Participating in a Town Hall Meeting

Attending a town hall meeting can be a bit intimidating. Just review these few reminders and you will do great.

1. **Be Respectful.** You'd be surprised how many people start a conversation with "I pay your salary so you better listen to me." If you show elected officials proper courtesy they are much more likely to answer your question or provide necessary feedback.

2. **Go in Groups.**   If you know other physicians in the area with similar concerns go together. It helps to have a friend, but it also shows that this problem affects more than just your practice or hospital.

3. **Be Prepared.** Read the AAO-HNS talking points and the AAO-HNS legislator score card. Also if possible, prepare yourself with the opposing point of view.

4. **Tell a Personal Story.** You deal with patients all day every day. Incorporate their stories into your question. Personal stories help humanize accounting ideas like Sustainable Growth Rate (SGR) or Scope of Practice issues.

5. **Talk to Staff.** Speaking to staff is the sometimes better than speaking to the elected official. Members will be inundated with handshakes and conversations, they will sometimes forget things. When staff speaks with you, it is part of their job to provide follow-up.

6. **Extend an invitation to visit your practice or hospital. -** Offer to have the elected official come to your work place. It is a great opportunity for them to see the care physicians provide and how their legislation affects your patients.

7. **Recruit Physicians for Multiple Meetings.** The more an official hears a question the more likely they are to realize it is an issue. Physicians are widely respected, if multiple physicians mention an issue it is more likely to get noticed.

8. **Demonstrate Persistence.** We must continue to show up at multiple meetings, it shows we are not going away and that this issue is important. Also, always make sure to follow up with an elected official's office regardless of whether your question was asked publicly.