

# How to Virtually Advocate During the 2023 Legislative Session

## Quick Guide

*For more detailed instructions, please see the following pages.*

### Bill Sign-In

1. Go to “[Participating in Committee Hearings](#)” on the legislative website.
2. Select “Get Your Position on a Bill Noted for Legislative Record.”
3. Find the committee hearing.
4. Select “I would like my position noted for the legislative record.”
5. Enter your position and information and submit.

*Closes one hour before committee hearing begins.*

### Submit Written Testimony

1. Go to “[Participating in Committee Hearings](#)” on the legislative website.
2. Select “Submitting Written Testimony to a Committee.”
3. Find the committee hearing.
4. Select “I would like to submit written testimony.”
5. Enter your position, information, and testimony and submit.

*Closes 24 hours after committee hearing begins.*

### Testifying Live in a Hearing

1. Go to “[Participating in Committee Hearings](#)” on the legislative website.
2. Select “Testifying in a Committee Hearing.”
3. Find the committee hearing.
4. Select “I would like to testify live during the hearing.”
5. Enter your position and information and submit.
6. You will be emailed a unique link to join the hearing.

*Closes one hour before committee hearing begins.*

### Scheduling a Lawmaker Meeting

1. Find your lawmaker by entering your address in the [District Finder](#).
2. Go to the [Legislative Roster](#) and find your lawmaker in the list.
3. Email the legislative assistant(s) with your meeting request. Be sure to include the fact that you are a constituent, the subject you would like to discuss, your availability, and a phone number.

## Bill Sign-in

Signing-in pro, con, or other on a bill in a committee hearing demonstrates your support or opposition to that bill, and your position becomes part of the public record. Sign-in opens as soon as the bill is scheduled for a hearing but closes one hour prior to the start of the committee hearing.

### How to sign in on a bill:

1. Find the bill on the legislative website by entering by selecting “Bill Information” from the main menu and entering the bill number. If you already know when the bill will be heard and in which committee, skip to step 3.



The screenshot shows the Washington State Legislature website. At the top, there is a green banner with the text "WASHINGTON STATE LEGISLATURE" and images of the state capitol and a portrait of George Washington. Below the banner is a navigation menu with the following items: "Legislature Home", "House of Representatives", "Senate", "Find Your District", "Laws & Agency Rules", "Bill Information", and "Agendas, Schedules, and Calendars". To the right of the menu is a "Bill Information" search box. The search box has a title "Search by Bill Number" and a text input field labeled "Bill number". There are two buttons: "Bill" (highlighted in green) and "Initiative". Below the input field is a dropdown menu showing "2023-24" and a "Search" button.

2. On the bill page, scroll down to “Bill History” to find when the bill will be heard in committee. In the example below, we can see that this bill will be heard in the Senate Committee on State Government & Elections at 8:00am on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

### Bill History

#### 2023 REGULAR SESSION

Dec 14	Prefiled for introduction.
Jan 9	First reading, referred to State Government & Elections. ( <a href="#">View Original Bill</a> )
Jan 20	Scheduled for public hearing in the Senate Committee on State Government & Elections at 8:00 AM (Subject to change). ( <a href="#">Committee Materials</a> )

3. Now to go the “Participating in Committee Hearings” page here:  
<https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Participating.aspx>
4. Select “Get Your Position on a Bill Noted for Legislative Record.”

## Participating in the Process

You are a vital part of the legislative process. The legislative web site offers ways to contact a legislator and even participate in committee hearing activity. See below for information about the different options.

Communicating with a Legislator	Participating in a Committee Hearing
<p><b>Send an Email</b> You can send an email message to your elected official by clicking their name hyperlink.</p> <p><b>Send a Message about a Bill</b> After searching for a bill, click the "Comment on a Bill" button on the Bill Summary Page to send a message to your elected official and share your opinion. You can request a response to your message if you wish.</p>	<p><b>Testifying in a Committee Hearing</b> During the Legislative Session, you can register to testify in a virtual committee hearing either in person or remotely through Zoom in a similar manner as you would on campus. If you frequently testify on bills, you may find it useful to create a Legislative Account. An account allows you to autofill sign-in information and view and edit your sign-in history.</p> <p><b>Submitting Written Testimony to a Committee</b> If you do not wish to testify in a committee hearing, you can still submit written testimony on a bill for the archived legislative record.</p> <p><b>Get Your Position on a Bill Noted for Legislative Record</b> If you wish, you could choose to have your position noted. The Committee Sign In - Remote Testimony page also allows you to select a chamber, committee, and bill, then indicate you wish to have your position noted for the archived legislative record.</p>

5. Select the chamber in which the hearing is taking place (House or Senate).

## Committee Sign In

Please select which chamber or agency you would like to submit testimony for:

6. Select the Committee name and the date/time of the hearing from the dropdown menus.

## Senate Committee Sign In

[Return to Committee Sign In Home](#)

**Committee:**  **Meetings:**

7. Select the circle next to the bill for which you wish to sign in. A pop-up menu will appear – select “I would like my position noted for the legislative record.”

