

# MOVING THE MESSAGE ON TRANSIT IN IDAHO



**CTAI** Community  
Transportation  
Association of Idaho



Elaine Clegg | VRT

Suzanne Seigneur | Lewiston Transit

# WHAT WE'LL TALK ABOUT

- Engaging with policymakers
- Define your message
- Economic impact
- Conducting a meeting
- Direct Education
- Personal stories



# ENGAGING WITH POLICYMAKERS

## DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS

- Building strong relationships with policymakers is fundamental to successful advocacy
- You can build respectful rapport even with politicians you don't typically align with



# ENGAGING WITH POLICYMAKERS

## PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

- Visit your legislators while here at the Capitol – but also in your community
- Invite them on a ride along
- Thank them for their public service
- Get to know their gatekeepers



# ENGAGING WITH POLICYMAKERS

## FOLLOW UP

- Follow up with handwritten thank-you notes, Sharing additional information
- Offer your expertise on relevant issues
- Communicate often



# DEFINE YOUR MESSAGE

**WHAT DO YOU WANT THEM TO KNOW  
ABOUT YOU & THE TRANSIT SYSTEM YOU  
RIDE OR WORK FOR?**



# DEFINE YOUR MESSAGE

- A well-defined message is easier to pass on to your allies, easier for them to understand, and less likely to be misstated.
- A clear message is easier for legislators and understand, especially if they're unfamiliar with the issue.
- A message that's specific and concise is more likely to be heard favorably by legislators, especially if it asks for some specific action.



# ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Idaho has been one of the fastest-growing states in U.S. for two decades
- Transit produces measurable economic impact for the state
- Transit provides congestion mitigation
- Transit supports job creation by expanding access to work
- Transit strengthens rural communities





# CONDUCTING A MEETING

## ACT AND LOOK LIKE A PROFESSIONAL

- Be professional in your demeanor and tone and address your legislators and their staffers according to their titles
- Wear business attire and comfortable shoes



# CONDUCTING A MEETING

## BE PUNCTUAL

- The legislator may leave you waiting but your job is show up a few minutes early



# CONDUCTING A MEETING

## BE POSITIVE IN YOUR MESSAGING

- Talk about what works for you or those you represent.



# CONDUCTING A MEETING

## FOLLOW UP

- Send a thank-you note



# DIRECT EDUCATION

- Direct education and lobbying involves directly communicating with policymakers to advocate for your cause
- This can include in-person meetings, phone calls, or written correspondence



# DIRECT EDUCATION

## SCHEDULE MEETINGS

- Request a meeting
- Prepare an agenda outlining key points and anticipate potential questions they may have



# DIRECT EDUCATION

## BRING EVIDENCE

- Bring supporting materials, such as our report, fact sheets, and case studies from your agency
- This evidence will reinforce your arguments and demonstrate your expertise



# SHARE PERSONAL STORIES

- While data and figures all help to make the case for your issue, personal stories are extremely powerful and are often remembered





# SHARE PERSONAL STORIES

## RETELL MOVING ANECDOTES

- Legislators are all people who care about their community
- Stories relating how communities and community members are directly impacted by transit can make a lasting impression



# SHARE PERSONAL STORIES

## KEEP IT BRIEF

- Your story doesn't have to be long to be powerful,
- The more it relates across transit riders or issues the more impact it may have

