



How to Advocate in the time of COVID

TRAINING SESSION



Ways to Advocate:

- Meeting with Legislators Virtually
- Participating in Legislative Session and Committee Action
- Activism on Social Media *with Chyna Crockett*
- Learning from Thought Leaders and Political Pundits

Meeting with Legislators Virtually



Tips for a Successful **VIRTUAL MEETING** with Your Tennessee State Legislator

Keep in mind that your goal is to develop an ongoing relationship with your elected representatives, as well as to influence their position on specific issues or bills.

 Know your legislator. The state website at: capitol.tn.gov can help you find out and tell you a little about who they are.

Find out what committees your legislator serves on. Are they relevant to your issues? 

 Look up their website, Facebook and Twitter accounts. Most TN legislators talk about the issues that matter to them online.

In addition to your own state representative and senator, you may want to think about establishing a relationship with other legislative leaders who chair relevant committees or serve other leadership roles. 

 Prepare ahead of time. Write down key points to discuss in the meeting as well as any questions you might have. Practice what you want to say. Appointments move quickly, sometimes lasting only 5 to 15 minutes. Be prepared to make your case simply and efficiently but also to make a personal connection if you can.

Limit your topics. Focus on a single issue or bill, two at most. Don't risk confusing your legislator or weakening your case by bringing up too many issues at once. 

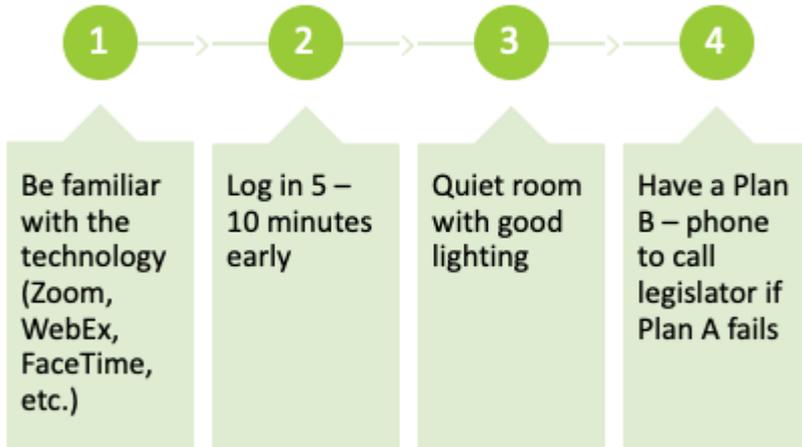
 Your legislator may not know about the needs and experiences of those with disabilities. Be patient if they make a mistake and take time to educate him/her in plain language. Do not use jargon or acronyms.

Do not be intimidated. Legislators will view you as the expert on the issue and on your life experience. 



Meeting virtually vs. Meeting Face to Face

What's Different?



Meeting virtually
vs.
Meeting face
to face.

What's the same?

- Dress appropriately
- Be courteous
- Introduce yourself – who you are, the issue you want to discuss and that you are from their district.
- Don't forget to listen
- It's ok to disagree
- Thank them!

Participating in Legislative Session and Committee Action



How Legislators Talk About Issues that Matter

- TN State Legislators meet in committees
- Committees focus on a specific issue like “Education”
- It’s important to pay attention to committee work because they talk about issues that will affect us

