DO:

- **Prepare.** Check out the elected official’s website and social media pages to get an idea of the issues important to them and their office. Arrive early, dress appropriately and bring business cards.
- **Inform.** Inform Auto Care Association staff that you have a meeting scheduled; they will help provide any key talking points and our combined efforts will have a stronger impact.
- **Be Flexible.** Legislators are busy, even when back home in the district or state, so it is important to try to accommodate the office’s schedule as much as possible.
- **Be the Expert.** You are the expert on your business and how the government may impact your ability to succeed. Share your personal experiences and insights.
- **Listen.** Participate in active listening. The legislator or staff member might have an idea of how something might be able to move through Congress that you can pass along, or if they don’t agree with your position on an issue, they will often tell you why.
- **Relax.** No need to be nervous. Remember, you are there to discuss your business and your story. Plus, they want to hear from you. If you don’t know an answer to a question it is okay to say “I will need to get back to you.”
- **Follow Up.** Send a follow-up letter after your meeting to thank the elected official and/or staff for the meeting and to respond to any questions that were not answered during the meeting.

DON’T:

- **Get Political.** Your meeting is about constituent services and public policy; it is not about campaign support, financial contributions or electoral politics. Discussion of these items can lead to ethical and legal troubles for any elected official. If you are a major campaign donor, chances are they already know—there is no need to bring it up.
- **Assume.** It is important to share your story, but don’t assume you know the elected official’s views on a particular issue. Ask them and listen to their response.
- **Talk About the Weather.** Don’t get bogged down in small talk. These meetings can be brief so be sure to focus on the policy issues that are important to your company.