

A photograph of the California State Capitol building in Sacramento, featuring its iconic dome and classical columns. The building is surrounded by large green trees and a lawn with some people. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the building, containing the text "CACVSO ADVOCACY DAY" in large, bold, green letters with a slight drop shadow.

CACVSO ADVOCACY DAY

Agenda



Welcome



Overview of Advocacy Day Schedule



Legislative Priorities



Scheduling Meetings with Elected Officials



Preparation for Meetings & Best Practices



Q&A

Overview of Advocacy Day Schedule



Legislative Priorities

AB 53 (Ramos) - Military Retirement Pay Tax Exemption

- **What it does:** This bill would exempt military retirement pay and Survivor Benefit Plan annuities from California state income taxes from 2027 to 2037. California is the only state that does not offer a military retirement or SBP income tax benefit. **Very similar to SB-1 (Seyarto)** for 2024-2033. *Gov. Newsom's 2026 budget included a \$20k deduction, but we owe it to retirees and Spouses to fight for more (E-7 with 20yrs retires at \$34k)
- **Why it matters:** Many military retirees leave California for states with better tax policies. This bill aims to keep more veterans in California, recognize their service, and honor the sacrifices of Surviving Spouses.

SB 23 (Valladares) - Property Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans

- **What it does:** Exempts 100% disabled veterans and their spouses from paying property taxes on their home.
- **Why it matters:** Lowers housing costs for disabled veterans and their families.

Predatory VA Claims Companies (seeking bill sponsors)

- **What it does:** Prohibit unaccredited agents from charging for VA claims, protecting Veterans and families from financial harm, inappropriate/incorrect claims, and personal data exposure.
- **Why it matters:** Veterans and families are being targeted by for-profit agencies using deceptive marketing and financial exploitation.

Scheduling Meetings with Elected Officials

Identify Your Elected Officials

The first step in contacting California elected officials is to identify who they are. California has a broad range of elected officials at different levels of government, including federal, state, and local representatives.

Federal Officials

U.S. Senators: California has two senators who represent the entire state in the U.S. Senate.

U.S. Representatives: California is divided into 52 congressional districts, each represented by a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

State Officials

Governor: The governor is the chief executive officer of the state.

State Senators: The California State Senate has 40 members, each representing a district of about 930,000 people.

State Assembly Members: The California State Assembly consists of 80 members, each representing a district of about 465,000 people

Local Officials

Mayors and City Council Members: These officials manage city areas.

County Supervisors: Responsible for governing counties.

School Board Members: Oversee local education policies.

Scheduling Meetings with Elected Officials

Determine if your county requires you to go through your County Legislative Offices to schedule meetings. If yes, contact your County Legislative Team.

Emails and Letters

- **State Your Purpose:** Clearly state why you are writing in the first paragraph.
- **Be Concise:** Keep your message brief and to the point.
- **Provide Details:** Include any relevant facts, statistics, or personal stories.
- **Request a Response:** Politely ask for a reply or meeting.
- **Proofread:** Ensure your message is free of errors.

Phone Calls

- **Prepare Your Message:** Know what you want to say before calling.
- **Be Polite:** Always be respectful, even if you disagree with the official's stance.
- **Leave a Voicemail:** If you cannot speak directly, leave a clear and concise voicemail.

Requesting a Meeting

- **Contact the Office:** Reach out via phone or email to request a meeting.
- **Be Flexible:** Offer several dates and times when you are available.
- **Specify the Topic:** Clearly outline the purpose of the meeting.
- **Follow Up:** If you do not hear back, follow up politely.

Preparation for Meetings and Best Practices

Preparing for the Meeting

- Research the Official: Know their positions and recent actions on relevant issues.
- Bring Materials: Provide any documents or information that support your case
 - One page overview, office business cards, office brochures
- Practice Your Message: Be ready to articulate your points clearly and confidently.

During the Meeting

- Be On Time: Arrive a few minutes early to show respect.
- Introduce Yourself: Clearly state your name, affiliation, and the purpose of your visit.
- Stay on Topic: Focus on the issues you outlined in your meeting request.
- Listen Actively: Pay attention to the official's responses and ask clarifying questions if needed.
- Be Respectful: Maintain a polite and professional demeanor throughout the meeting.

After the Meeting

- Send a Thank You Note: Express your appreciation for the official's time and attention.
- Follow Up: Provide any additional information or answer any questions that came up during the meeting.
- Stay Engaged: Continue to communicate with the official's office and stay informed about relevant issues.



Open Floor for
Questions