. Please plan to have those collected and stored BEFORE entering the State House.**

Tips for visiting House members

You should make an appointment to see your reps - See step 3 above.

The House of Representatives is on the 5th floor. Individual members' offices are on the 4th and 5th floors. You may go by their office and leave notes or information. They may be on the House floor, and office doors may be locked. You can push information under their doors or tape it to their doors.

You can write a note to your representative if he or she is on the House floor. The note should be brief. Say you are there for the disability advocacy event, give your name and town, and ask that they come out and speak with you. Give the note to a page (young volunteer) at the front desk located on the 5th floor. You may be allowed to stay on the 5th floor behind the ropes or be asked to wait on the 6th floor.

The House Gallery is on the 6th floor, and you are welcome to go there to watch the proceedings. There is also a big lobby outside the gallery where legislators may come meet with you if you sent them a note. Masks are required on this floor.

Tips for visiting Senate members

The Senate Chamber and the senators' offices are on the 7th floor. Please be mindful not to block the halls if you go to the offices. If your senator is not in the office, you may leave a note and information with the secretary.

If your senator is on the Senate floor, you may write a note asking him or her to come out and speak to you. Give the note to a page at the end of the lobby near the entrance to the chamber. Wait behind the roped-off walkway, and if possible, your senator will come out.

To observe the Senate, you must go to the 8th floor either by the steps or by a small elevator at the left side of the Senate lobby. Use the steps if possible.

March 15th Tentative Agenda

- 9:30-10:00 Arrive in Montgomery
- 10:00 Gather near State House Steps for Rally
- 10:30 - 12:00 Attend meetings with your representatives
- 12:00 - 1:00 Boxed lunch pickup for advocates register by March 3rd. Room 349
- 1:00 - 4:00 Continue meetings with your representatives OR gather with other advocates.

What to Bring

1. 1 pagers to leave behind listing talking points
2. Post it notes to leave notes for representatives
3. Pen and notebook to jot down any follow ups needed