



Library Legislative Day for Newbies

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Being a library advocate on Library Legislative Day is easy!

Taking a bus ride to the State House is your opportunity to talk to your legislators about your library and its importance to your users. Here is all you need to know about taking the WMLA/CMLA bus to Library Legislative Day in Boston on March 15.

AGENDA

10:00 - 10:30 am - The bus arrives at the State House.

10:00 - Legislative Briefing, Room 222; repeated at 11:00.

11:00 am - 12:00 pm - Visit legislators; view exhibits; tour State House.

12:00 - 1:00 pm - Lunch & Advocacy Award in the Great Hall (Provided by sponsors; no charge to attendees). Invite legislators to join you.

1:00 - 2:00 pm - Visit legislators; view exhibits; tour State House.

The bus leaves at 2:45 (try to be there at 2:30).

When we arrive at the State House:

Proceed to the General Hooker entrance of the building and go through security.

At the Great Hall, visit the sign in desk and pick up information packets for legislators.

It is now time to go to visit legislators. A list of legislators and office numbers will be available, and there are plenty of people and signs to help you find your way.

TIPS

To Bring: Masks as a courtesy to attendees, legislators, and their staff; Business cards; Thank you notes generated by library patrons; Comfy shoes are recommended.

Do Not Bring: Swiss army knives (you may not see yours again); Big backpacks. You will slow everybody down.

It is useful, but not imperative that you make an appointment. Library Legislative Day is a significant recurring event. Legislators and their staff know to expect library visitors. The important thing is to:

Stop by your legislators' offices. Speak to your legislators and/or their staff. Describe what your library provides for your community, ask for their active support for the MBLC legislative agenda, explain why the agenda items are crucial for your library (State Aid, delivery, resource sharing and network support, data bases, training and the MBLC), and why your library is important and necessary for your users.

You'll have a few minutes to make a couple of key points on the value of state funding for libraries and to ask for their support. Specific local examples of library use or need are particularly effective.

Get business cards from staff members if you interact with them.

Invite them to join you for lunch. (The podium will recognize all legislators present at the luncheon.)

If you can't speak with your legislator or an aide directly, leave your card, an info packet or a note so that they know you were there and what action you would like them to take. These notes and your presence are very important. Our legislators are aware of the commitment we have made to take the day and travel to Boston. Your note, even if your legislator is not available, makes a significant impression.

The Legislative Day Bus is organized and underwritten by the Western Massachusetts Library Advocates (WMLA) and the Central Massachusetts Library Advocates/ Legislative Day is sponsored by the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) and the Massachusetts School Library Association (MSLA). The sponsoring organizations pay for the lunch; there is no cost to you or your legislator.