

STORYTELLING TIPS AND TRICKS

WHY STORYTELLING?

Storytelling can add emotional weight to your meeting and help form connections with lawmakers by pointing out shared values. It can also help lawmakers see how their policy decisions impact real people.

- Requesting a meeting about one to two weeks in advance is usually the best way to go.
- You can schedule a lobby meeting by phone or email using the Meeting Request Template.

ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE STORY

- Describe your direct experience about the topic at hand, such as your time working at an agency that provides shelter to others, or what an affordable home means to you.
- Share your values that are informed by these experiences.
- Describe what needs to happen next—actionable steps that relate to your story.

Tips and Reminders:

- The story you tell must be true, and it must relate to the topic at hand.
- Explain the impact of your experience.
- Keep it simple, don't overcomplicate it.
- Timing: Try to tell the story in 3-5 minutes.
- Don't explain a culture or community that is not your own. If you are telling someone else's story, make sure you have permission to share it.

PROMPTS FOR PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCES:

- Share how your life has changed as a result of the assistance you received.
 - Describe things you have accomplished and how housing has played a role in the challenges you've faced.
 - How did you get to where you are today? If you've received housing assistance, how has it impacted your life?
- Describe your home and your living conditions
 - What makes you proud to live in the place you call home?
 - What could be improved about your home?
- How would your community improve with more housing assistance available for others in your community?
- Describe your hopes for the future and how your home is a part of this.

PROMPTS FOR HOUSING SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Describe the community and the clients you serve.
 - How has access to affordable housing, or a lack of access to affordable housing, impacted your community?
 - What makes you proud of your organization's mission and the work you accomplish?
- How would more housing assistance improve your community?
- How have federal housing assistance and production programs enhanced your work?

OTHER POSSIBLE PROMPTS:

- Why do you care about housing justice?
- Why did you join the organization you are representing?

**Some of this language is adapted from the RESULTS advocacy week materials.*