



## HOW TO TESTIFY AT A PUBLIC HEARING

### (for Connecticut researchers)

You can find all you need to know about testifying at a public hearing in the [CT General Assembly's daily bulletin](#). The daily bulletin is published each day of the legislative session. Once you see a hearing on a bill of interest listed on the [CT General Assembly's schedule of events](#),<sup>1</sup> you can find out how to sign up and/or submit testimony in the daily bulletin. You can either search the bulletin by the hearing date or the committee to find a description of the hearing, including the email address for submitting testimony and the way to sign up to testify. Be sure to check the hearing description because the rules for testifying vary by committee.

### Example of a Public Hearing Listing and What to Look for:

The Environment Committee will hold a public hearing on Monday, March 7, 2023 at 10:00 A.M. via Zoom. The public hearing can be viewed via YouTube Live. In addition, the public hearing may be recorded and broadcast live on CT-N.com. Individuals who wish to **testify via Zoom** must register using the On-line Testimony Registration Form. Registration will close on Sunday, March 6, 2023 at 3:00 P.M. Speaker order of approved registrants will be posted on the Environment Committee website on Sunday, March 6, 2023 at 6:00 P.M. under Public Hearing Testimony. If you do not have internet access, you may provide testimony **via telephone**. To register to testify by phone, call the Phone Registrant Line at (860) 240-0431 to leave your contact information. Please **email written testimony** in Word or PDF format to [ENVtestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:ENVtestimony@cga.ct.gov). Testimony should clearly state testifier name and related bills. All public hearing testimony, written and spoken, is public information. As such, it will be made available on the CGA website and indexed by internet search engines.

Notice that the committee includes information on how to both verbally testify (in this case virtually or via telephone) and how to submit written testimony. Make sure to register by the deadline as they are strict.

### What to Include in Testimony:

Begin your testimony by acknowledging the committee chairs and explaining your research area and its impact on population or individual health outcomes. Explicitly state if you support or oppose the bill and why. If you think the bill can be improved with modifications, include draft language that incorporates your recommended changes. You can address more than one bill in your testimony, but you can only testify on bills that are on the public hearing agenda.

Both your written and oral testimony should be clear, concise, and persuasive. Provide CT and/or community-specific data whenever possible. Explain how the proposed policy has worked, or been ineffective, in other states—examples from neighboring and New England states are typically the most influential. Clearly explain the importance of the bill and why

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<sup>1</sup> You can also [track bills](#) through the CT General Assembly website. This allows you to get alerts on public hearings and provides updates on how a bill is moving through the legislative process.

legislators should take action. Including anecdotal stories and personal insights can make your testimony stand out.

While your written testimony can be longer and include citations and resources that may be helpful to legislators, **you only have three minutes** to deliver your testimony in person during the public hearing. Stick to the main/most compelling points of your written testimony and practice to make sure it is within the three-minute timeframe. Always end with offering to answer legislators' questions. If you are asked a question, use this time not only to answer the question but also provide pertinent information that you were unable to include earlier in your oral testimony. **There is no time limit for questions and answers.** Finally, send a follow up email to legislators on the committee after the hearing. View the hearing as an opportunity to build a relationship with legislators and help them learn more about your research.



## Additional Resources

### [CT-N Connecticut Network](#)

CT-N is a resource for live and recorded public hearings, committee meetings, and a wide range of state government media coverage. You can also find videos on the CT legislative process and how to testify.

### [Guide for Reaching State Legislators and Testifying at Hearings](#)

from the Connecticut General Assembly

### [Testify at a Hearing](#)

from the Connecticut Health Policy Project

