

## So you're attending the LD1345 hearing in Augusta?

"An Act To Establish a Single-payor Health Care System To Be Effective in 2017"

**January 9, 2014, 1:00 PM**

**Insurance & Financial Services Committee, Room 220, Cross Office Bldg. (State House)**

You are making the effort to go to Augusta because you want to be heard by those who represent you. Here are ten tips to help you get your message across.

1. **Be prepared.** Try to find out as much as you can about who is on the committee you are addressing (see also #4). This information is easily available on the state website, [www.maine.gov](http://www.maine.gov). Begin your testimony by addressing the committee: "Senator Gratwick, Representative Treat, members of the Committee..."
2. **Bring handouts.** You may not have much time to speak, especially if there are many people ahead of you. However, you can make copies of information you would like the committee to have. The committee clerk usually wants about 25 copies and will see that the representatives or senators get them.
3. **Get personal.** Tell a (brief) personal story if possible. Talk about how the issue affects friends, family, community. Help legislators see the "other end" of the legislation in human terms.
4. **Short is good.** Keep comments down to two or three minutes. Go to what you feel is the heart of the issue and support your point. When you speak you will be asked to sign a list at the speakers' rostrum. You will save time by signing your name AFTER you have spoken.
5. **Stick to the point.** Unless asked a question by one of the legislators, which happens seldom, keep to your main point(s) and stay on topic.
6. **Make sure you are heard.** Show confidence in your point of view by speaking slowly and clearly.
7. **Avoid reading statements.** Hearings let you speak to your lawmakers with passion and sincerity. It's time-wasting to listen to someone read a prepared statement which could have been printed and distributed.
8. **Use body language.** In the hearing legislators are looking at the audience. They note facial expressions, indications of the degree of agreement with whomever is speaking, the general demeanor of those for and against, manner of dress, who is paying attention, who is familiar, and other valuable input for their decision making.
9. **Stay in the moment.** Watch the speakers and identify who speaks strongly for and against. When it's your turn to speak you can say you agree with so-and-so, or you take issue with thus-and-such. Doing this allows you to show yourself to be a good listener and "on top of" the issue.
10. **Follow up.** Keep track of the legislation and call or e-mail legislators after the hearing. You may want to either to reinforce your points, or to thank them for voting as you hoped they would.

**It's our government and we can make a difference!**