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Dear Neighbor:

I wish to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your State Representative in Hartford. I feel privileged to have earned your trust.

Speaker Amann has appointed me to serve on the following Committees: Transportation, Energy & Technology, and Environment. There are many issues that residents will have the opportunity to comment on during public hearings and I hope that the information provided on this sheet will not only inform you of how to testify at a public hearing but may even encourage you to do so.

The dates of the hearings can always be accessed via the state website: www.cga.ct.gov.

If my office can be of any assistance to you during this upcoming session please call my office at 240-8585.

Sincerely,

Russell G. Morin



State Representative
Russell Morin
Legislative Office Building, Room 4115
Hartford, CT 06106

1-800-842-8267

State Representative Russell Morin

Making Government Work For You!



Making Your Voice Heard

Speaking at a public hearing is an effective way of getting your point across at the Capitol. Many people find the idea intimidating, but I encourage you to get involved. Here's how:

When preparing your remarks, it is important to know the number of the bill which interests you. To get a bill number you can call 1-800-842-1902 and request to speak to my aide or you can access the General Assembly web site at www.cga.ct.gov and do a bill search. It is a good idea to prepare copies of your testimony to be distributed to the committee members at the hearing (approx. 30 copies). If you do so, be sure to include a reference to the bill number at the beginning of your testimony.



Most hearings are held in the Legislative Office Building (LOB). TV monitors at the LOB entrances show the location. The daily printed Bulletin also gives this information and lists all bills scheduled for hearing. You can get a Bulletin in the LOB ground floor bill room.

Sign up at the shelf just inside the hearing room door, and please print your name clearly. The sign-up sheet requests your name, the bill number(s) and whether you are for or against the bill. You may not sign up for other speakers. Sign-up sheets are placed in hearing rooms one hour before the hearing begins, unless otherwise announced. Copies of the bills are also available outside the hearing room.



Hearing Procedures



The first hour of a hearing is normally reserved for legislators and agency heads or invited guests. Remaining speakers are called by the co-chairs usually - though not always - in the order that they appear on the sign-up sheet. Some committees hear all testimony on one bill before proceeding to the next, following the agenda printed in the Bulletin.

Most hearings last for several hours and legislators come and go because they are frequently attending more than one meeting or hearing at the same time. This does not mean your testimony goes unnoticed. I recommend providing written copies of your testimony to committee members, in part so that the members can review it even if they missed your actual testimony. All hearings are recorded and transcripts are prepared from the tapes. Some of the hearings are even televised for viewing at home or via computers.

Hearings can be frustrating because you may have to wait a long while for just a few minutes of testimony (many are limited to three minutes). Nevertheless, your time is well spent because legislators do care what you think and there are times where one person's remarks can initiate a changed course for a bill. In addition, I am confident you will find the process interesting and you will gain insight into the importance of citizen involvement.

Your Testimony

When you are called, you sit at a desk equipped with a microphone. You will be asked to introduce yourself; it is a good idea to mention your town, the number and title of the bill you are addressing, whether you support or oppose the bill and whether you will be offering suggestions for improvement, then explain your reasoning. It is important to keep your remarks short. In fact, some committees impose time limits. When you finish, remain at the mike for a moment, in case committee members want to ask questions.