

# Louisiana Lobbying Tips

**What:** Public hearings on nine medical cannabis bills — The House Committee on Health and Welfare

**When:** Tuesday, April 19, starting at 8:30 a.m.; the hearing will last several hours.

## Some tips:

- The hearing is in the House of Representatives Committee Room 5 (in the basement).
- We'll all need to go through security, and there could be dozens of other people, so build in extra time. It's a good idea to aim to arrive by 8:00 a.m.
- Be sure and fill out a green card with your information. The card will have an option for you to show support and/or if you would like to testify for the bill.
- Each witness will most likely be limited to three minutes. It's a good idea to practice your testimony and time it to make sure it fits in three minutes. (We recommend not having it on your iPhone; print it out in larger font if you'll be reading off of it.)
- If another person has effectively testified your points, you have the right to waive your testimony.
- The most effective testimony will be speaking about your personal experience regarding how the medical cannabis law has improved your life (or that of a loved one). But note that you want to see improvements to better the quality of life for patients (i.e., A pharmacy closer to you if you must drive long distances, if you had a hard time finding someone to recommend medical cannabis, if the limited variety of cannabis available has not given you relief, or if the limited numbers of growers/processors has made medical cannabis too expensive for you).
- We recommend dressing professionally in business attire, business casual, or church attire (but make sure the clothes are comfortable enough to wear for several hours).
- Food and drinks are not allowed.
- Please be sure to say *cannabis* rather than using slang.
- Focus on medical cannabis (and support for a specific bill) not legalization or other issues.
- Be polite and respectful to legislators.
- Do not make any outburst if opponents make false claims or otherwise upset you. As maddening as some of their testimony will be, outbursts or aggressive reactions will only hurt our cause. Also, know that the majority of the committee members are supportive, so the audience is friendly. Inappropriate behavior can also result in removal from the committee room. It is possible legislators will ask questions of witnesses. If they ask you anything you don't know the answer to, you can simply explain that another witness will need to answer that.

We know public speaking can be nerve-racking, especially about something like medical cannabis. Thank you so much for being willing to do so. Legislators hearing that these bills will improve the Louisiana medical cannabis program and the patients' quality of life makes important impressions. Hopefully, those impressions lead to passage of these bills.