

Hepatitis Leadership Corps: Prepare & Provide Public Testimony

BJ Cavnor
One in Four Chronic Health

About us.

One in Four Chronic Health was created in 2013 to serve people living with chronic health conditions.

We are a collaborative project, bringing together patients, community based organizations & policy makers to ensure continued access to affordable treatment for everyone.

Our name reflects the fact that one in four Americans are living with a chronic health condition.

What is testimony & why is it important?

- Public testimony is a way to share your concerns about an issue with legislators.
- Providing Testimony gives you the opportunity to engage in the legislative and law making process.
- *Your* comments and *your* story have an impact on how legislators view and vote on an issue.
- It offers legislators the chance to see how the public and their peers feel about an issue.
- It allows you the opportunity to learn what your opposition is doing, and better prepare your own message.

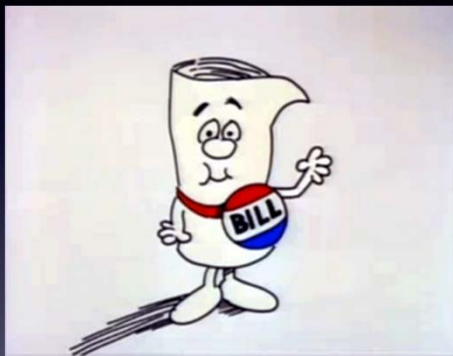
What is testimony & why does it matter?

Because our legislators work for us.

Opportunities to testify.

- Before Policy and Rule Making committees
- Pharmacy & Therapeutics Committees
- HERC/Medicaid
- Before Legislative Committees
- At the invitation of a legislator
- In the house of worship of your choice

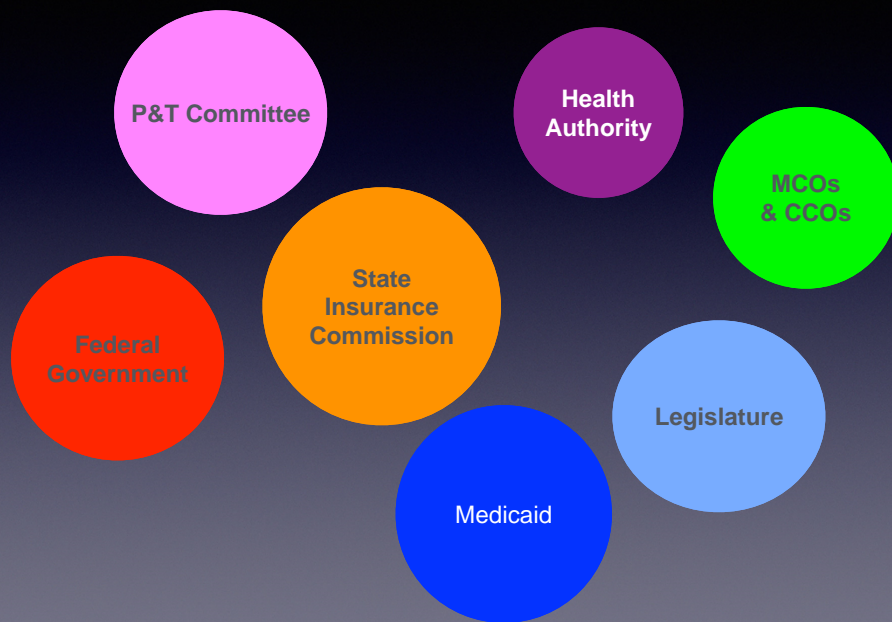
Learn the process.



Learn the process. It's sometimes confusing but critical to know the rules of the game.

If you don't get this reference, it means I'm older than you. Google "I'm Just a Bill"

Know the players.



Know Your Audience.

- Who are you testifying before?
- Federal or State Legislators?
- Are you a constituent?
- Are they a Committee (such as P&T)?
- Who do they report findings to?
- How are they chosen?

Types of Testimony

There are two types of public testimony: **written** & **spoken**, and to every rule there is an **exception***

Written testimony is your opportunity to provide data and details on the issue.

Generally required to be submitted 24 hours before the meeting.

- Check to see if there is a preference for PDF or hard copy paper.
- If possible use letterhead, and spell check.

Spoken testimony is given in person before the committee.

The Committee Chair can call speakers in any order.

Public testimony is part of the public record and often video recorded for public viewing.

Practice makes it much easier to do.

***Some committees allow only invited testimony. Get to know the committee administrator, and always ask a question if in doubt.**

Preparing Written Testimony

Written testimony is the resource and background on the issue you're speaking about.

Use Modern Language Association (MLA) style citations for your resources.

Don't use abbreviations without writing them out first:

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Choose reputable sources for your data; government agencies, health care journals, national news media.

Make a **cogent*** argument. Have someone unfamiliar with the issue read your work. They should be able to understand the argument even knowing nothing about the issue.

Know your stats; be able to cite them and where they are from and when.

*** Clear, logical, and convincing.**

Preparing Spoken Testimony

In the interest of time and consideration of others, plan to limit your comments to 3 minutes or less.

Address your comments to the Chair and the Committee. If you are asked a question respond first to the Chair and then the legislator who asked the question.

Know your audience, what are their opinions on your comments?

Know your material, don't just read your comments, make eye contact and use vocal inflections.

Practice, practice, practice.

Final thoughts.

People living with chronic health issues, (and our supporters) bring unique voices to advocacy.

This is our advantage.

When we engage, we do it for personal reasons, to create change and find cures.

Remember to always be yourself, be gracious and kind, even when you lose.

Questions?



BJ Cavnor | executive director
one in four chronic health | a voice for patients

206 601 8453 | 1-in-4.org | BJ@1-in-4.org