



NEVADA YOUTH LEGISLATURE (NYL)
**TESTIMONY BEFORE A
PUBLIC DECISION-MAKING BODY**

PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

EARLY PREPARATION FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY

1. Select the topic or subject matter that you will be addressing. Find something about which you can invest your passion and share your experience.
2. Determine the purpose/goal of your remarks. What do you want to accomplish with your testimony?
3. Study details about the decision-making body, its authority, and what will be on the agenda at the meeting you are planning to attend.
4. Learn about the specific member(s) of the decision-making body, who might represent your constituency. For example, this might be a school board member who represents your Senate district.
 - Prior to your plans to testify, contact this person about who you are, (Youth Legislator from Senate District #), which meeting you will be attending, and the purpose of your testimony.
 - Often, Youth Legislators speak on the record during public testimony. However, when you do your research, which includes reviewing the agenda of the meeting that you are planning to attend, the agenda might contain a topic about which you want to testify. This would be something you would want to discuss with your representative on this particular decision-making body. Know enough about what you are planning to share that you feel comfortable having a conversation with this official.

PREPARING FOR YOUR PRESENTATION

1. Focus your remarks on no more than three key points, and support your message with research, including meaningful examples and relevant statistics.
2. If appropriate, include a story, anecdote, or quotes to highlight and humanize key points.
3. Script the opening and closing of your testimony, which can include a summary, a question, a very brief (related) story, a quotation, an important statistic, or something else that is relevant and memorable.
4. If you will be testifying regarding an agenda item, prior to the meeting, learn how much time you will be allotted. Also, determine when the item appears on the agenda. This will help you in preparing your remarks and planning your attendance.

5. Practice. Practice. Practice. This includes practicing your remarks and your answers to possible questions that the decision-makers might ask.
6. Be prepared to respond to requests for additional conversations or opportunities to present or discuss your message.
7. Please remember to maintain proper decorum and respect for the process and all those who are participating in it. Also, “Thank you for your time, your service, and your consideration” is an appropriate way to conclude.