National Quaker Peace & Legislation Committee – Six Key Lobby Tips

**Tip #1: Be prepared**While you don’t have to be an expert on the specific issue and the Ask, do your homework. Know the position of your elected representative, and the impacts of this position on the local community. You may not have more than a few minutes, even if the meeting was scheduled for longer, so use your time wisely – a Roadmap is handy.

**Ideas for the Ask:** Vote a certain way. Make a public statement. Talk with your colleagues. Sponsor or co-sponsor a bill. Call for an Inquiry. Sign our petition. Attend or speak at our event. Visit our stricken location. Meet with our representatives. Make a statement in Parliament.

**Tip #2: Be positive**Even if you disagree with your Parliamentarian/Assembly Representative/Local Council on most issues, odds are that you can find something your agree on. Thank them for something you both support. Building a long-term relationship with the office is a good investment. Be polite and respectful to everyone in the office and around the table. It’s not unusual for receptionists/front of house staff to move around as politicians come and go. Plus, they are usually well connected. If there are people who look very young or are introduced as junior members of the team, keep in mind that they usually have to report back to senior people and will, sometimes quickly, move up the ranks.

**Tip #3: Don’t memorize – practice in advance, think of the meeting as a piece of chorography, don’t leave things to chance, have a game plan**

Use dot points to make sure key points/figures aren’t forgotten – use a Road Map or something similar. The office/elected representative wants to know why you are going to the trouble of meeting with them. You don’t need to be a subject matter expert, it’s your story that counts. Unsure how to answer a question? Take it on notice and send the information or response by 5pm on the same day if possible.

**Tip #4: Use the buddy system, build a delegation**

You are more likely to get a meeting with someone if you come with a delegation representing the diversity of your community. Build a delegation that is as diverse in as many ways as possible. Run through your introductions in advance so that even if the delegation looks the same (age, ethnicity, etc), the introductions are diverse. For example, *I’m Sue Smith from Smalltown in the northern part of NSW. My partner and I have a small construction business which was pretty impacted by COVID. We have two children, one in public school and one in private, we’re also an NDIS family and just finished rebuilding our house from the 2021 floods. I really want to thank you for taking the time to attend our flood recovery ceremony last year – it really mattered to everyone.* In four sentences the Parliamentarian knows that Sue Smith has several networks into a range of community/school and work groups who may well hear about her experience of this meeting.

**Tip #5: Have a strong Ask**

Having a concrete Ask is important. Be specific. ‘Will you/your boss make a public statement in support of signing and ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition on Nuclear Weapons?’ If it relates to legislation, make sure that your Parliamentarian or their staff knows exactly which bill you are talking about. If it relates to an action in a specific location, make sure that information is clearly conveyed. Leave behind your contact details (including your website or other useful links).

**Tip #6: Follow up. Then follow up again.**

After you visit, send a thank you note to the member of staff or elected representative you met with, answer any questions. Think about how you can build a relationship with the office. If you use social media to amplify the visit, let the Office know where to find it online.