

Inviting State Legislators to Chapter Activities

Quick Reference Guide for Volunteer Leaders

Thrivent Financial's chapter system and outreach are funded by tax exemptions, and legislators who don't know about Thrivent and our community impact could vote to eliminate those exemptions. **Please educate state legislators by inviting them to local Thrivent chapter events.**

Since all politics really is local, it's important to understand that state legislators form opinions based upon what they see back home. Thrivent chapters are doing great things in communities every day, **so it's critical that chapter leaders share that information with state legislators.** The best way to do that is to invite legislators to see, or even participate in, chapter volunteer efforts in person.

Identifying and inviting your state legislators is easy!

Most legislators are happy to be invited to events that provide them with an opportunity to meet constituents and learn about activities in their districts. But they usually have very busy schedules, so it may take multiple attempts to find a date or event that works for them.

- ✓ **Create a list of your area's elected officials.** Visit <http://capwiz.com/thrivent> to find out who represents communities in your area and get their contact information.
- ✓ **Prioritize activities.** The larger the activity, or the greater its impact on the community, the more attractive it will be to state legislators. Invite officials to those activities that will attract a large gathering of volunteers, aid a compelling or well-known community cause, or have a significant impact in other ways.
- ✓ **Send the invitation.** Include details of the event, such as date, time, location and your contact information. Provide information about whom or what cause the activity benefits and any other information you think might draw their attention, like number of people attending. Give the state legislator a role in the activity, whether that is a speaking role or volunteer participation.
- ✓ **Include home address.** Always include your home address, especially when contacting legislators by email. Due to large volumes of email, many legislators only respond to emails from people in their district.
- ✓ **Follow up.** If you haven't received a response by at least one week before the activity, call to see if the legislator(s) will attend. The staff may have questions about the activity, and your conversation may help them choose to attend the chapter activity over a competing event.
- ✓ **Be yourself at the activity.** State legislators are invited to chapter activities to meet our members and see them in action. Designate one or more persons to greet the official, to introduce them and take a photo of them in their role at the activity. Be friendly, polite and accommodating of the official's schedule and the visit to a chapter event should be an enjoyable one for everyone.
- ✓ **Send a thank-you note.** A timely and sincere note thanking an official for his or her attendance at a chapter activity can seal a relationship. Include in the note any photos you took or newspaper articles you clipped that refer to the activity. Don't forget this important final step.
- ✓ **Let your Government Affairs Team know!** Tell Maria Gaulin (maria.gaulin@thrivent.com or 920-628-3533) which legislators you invite and the response you hear back. If you need additional advice or assistance with contacting officials, Maria can help.

More information on this topic:

- Visibility Toolkit (www.thrivent.com/chapters/volunteer/chapterleader/leader_resources.html).
- To find the names of elected officials in your area, visit <http://capwiz.com/thrivent>.
- Ask CHIP! The Chapter Information Place (www.thrivent.com/chip and search on 'elected officials').