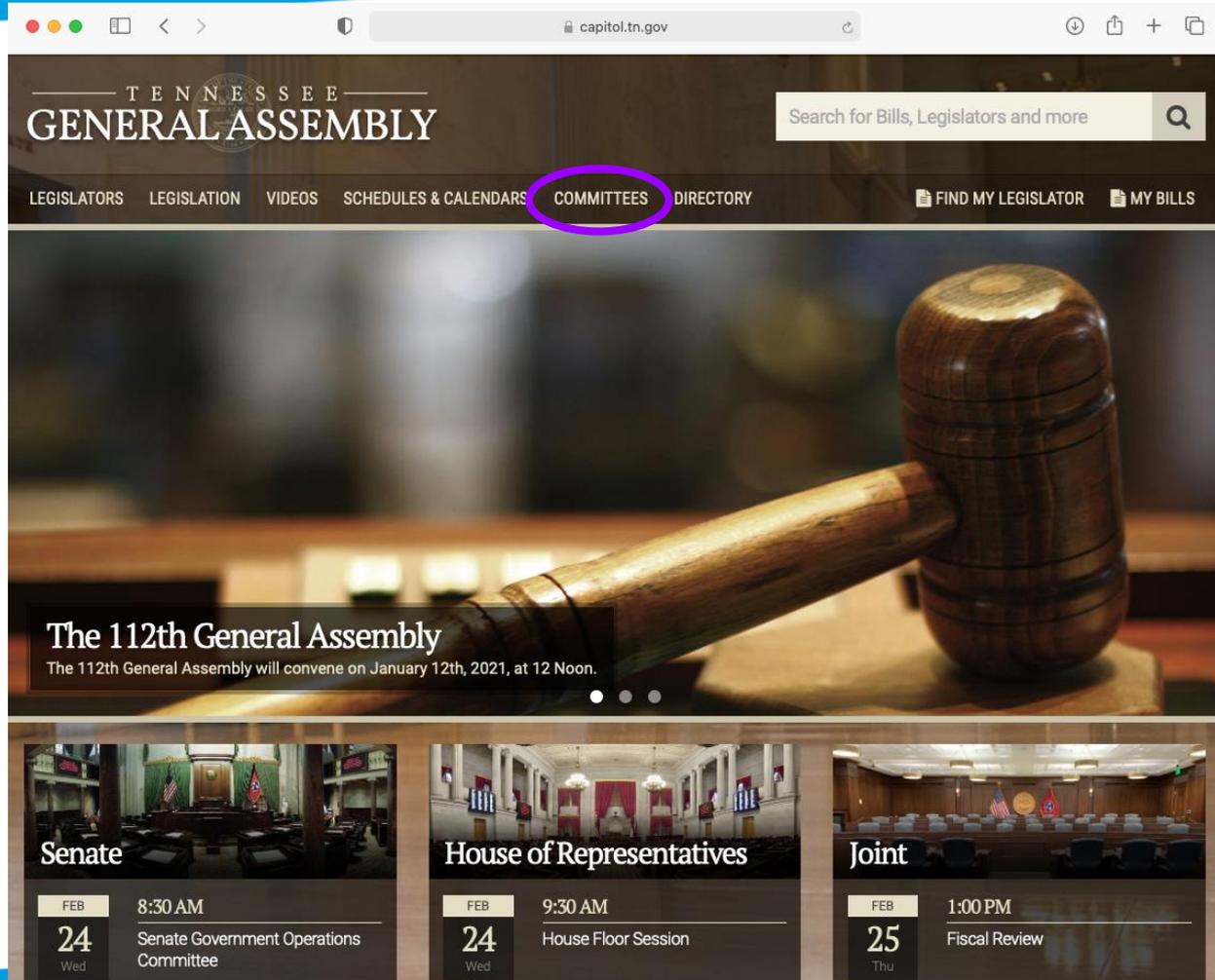


The TN General Assembly Website is:

www.capitol.tn.gov

Follow the issues that matter to you by following those legislative committees

There is a House and Senate version of most committees



The screenshot shows the website www.capitol.tn.gov. The header features the text "TENNESSEE GENERAL ASSEMBLY" and a search bar. The navigation menu includes "LEGISLATORS", "LEGISLATION", "VIDEOS", "SCHEDULES & CALENDARS", "COMMITTEES" (circled in purple), and "DIRECTORY". Below the navigation is a large banner image of a wooden gavel with the text "The 112th General Assembly" and "The 112th General Assembly will convene on January 12th, 2021, at 12 Noon." Below the banner are three panels for upcoming sessions:

Senate	House of Representatives	Joint
FEB 24 Wed	FEB 24 Wed	FEB 25 Thu
8:30 AM Senate Government Operations Committee	9:30 AM House Floor Session	1:00 PM Fiscal Review

Summary: What's Available on the Committee Page

List of Committee Members
(who meets to talk about this
issue)

