



Sample legislative meeting script

Introductions:

Everyone present quickly introduces themselves stating name, medical specialty and place of employment/professional affiliations.

- *If a group meeting with the legislator is larger than 5 people, the designated speakers should introduce themselves and the group as a whole (not individual introductions).*

Confirm time allotted for the meeting to ensure you customize remarks appropriately.

- *Respect their time constraints- you can always follow up with additional information afterwards!*

Speaker 1:

Delegate/Senator XXXX (or staff) -

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. I / we requested this meeting today because we are taking part in Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action's Advocacy Day.

If you're not familiar, Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action - or VCCA - is an organization representing more than 450 health professionals across the Commonwealth who are concerned about the threat that climate change poses to the health of our patients and our communities.

Speaker 2:

Today we have two objectives:

First and foremost, to ask that you continue supporting very important climate legislation passed in recent years. These include:

- The Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA)
- Virginia's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)
- Advanced Clean Car Standards

Virginia Clinicians for Climate Action and healthcare professionals across the state supported these bills and believe they must not be weakened, rolled back or repealed. Multiple bills introduced this session threaten the health of Virginians by unwinding the progress made by these pieces of legislation.

Second, we would like to highlight and ask for your support on three pieces of legislation before the General Assembly that will protect public health.

We will be happy to follow up with any further information you need regarding these bills and will also be sending an email following this meeting that summarizes our priorities, but in the interest of time, wanted to tell you a bit about why we believe these bills are important to protect the health of Virginians:

VCCA SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING BILLS:

If time is extremely short, you can just list each one (referencing numbers and title and saying that each one plays a role in promoting public health by helping us address climate change and transition to a clean energy economy)

Public school buildings and facilities; construction and renovation; renewable energy.

Directs the Commission on School Construction and Modernization to assist in developing renewable energy generation facilities in the construction of school buildings.

- SB 848 (Favola), HB 1852 (Subramanyam)
- Solar in schools will save money, make builds more energy efficient, and create cleaner environments for students, faculty, and staff.
- This bill gives school districts easy access to the information they need on how to use cheaper, cleaner solar energy in their construction planning.

Department of Emergency Management; comprehensive extreme heat emergency response plan.

Legislation directs the Department of Emergency Management to develop a comprehensive extreme heat emergency response plan.

- SB 936 (Hashmi)
- Extreme heat is a public health risk, last summer was the third hottest on record.
- This plan creates a coordinated state response, ensuring all Virginians are safe and healthy in the face of extreme heat.
- Record high temperatures and the inability to escape the heat led to 5,000 annual death in the US and nearly 3,000 ER visits in Virginia.

Comprehensive plan; healthy communities strategy

Authorizes cities of a certain size to consider adopting a healthy communities strategy. This may include identifying neighborhoods with pollution and objectives to reduce health risks there.

- SB 1322 (McClellan)
- This is an option effort for localities, that would encourage local leaders to think differently about community health while empowering citizens.
- The strategies developed would offer objectives and policies to address community health burdens, improving the overall health of Virginians and saving money for localities.
- Pollution has left many low-income communities and communities of color behind, increasing their negative health outcomes.

VCCA OPPOSES THE FOLLOWING BILLS WHICH THREATEN the Virginia Clean Economy Act, Virginia’s Participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and Virginia’s adoption of the Advanced Clean Car Standards:

| Bills that oppose VCEA | | Bills that oppose Clean Cars | Budget items opposing RGGI |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| HB 1430 Ware | SB 1265 Saslaw | HB 1378 Wilt | HB 1400: Item 114 K1 (Gov. proposal) |
| HB 1770 Kilgore | | | SB 800: Item 114 K 1 (Gov. proposal) |
| HB 1777 O’Quinn | | | |
| HB 1783 O’Quinn | | | |
| HB 2026 O’Quinn | | | |
| HB 2130 Wilt | | | |
| HB 2178 Morefield | | | |
| HB 2197 Byron | | | |

IF TIME ALLOWS: *Share some more personal motivations or patient stories that reinforce the important role that health professionals play in observing the health impacts of our changing climate.*

Closing:

Does your office already have a position regarding these bills? Can we count on your support to defend climate progress and vote in favor of these bills we’ve highlighted if given the opportunity?

- **If yes**, thank them for support and state you’ll look forward to working with them moving forward and being a resource on similar bills.
- **If no**, ask if they need any additional information you might be able to provide and state that you’ll look forward to following up.

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us today. I hope you see that health professionals have a role and interest in protecting public health from the dangers posed by climate change. We will be following up with an email after this meeting outlining these priorities and providing further resources.

We hope you will consider defending Virginia’s progress and supporting these additional bills. We look forward to being a resource if you ever need information regarding climate and health.

END