



## **Staying Connected to Your Legislators **Virtually****

### **During the Next Legislative Session**

#### **1. Get to know your elected officials, especially those that represent you.**

- Request a virtual office visit with your legislator
- Use an interactive software such as Zoom, GoToMeeting or Microsoft Teams
- Invite your legislator to attend a component meeting virtually and speak for 15 minutes
- Take photos of your computer screen during these meetings/visits and post on social media

#### **2. Plan your virtual meeting.**

- Request a virtual meeting in the legislator's district or capitol office
- Send a reminder notification
- Test all technology prior to the meeting (video, wi-fi, screen sharing)
- Establish connection about ten minutes before meeting begins
- Set aside all distractions (children, pets, television, music)

#### **3. Send supportive TDHA resource materials before the virtual meeting.**

- The legislator may not be familiar with dental hygienists and TDHA's issues
- You may want to share information about local anesthesia, expanded practice settings and tele-dentistry (GAC can provide fact sheets to guide the discussion)
- If appropriate, share statistics that show Texas ranking at the bottom on oral health issues

#### **4. Share your agenda ahead of time.**

- Purpose of the visit is to introduce yourself
- Explain you are in legislator's district
- Explain you are a member of TDHA
- Share your professional education
- Express your concerns about access to care
- Tell about how Covid-19 has affected your employment

#### **5. Be politically correct.**

- All politics are local

- Be sure legislator knows that you live in his/her district and that you vote
- Do not give misinformation
- Do not be afraid to say, "I don't know but I will get back to you"
- Discuss any opposition to an issue (such as TDA)

**6. Be prompt, punctual and prepared.**

- Know the committees on which your legislator serves
- Be gracious if legislator is late or cancels at the last minute
- Talk to staff if legislator cannot be on meeting
- Make the connection between legislator's interests/committees and access to care
- Respect the reserved meeting time

**7. Things to consider when ending the meeting.**

- Get contact information for everyone you connected with electronically
- Leave your contact information
- Offer to be the **dental hygiene resource** for the legislator

**8. Things to do after the virtual meeting.**

- ALWAYS send a thank you note, written or electronic
- "Friend" your legislator through social media sites
- Maintain ongoing communication through texts and emails

**9. Help candidates get elected by volunteering. IT TAKES TIME TO BUILD A RELATIONSHIP!**

- Make a financial contribution if you are able
- Write letters on their behalf
- Display yard signs
- Work phone banks
- Block walk in their districts
- Respond promptly to **Calls for Action** from TDHA Lobbyist and Legislative Director

REMEMBER YOUR GAC TEAM, LOBBYIST, AND LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU **BEFORE** AND **AFTER** YOUR VIRTUAL VISITS.

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