Current Committee Calendar
(what they'll be talking about in
their meeting)

Current weekly schedule (when
they'll be meeting)

Video - watch live or past
meetings

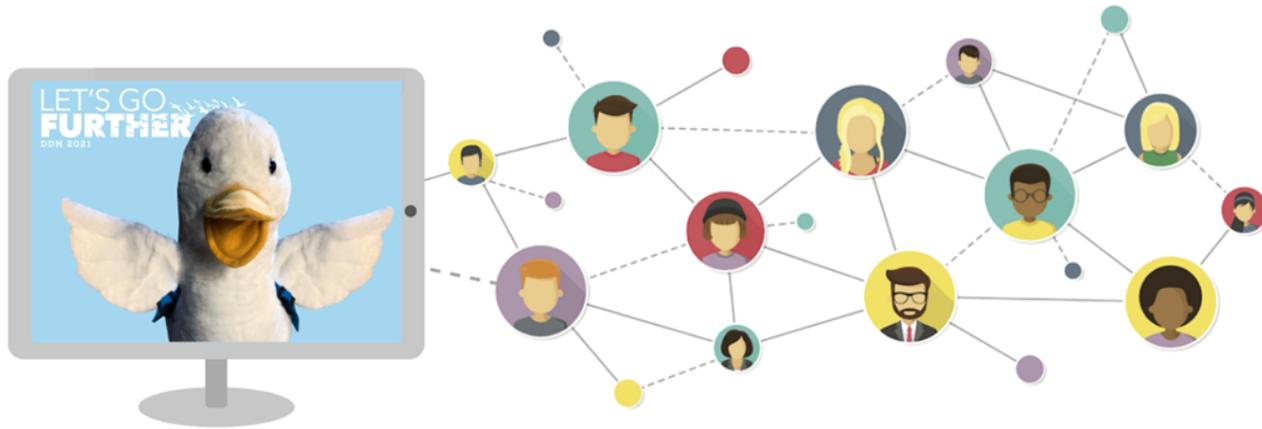
The screenshot displays the Tennessee General Assembly website for the Senate Standing Committee on Education. The page features a navigation bar with links for Legislators, Legislation, Videos, Schedules & Calendars, Committees, and Directory. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area includes a sidebar with links to the Current Committee Calendar, Current Weekly Schedule, and Video. The main body of the page provides a description of the committee's responsibilities, contact information for Colleen Ellis, Executive Secretary, and Michael Maren, Research Analyst. Below this, there are tabs for Committee Membership and Committee Reports, followed by a section for Committee Officers featuring portraits and names of Brian Kelsey (Chair), Jon Lundberg (1st Vice-Chair), and Raumesh Akbari (2nd Vice-Chair). A final section for Committee Members shows portraits and names of Mike Bell, Rusty Crowe, Ferrell Haile, Joey Hensley, Bill Powers, and Dawn White. A right-hand sidebar contains a list of Senate Links, including Senate Members, Senate Leadership, Senate Committees, Senate Weekly Schedule, Senate Video, Senate Staff, Senate Archives, Senate Publications, Senate Caucuses, Senate District Maps, Senate Members by Seniority, and Find My Senator.



Activism on Social Media

CHYNA

Social Media Takes Us *FURTHER*



The easiest way to show your support for people with disabilities and to get your legislator's attention is to participate on social media.



SPREAD AWARENESS

by sharing content from disability thought leaders.



TAKE ACTION ON DISABILITY ISSUES

by commenting, tagging and direct messaging your local government and elected officials.



SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

by creating original posts about challenges (accessibility issues, confusing informational materials, etc) and tagging your representatives.



STAY ALERT

by following local disability groups that notify you to policy changes.



SPEAK UP!

