

FLORIDIANS FOR BETTER



TRANSPORTATION

Do's and Don'ts of Communicating with Members of Congress

DO'S:

- **Do** communicate clearly the subject or subjects in which you are interested.
- **Do** state why you are concerned about an issue or issues. Personalize the issue if you can.
- **Do** restrict the number of issues you discuss. Concentrate your arguments.
- **Do** put your thoughts in your own words. Be yourself.
- **Do** use the meeting to begin to establish a relationship with your Member of Congress if you don't already have one. In general, you will have more influence as a constituent.
- **Do** find out what committees and subcommittees on which your Representative or Senators serve. Members of Congress have more influence over legislation within their committees 'and subcommittees' jurisdiction.

DON'TS:

- **Don't** ever threaten. Don't even hint, "I'll never vote for you unless you do what I want." Present your case and ask for consideration.
- **Don't** drone on about an issue or anything else. Time is the most precious commodity any of us have. Use your time with the member or staff wisely.
- **Don't** be condescending if you are meeting with staff. Staff members often hold strong sway with the Member of Congress they serve.
- **Don't** lie or exaggerate.