



## How to show up at the Texas Capitol (and make your voice heard!)

### What do I bring?

- Comfortable walking shoes
- Water bottles, packaged snacks (*you might miss the chance to speak if you leave*)
- A sweater or light jacket
- Phone / laptop / tablet and charging cables / power banks
- Something to do while you wait – sometimes you have to wait for hours!
- Dress nicely. Be clean and neat. Slacks or nice jeans are fine.

### Where do I park?

- Park at the [Capitol Visitors Parking Garage](#), 1201 San Jacinto, Austin.
- Parking is free for the first two hours, with a maximum of \$12 for all day.
- The garage almost always has plenty of space, is wheelchair accessible, and is tall enough for most pickup trucks or large SUVs.

### How do I get inside?

- Only the North entrance is open currently.
- From the parking garage, you can see the Capitol dome. Walk towards the Capitol and around the right side of it to get to the North entrance.
- If you have your LTC, go to the sign for “CARD / CHL ENTRANCE.” Hand them your LTC. They’ll scan it and wave you through.
- Otherwise, stand in line to go through the metal detector. It’s not like the airport; you can have a knife and you don’t have to take off your shoes.

### What COVID restrictions are there? Masks? Testing?

- Masks are required in hearing rooms but not walking throughout the Capitol.
- COVID tests are NOT required for House hearings, but they ARE required for Senate hearings and for some Senate offices.
- COVID tests are available in the tents outside the North entrance. You insert a swab into your own nose (unsupervised) and you typically get results within 15 minutes. Allow enough extra time.
- If you do not wish to take a COVID test, do not go inside the Senate hearing room – we are happy to find other ways for you to help!
- Some offices require masks or appointments. A few require COVID tests.

## How do I find the hearing room?

- The elevators are just inside, to the right or left.
- The hearing room will be listed on the hearing notice.
- Most hearings are on level E1 or level E2. Those are underground. Take the elevator DOWN to E1 or E2, then walk down the corridor until you see the correct hearing room on the left or right. Rooms numbered .030 or above are all the way at the end.
- See [Capitol floorplan maps here](#).

## How do I register a position on a bill or register to speak?

- You will need to register your position on each bill (for / on / against) and indicate whether you wish to speak.
- House hearings: Find the iPad kiosks back behind the hearing rooms. Sign in there. You'll need to know the committee and the bill number.
  - Or go to [hwrs.house.texas.gov/](http://hwrs.house.texas.gov/) on your tablet while connected to Capitol wifi.
  - It's easier if you [set up an account ahead of time](#).
- Senate hearings: Most of them use paper cards. Ask a clerk in the hearing room.
- You can use “on” as your position if you like some parts but want them to change it – or if you think it’s good but doesn’t go nearly far enough. Then use your testimony to tell them the changes you want.

## How do I prepare to speak or testify on a bill?

- Be sure you know what the bill does. Talk about why THAT BILL is good or bad.
- You can also submit written testimony – try for a handout that summarizes your main points, or adds some data, charts, or links.
- Your testimony should connect with both the head (facts & logic) and the heart (tell your story and how this personally affects you).
- Be specific. Not “please support gun rights” but instead “repeal the license requirement to carry a handgun.”
- Practice saying it in 2 minutes or less.

## What are some tips for delivering testimony?

- Start with your name, your position on the bill, and who you are representing.
- For example: “My name is Rachel Malone, I am testifying in FAVOR of HB 2900, and I am representing myself.”
  - You are representing yourself unless you have specific permission from an organization to represent them (or you have authority over the organization to make that decision).
  - You cannot officially represent GOA, but you can say in your testimony that you are a GOA member.
- Focus on one main point – don't try to get everything in.
- Speak clearly, look at the committee, and end on time. Usually you get 2-3min.

*See more at [txgoa.us](http://txgoa.us). For gun rights alerts, text your zip code to 833-922-1212.*