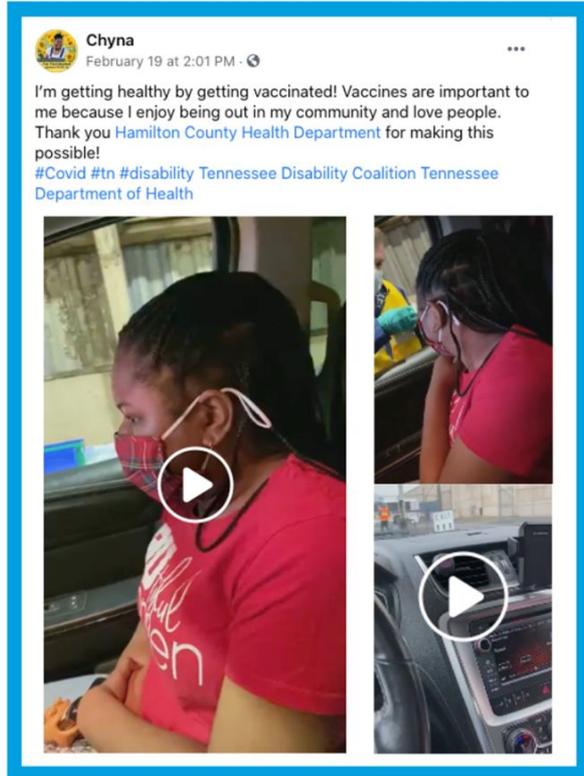
by signing and sharing digital petitions in opposition or support of a piece of legislation.



PLUS

tag us [@tndisability](#) and we will share your posts!

What Makes a Good **SOCIAL POST**?



- Short, clear, and personal message
- Eye-catching video & photos
- Hashtags that are relevant to the conversation
- She tagged the Coalition and the Dept of Health to increase the chance that the post will get shared further.

The Basics on *HASHTAGS*



Including hashtags in your posts means that you are taking part in a conversation happening on social media. They make your posts visible to non-followers.



Do NOT use spaces, punctuation or symbols.



Do NOT string too many words together.
The best hashtags are short and memorable.



Use relevant and popular hashtags.
If it is too obscure, it will be hard to find.



Limit the number of hashtags you use.
More isn't better.



Make sure your accounts are public.
Otherwise only your followers see your posts.

TOP DISABILITY HASHTAGS

#disability	#inclusion
#disabilityrights	#disabilitypride
#disabilityawareness	#disabilityjustice
#invisibledisability	#disabilitybenefits

TOP POLITICAL HASHTAGS

#TNleg	#TNpol
#TN	#TNpolitics
#criphethevote	#TNsenate
#tenncare	#COVID19
#medicare	#systemic

Leaders in State Government to **FOLLOW & TAG**



Your **LOCAL** representatives work for you!

look them up and stay connected:

<https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/Apps/fmlv3/lookup.aspx>

Advocacy Areas to **FOLLOW & TAG**

EDUCATION



PENNY SCHWINN
COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
@TNedu
@TennesseeEducation
Commissioner.Schwinn@tn.gov

ELECTIONS & VOTING



TREY HARGETT
SECRETARY OF STATE
@sectrehargett
@TennesseeSecretaryofState
@tnsecofstate
Tre.Hargett@tn.gov

EMPLOYMENT



JEFF McCORD
COMMISSIONER, LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
@JeffMcCordTN

INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SERVICES



BRAD TURNER
COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF DIDD
@BradTurnerDIDD
@tndidd
Brad.Turner@tn.gov

VOCATIONAL REHAB SERVICES



CLARENCE H. CARTER
COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
@TNHumanServices
@tennesseedepartmentofhumanservices

TRANSPORTATION



CLAY BRIGHT
COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
@TDOTCommish
@clay.bright@tn.gov

HOUSING



RALPH PERREY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, TENNESSEE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
@TN_Housing_Dev
@TNHousing

MEDICAID SUPPORTS & SERVICES



BUREAU OF TENNCARE
@tencarerep
@TennCare
Tenn.Care@tn.gov

HEALTH CARE



TN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
@TNDeptofHealth
tn.health@tn.gov



Chyna Crockett

February 23 at 12:55 PM · 🌐



I'm speaking at [Tennessee Disability Coalition's Disability Day on the Hill](#) this THURSDAY! My legislators [Senator Bo Watson \(TN-11\)](#) and [State Representative Mike Carter](#) are invited to come hear me speak about a topic that is important to me! [#Tn](#) [#CovidVaccine](#) [#disability](#) [Tennessee Department of Health](#) [@tndisability](#)

My name is Chyna

DISABILITY DAY
ON THE HILL
2021

- I have a disability.
- I care for someone with a disability.
- I advocate for people with disabilities.

