

HOW TO MEET WITH YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

BOOKING A MEETING

- Phone your MP's electorate office & make a booking
 - They might ask you to put it in writing, so if they do send them a letter or an email and then follow up with a phone call if they don't respond to you. You can find your MP's contact details at aec.gov.au & aph.gov.au
- Be prepared to explain who you are representing, why you want a meeting and who will be attending the meeting
 - You don't need to summarise all of your talking points, just one or two sentences on what you'd like to speak to the MP about. E.g. 'I'd like to speak to Mr Jones about Australia's role in ending exploitation in global supply chains'
 - If you'll be representing your church then let them know
- Ask if you can arrange to meet the MP for around half an hour

PREPARING FOR YOUR MEETING

- Arrange a team of 3-5 to make the visit
 - Any more than 3-5 people may lead to the meeting becoming a bit unwieldy, and you actually might not physically be able to all fit in the office
- Familiarise yourself with the issue that you would like to talk about, and make sure you know exactly what actions you'd like the MP to take
 - Make sure that everyone attending the meeting is clear on the issue you'll be discussing. Prepare a couple of points to mention and have your facts straight. Ensure that you're up to date with the latest news and developments, and have answers to basic questions or arguments that people usually have about your issue.
 - Our briefing sheets that you leave with the MP will usually have something at the bottom with 'what we're asking for' and 'what you can do'
 - Make a speech in parliament
 - Write to the treasurer
 - Raise awareness in your newsletter or on your website
- Do some background research on your MP:
 - You should find out things like how to address them, if they have ever spoken about the issue you're going to meet with them about, if they are involved in any relevant organisations, what their party's policy is. You can go onto the who's who section of the Australian Parliament Website, or just by searching the MP's name and then the issue you're campaigning on.

- It may be useful to learn a bit about the MP's background and priorities by looking at their maiden and recent speeches in parliament, but this is not necessary.
- Get together as a team beforehand to discuss who will say what, and to organise which materials you will be taking
 - You might like to assign roles like note taker, leader speaker, other speakers etc.
 - Practice putting your case across in 10 minutes
 - Organise the briefing sheet, or a poster, or something for the MP to hold up in a photo with you
- Pray before you go in, that God would prepare the heart of the MP to hear your message and that they will take action.

DURING YOUR MEETING

- Be punctual, neatly dressed, and friendly: make a good first impression.
- Introduce yourselves. Tell the MP a little bit about what your background is. Are you a student? Do you work full time?
- Share your concern – hand the MP the briefing sheet. You don't need to go into great detail – the MP will ask for more details if they need them. Don't worry if you don't know the answers to all of the questions. Just let them know that you'll find out and let them know
- Be polite and persuasive, not rude and confrontational – don't try and lecture them, or be angry with them. But do assert your case robustly – the best way to influence your MP is to have a genuine conversation with them; that way, they and you will both hopefully learn from each other and over time, build a constructive relationship and a way forward on this issue. So make sure you listen to them as well
- Make your asks – have really clear asks of the MPs, determine what actions you think are reasonable for them to take. Consult the relevant policy briefing sheets for suggested asks
- Clarify what the MP is agreeing to do and what you are agreeing to do
- Tell your MP that you will follow them up

AFTER THE MEETING

- Write a Thank You note outlining that actions that both you, and the MP, agreed to take
- Follow up by letter, mail, or phone as appropriate
- Debrief as a group – debrief with your group and try to document any ways that you could improve future meetings. Pray about the meeting.
- Start planning your next meeting
- We'd love to hear about how your meeting went! Fill in our MP feedback form: baptistworldaid.org.au/politician-meeting-feedback-form