

## ***Meetings or Events (“Meet and Greets”)***

One good way to build productive relationships with state legislators is to invite them to attend meetings or events sponsored or supported by LACMA Districts in their legislative districts. It may be advantageous to invite legislators (and their staffs) to attend regularly scheduled LACMA Regional District meetings or breakfasts. Usually, the District president makes a brief presentation outlining legislative priorities and concerns and then turns the floor over to the legislator for comments. A question-and-answer session usually follows.

These sorts of “back home” events work best when they are not geared to specific legislation but are billed as get-acquainted sessions. It is important to foster long-term relationships based on broad mutual interests and understanding. Not every meeting should involve pressure to vote or act a certain way. **Nothing is more effective in building a relationship with public officials than creating opportunities for them to interact with their constituents.**

Large events like the LACMA/CMA Legislative Day, awards programs, receptions, charities, golf tournaments, or other public activities are prime opportunities to build relationships with public officials, elected and otherwise. Well-attended events like these are often a good place to give awards or other formal recognition to public officials, as well. Whenever you involve public officials in your events, be sure to include them in any publicity materials. Let the media know they will be there and include their names on programs, press releases, etc. It is a good idea to send copies of those materials to the legislator’s office, along with any press clippings that result mentioning his or her name.

LACMA also encourages Districts to hold “Meet and Greet” events. Please see the following page to explore Ten Steps Toward Creating “Meet and Greet” Events.

### ***TEN STEPS TOWARD CREATING “MEET AND GREET” EVENTS***

1. Pick a legislator, preferably one with potential interest in physicians’ concerns!
2. Work with the legislator’s district office to schedule a date and pick a place. Allow at least two months lead time. This will give you time to reserve a room and develop a simple invitation with directions. Also ask for RSVPs to get a head count.
3. You can obtain a list of physicians that live and work in the legislator’s district from LACMA. Use this list to fax the invitation, and have the Chapter GAAC Chair and Key contact(s) follow up with phone calls personally inviting them. E-mail is also very effective and inexpensive.
4. Place an announcement and/or the flyer in your local newsletter.
5. If there is a local graduate school, invite the graduate students. This is a great way to get students involved early. If your Regional District has a student Rep have them help!
6. Coordinate the event with LACMA. A member of LACMA’s Advocacy Team may be able to attend, and this will allow them to educate the legislator on the important issues.
7. Familiarize yourself with the legislator’s committee memberships, bills sponsored, and prior involvement with the practice of medicine issues. Familiarize yourself with LACMA’s legislative agenda, pending bills, etc. You may want to prepare a handout to provide attending physicians to facilitate informed questions and comments. Ask LACMA for the information.

#### **On the day of the event:**

1. Get there early, have nametags, and take photos. Ask all attendees for business cards or have them sign in. Use this list to send thank you letters. Publicly thank the legislator for coming after his presentation.

#### **After the event:**

1. Write an article for your local newsletter. Send a copy to the legislator with a thank you letter and any photos taken.
2. Start to prepare for the next event!