I live in east Tennessee.

I "go further" by...

speaking out for my friends!

LET'S GO TOGETHER
FURTHER
TENNESSEE DISABILITY COALITION



18

7 Comments 19 Shares

LISTENING



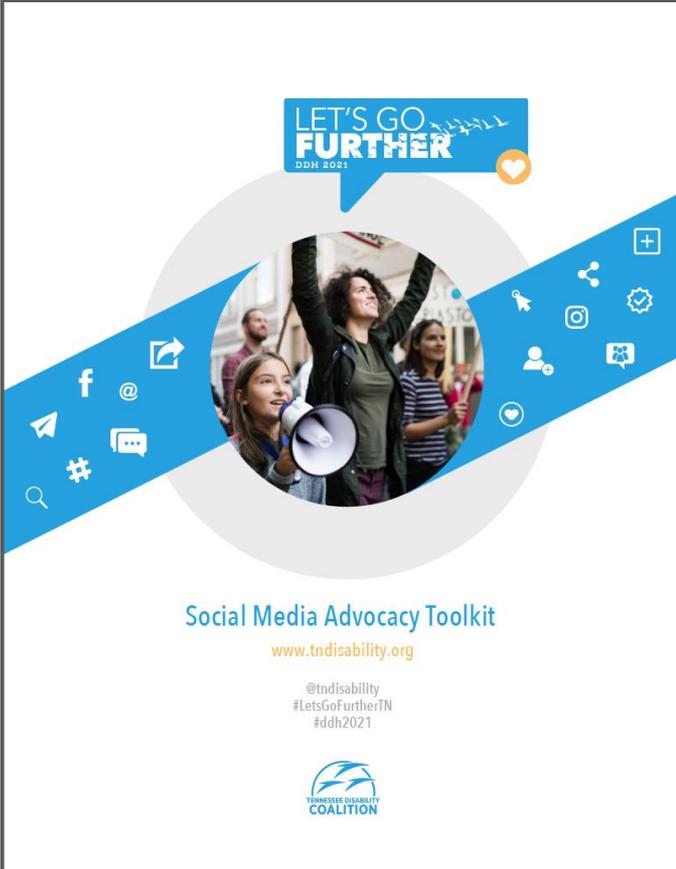
LIKING



SHARING



Learning from Thought Leaders and Political Pundits



LET'S GO
FURTHER
DDH 2021

www.tndisability.org

@tndisability
#LetsGoFurtherTN
#dhdh2021

TENNESSEE DISABILITY
COALITION

The graphic features a central circular image of a woman with her arms raised and a young girl with a megaphone. This image is set against a blue background with various social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) and a speech bubble containing the text 'LET'S GO FURTHER DDH 2021'. Below the image, the text 'Social Media Advocacy Toolkit' and the website 'www.tndisability.org' are displayed, along with social media handles and the Tennessee Disability Coalition logo.

What is a "Thought-Leader"?



An individual or organization that is recognized as an authority in a specialized field and whose expertise is sought.

What is a "Political Pundit?"



A person who offers to mass media their opinion or commentary on political analysis for which they are knowledgeable and/or considered a scholar.

In other words - an expert.



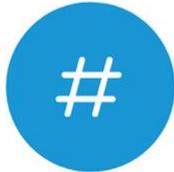
1. MEDIA

- State Government Reporters
- Opinion Editors



2. DISABILITY ADVOCATES

- Disability Advocacy Organizations
- Individual Disability Advocates



3. HASHTAG CAMPAIGNS & OTHER RELEVANT INFLUENCE

Tools for Success!

- Tipsheet: How to Have a Successful Virtual Meeting with Your Legislator
- Toolkit: How to Advocate on Social Media
- Full Training: How to Advocate During the Pandemic

www.tndisability.org



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