**Attending a town hall meeting?**

 **Raise your hand high and ask your elected officials if they will support wind energy**

Town hall meetings are generating headlines nowadays. These rare chances to be face-to-face with decision makers are drawing record crowds. In some cases, groups have gotten so large and raucous that elected officials are opting for smaller “coffee chats” or invitation-based events rather than traditional town halls.

Whether small or large, a live public forum is a chance for you to express your opinions and ask questions of your lawmakers. There are currently a number of state and federal policy issues that could affect the future of wind energy. Consider showing up at a town hall or small group meeting to talk wind power with your elected officials.

If you haven’t attended in the past, the idea of speaking up in front of an audience can be intimidating, so here are some tips that can help you prepare:

1. **Who are your elected officials?**

If you’re not sure of the names of your local, state, or federal level representatives, you can look them up using free services like [Balletopedia](https://ballotpedia.org/Elected_Officials_Lookup) or [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials).

1. **Mark your calendar**

Follow your elected officials on social media or subscribe to their email list. Typically they will notify their followers about any upcoming public meetings via these channels. [Town Hall Project](https://townhallproject.com/) is another useful tool for tracking upcoming town halls, office hours, and telephone town halls. Keep in mind that elected officials most often host public meetings when their [legislative session](http://thehill.com/sites/default/files/2017_the_hill_congressional_calendar.pdf) is in recess. If you still can’t find a scheduled meeting, call and ask your elected official’s office.

1. **Research your elected official**

Learn about the policymaker – how did he/she vote in the past on issues regarding renewable energy or wind energy? What information is on his/her website regarding energy policy? Having an indication of where the person stands can help you shape your approach to your interactions (e.g. thanking him/her for past support vs. asking if they will support in the future).

1. **Tell your wind story**

Do you work in wind energy? Do you host turbines on your land, or live in a community that benefits from the increased tax base brought by a wind project? Share your personal connection to wind power; this is a powerful way to connect with your lawmaker and other people in the room.

1. **Ask a direct question**

Prepare a question or two in advance and write them down. Some example questions regarding wind energy you could ask include:

* Thanks to wind energy, I [or someone you know] is able to have a good-paying job right here in [location]. Can you assure me that you won’t allow measures to pass that would halt production of more wind turbines in [location]?
* Are you supportive of [state/federal] policies that give stable and fair treatment to wind energy?
* Are you supportive of measures that will move our state towards more clean energy?
* \*When you can, reference specific state of federal policies that the elected official could be voting on soon.
1. **Include facts**

[AWEA’s state fact sheets](https://www.awea.org/resources/fact-sheets/state-facts-sheets) are great resources for information about the impact wind energy has in your area. You can cite how many jobs wind energy supports in your state, the number of wind-related factories located there, and more.

1. **Let us know how it goes**

If you spoke at or attended a public forum where wind energy was discussed, send us an email summarizing the event at grassroots@awea.org. This information helps AWEA take actions to follow up with the lawmaker and be aware of their current positions regarding wind energy.