



AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

## **TIPS FOR ADVOCATES ON MEETING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS**

### **DO**

- Be a good listener and hear out what the official has to say.
- Be concise and clear about your interests.
- Offer to serve as a resource.
- Respect the right of the official to disagree with you and vote against your issue but try to establish a common interest
- Provide written materials – one-page handouts are effective.
- Follow up on any commitments made.
- Thank the official for his/her time and interest in your issue.

### **DON'T**

- Go over the allotted time unless it's obvious the official wants to spend more time with you.
- Criticize people on a personal level – talk about the issue.
- Ask for more than one meeting with the same official on the same issue unless you have something different to say.
- Tell the official what he/she "should" do. Put your message in the form of a request and explain how his/her action will affect constituents.
- Burn your bridges. Show no anger or resentment toward officials who vote or act against you. You may need their support on another issue! Say 'maybe you can help me next time' and make sure the next time happens!