## Senate Committee Sign In

Return to Committee Sign In Home

Committee: State Government & Elections Meetings: 01/20/23 8:00 AM

Select agenda item

- SB 5047 Voting rights act
- SB 5140 Election security testing
- SB 5268 Public works procurement
- SCR 8402 Jennifer Belcher Building

Select type of testimony

- I would like to testify in person during the hearing
- I would like to testify remotely
- I would like my position noted for the legislative record
- I would like to submit written testimony

See who has signed in for this agenda item

- This will bring you to a new page. Confirm the committee title, date, and bill number at the top of the page.

## Committee Sign In - Legislative Record

Complete the fields below and press submit to state your position on a bill without testifying.

**Committee:** State Government & Elections

**Date/Time:** 1/20/2023 8:00:00 AM

**Bill/Issue:** SB 5047 Voting rights act

**Location:** Senate Hearing Rm 2 and Virtual

Required fields are marked with an asterisk (\*).

*This system is used as a roster to show who has registered and wishes to state their position on a bill. The information you provide will be made available to legislative committee members and staff of the committee, and will be included in the legislative record for bill and meeting archival purposes. Please ensure your information is accurate.*

***The roster is a legislative record maintained under chapter 40.14 RCW (Preservation and Destruction of Public Records) and subject to public disclosure under chapter 42.56 RCW (Public Records Act).***

- Selection your position on the bill from the dropdown menu and enter the required personal information.

**\*Position:**

**\*First Name:**

**\*Last Name:**

**\*Email:**

10. Select “Submit Registration.”

11. You’re done! If you’d like to sign in on multiple bills, return to step 3 and repeat.

## **Submitting Written Testimony**

In addition to signing-in with your position, you can also submit written testimony to the legislature. Your comments will be made available to legislative members and staff of the committee and will be included in the legislative record for bill and meeting archival purposes but will not be used as part of testimony summary materials on the bill report.

You may submit written testimony through the online portal as soon as the bill is scheduled for a committee hearing. You can submit testimony up until 24 hours after the start of the committee hearing.

### **How to submit written testimony:**

1. Follow steps 1-6 for signing in on a bill (above). You will find additional guidance for submitting written testimony at the bottom of this page.
2. Select the circle next to the bill for which you would like to submit written testimony. A pop-up menu will appear – select “I would like to submit written testimony.”
3. This will bring you to a new page. Confirm the committee title, date, and bill number at the top of the page.
4. Selection your position on the bill from the dropdown menu and enter the required personal information.
5. Write your written comment in the text box provided or copy and paste from a separate document. There is a 5000-character limit for written testimony. You also have the option to submit additional documentation in the form of a PDF file.
6. Select “Submit Registration.”
7. You’re done!

## Testifying Live in a Hearing

If you would like to testify live in committee hearing in person or via video or phone, you can do so using the same portal as sign-in and written testimony. Live testimony is a powerful way to make your voice heard by committee members and have your story become part of the public record for the bill.

Once you have registered for remote testimony, you will automatically be emailed a Zoom link. Each link is unique to the registrant and registrants are prohibited from sharing links. There are a few important things to keep in mind for public testimony:

- Registering to testify doesn't guarantee you a chance to speak or speak at specific times. Time constraints, technical issues, changes to committee schedules, etc. could affect your ability to testify.
- The committee Chair may limit public testimony to as little as one minute per testifier because of time constraints. Write your comments ahead of time and be prepared to testify at any point during the hearing.
- It's important to maintain proper committee protocol, which includes waiting to be acknowledged by the committee Chair before speaking and following rules for testimony established by the Chair.
- Dress nicely and address the committee formally – e.g. “Madame Chair and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to speak to you today.” You can find examples of testimony by watching live and recorded committee meetings on TVW.

**The Washington State Legislature provides detailed instructions on how to register to provide in-person or remote testimony on their website, which you can find [here](#).**