

National Campaign Transit Justice

A project of just|strategy

Model Meeting With Legislators

Introduction: The Week Without Driving challenges us to leave our cars at home for a week to experience what life is like for the third of Americans who can't or don't drive.

By participating in Week Without Driving, we accomplish a number of our goals.

- Build relationships with elected officials around support for transit.
- Give them a first-hand understanding of what it is like to have public transit as your only option for getting around.
- Move them to support our local, state, and national agenda to invest in public transit options by raising their voice (oped, blog, video social media, co-sponsor, etc) in support of our agenda.

The climate crisis is not coming; it is here now. And we all must take action to address it—locally and collectively, urging policymakers at the state and federal levels to act.

The transportation sector is the largest source of U.S. climate pollution — 80% of transportation emissions come from the [cars and trucks on our roads](#). It's one of the only major sectors where emissions are still [rising](#).

This is why we aim to make this year's "A Week Without Driving" the largest ever.

Meeting With Elected Officials To Advance Our Goals

Model Agenda:

It is good to go through a process with the team that will meet with your elected official to identify an overarching purpose and the outcomes that you want to achieve in the meeting. It is critical that you have identified your ask. For example, can you support the x,y, and z policies? Can you speak at our event? Can you write an op-ed supporting these policies? This clarity will enable you to build an agenda that supports your goals and enables you to be flexible in the meeting with the elected official.

Purpose: To build a relationship with (insert) and support for (insert the local, state, and federal policy you are working on).

Outcomes:

- To demonstrate a broad concern for investing in transit, biking, and walking - involving key stakeholders/constituencies (riders,
- Raise up stories of (key stakeholders) to illustrate local positive investments, problems, and opportunities. Examples may include:
 - Positive investment - showing that government investments can make a difference.
 - Stories highlighting the need for more frequent and reliable transportation
 - The story highlights the importance of transit, biking, and walking in all communities - a suburban/rural example of what is needed.
 - Accessible: Safe streets, sidewalks, curb cuts, street crossings, etc.
- To educate (insert elected official) on key talking points/facts that support our larger vision for investing in transit, biking, and walking.
 - Every community will benefit from a stronger public transit system and safe streets.
 - The Federal government needs to play a role in supporting transit service and safe streets in all types of communities.
 - Educate (insert elected official) on (insert policy or policies). For example, if you are advancing support for Transit Operations funding, you would add.
 - The federal government needs to fund operations - or it is like building schoolhouses without teachers.
 - Operations funding is critical to address
 - Expanding and moving to dependable and frequent services
 - Addressing the labor shortage to create good jobs - that are the backbone of the system
 - Investment in Transit has social benefits for all of us
 - Equity: Whether you are from a large urban setting or a small town, if you are a commuter or an inner city subway rider, we can all benefit from an investment in frequent and dependable services.
 - Climate Frequent and dependable services will encourage people to move from their cars onto public transit and support the reduction of GHG in our communities.
 - Builds the economy: A strong public transit system brings workers to jobs, connects people to shopping districts, and supports the growth of local economies /Access to jobs through good transit will save money

- Ask—Examples include: Can you support the x,y, and z policies? Can you speak at our event? Can you write an op-ed supporting these policies? Will you join us in supporting efforts to expand funding for operations that support transit service?

Agenda:

Welcome: (2 min)

- Who is in the room - ideally, we have representation from key constituencies/stakeholders.
- Thank them for the meeting and frame the discussion. For example, *“We are happy to meet with you to share our experiences and highlight that although we are from urban and small towns, low-income and business parts of your district, we all feel the urgent need to invest in better transit service, which will drive equity, address climate concerns, and support the local economy.”*

Stories: pick 3 - keep to 2 min each

Ask, for example, *“ Will you join us in advocating for expanded funding that is needed to expand transit service in all of our communities?”*

Elected Official time to respond.

Ask clarifying questions and agree on the next step.

Thank them and adjourn