

Doughnuts with Your Delegation

March 1 - April 30, 2022

MACDC is inviting all our members to once again participate in our Annual Doughnuts with Your Delegation Campaign by meeting with your state legislators in your community. These meetings are a terrific way to promote our shared Policy Agenda and to discuss important local issues impacting your work. These meetings also foster strong, long-term relationships with your state representatives and senators – relationships that are key to winning legislative and budget campaigns. And it's a great opportunity for community leaders to get to know their legislators.

This year's Campaign will take place from March 1st to April 30th, 2022, during which time MACDC members from around Massachusetts will be hosting their state legislators to share food and information, either virtually or in-person. Don't miss out!

We are providing you with six easy steps to host your delegation and a sample letter to invite your legislators. Our Policy Committee will help us hone in on our top priorities for these meetings so we will provide you with talking points on those before March 1st. We will ensure you have all the information you need before your meeting and MACDC staff will be available to join your meeting as well. Please let us know as soon as you schedule your meeting(s).

We also know that some CDCs may want to collaborate on these meetings because you have overlapping districts. We think this is a great idea and we can help coordinate such meetings with you and your colleagues.

Contact James Wu (james@field-first.com or 510-287-6394) for more information and assistance with your meeting.

Doughnuts with Your Delegation
How to Hold a Delegation Meeting in 6 Easy Steps

1. **Scheduling the meeting.** Start planning about a month ahead by picking a date for the meeting between March 1st and April 30th, when your key board and staff members can attend. Legislators are usually in session Tuesday to Thursdays, but with most meetings being virtual now, their schedules are slightly more flexible. Depending on the number of legislators you intend to invite, you should coordinate the schedule with their office(s) to ensure their attendance.
2. **Invite your legislators.** Send your legislators a letter/email inviting them to meet with your staff and board members to learn about the work you are doing in their district (See sample letter below.) Follow up with a phone call. When you call the front desk, ask who handles the legislator's schedule, and ask to speak to them. If neither the legislator, nor their staff reply, identify someone in your organization who has a relationship with that legislator and have them call. (NOTE: You can also reach legislators via direct messages on Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms.)
3. **Determine the agenda.** (See sample agenda below.) A core focus of the agenda should be MACDC's Policy Agenda – which we will provide before March 1st. By having CDCs across the state discussing the same issues at the same time, we amplify our voices and multiply our power. You should also think about what programs, projects, or issues in your community that you want to discuss with them. Will you need help or support from your legislators on something this year? Is there an issue or program that relates to the committee on which your legislator serves? What work are you particularly proud of? Is there any way you can help your legislators? Also, make sure to thank legislators for any help they have given you over the past year.
4. **Determine who should attend.** Take time to think about who from your staff, board and community should be at the meeting. It doesn't have to be a large group – 8-20 people is ideal. Give everyone a role in the meeting. Make sure people are informed about their issue and comfortable talking about it. Hold a "practice" meeting if necessary.
5. **Be Prepared.** Assign someone to run the Zoom tech during the meeting, take notes, keep time, and take a group photo - or screenshot - afterwards! If you're meeting in person, assign someone to buy the coffee, bagels (or muffins), and take notes and keep time.
6. **Follow up.** After the meeting send a letter thanking your legislators, providing them with any information they may have requested, and reminding them of any requests you had for them. You can also resend fact sheets and other materials from the meeting. Also, please tweet about the meeting and post on Facebook. Be sure to let MACDC know about the meeting, email us the photo and how your legislators responded to MACDC's Policy Agenda. We need friends and leaders in the legislature!

Contact James Wu (james@field-first.com or 510-287-6394) for more information and assistance with your meeting.

Doughnuts with Your Delegation
Template Letter/Email for Outreach to Legislators

EMAIL SUBJECT LINE: Invitation to [REP or SEN] to the [CDC NAME] Donuts with Your Delegation Meeting on [DATE]

Your CDC Letterhead

DATE

The Honorable [STATE REP or SENATOR]
State House [ROOM #]
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative [or Senator]:

The [YOUR CDC'S NAME] would like to invite you, along with all the legislators from our area, to join our board, community and staff members to a virtual meeting on [DATE/TIME OF MEETING] to discuss the important work [your CDC's name here] is doing in our community and to discuss ways we can work together.

We think that this will be an excellent opportunity for you to meet with your constituents. It will give you a chance to become familiar - or more familiar! - with our organization and all our goals and initiatives, as well as our policy priorities for 2022. We are also very excited to share with you all of our recent accomplishments and we want to know your priorities and concerns.

We are a member of the Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations (MACDC), a state-wide membership association of more than 95 community development corporations (CDCs) and non-profit organizations. As an MACDC member, we are advocating for a policy agenda that enhances the quality of life in local communities across the state. We are eager to discuss these issues with you, including affordable housing, small business development, and other community economic development programs.

On behalf of all of [YOUR CDC'S NAME] members, we look forward to seeing you on [DATE OF MEETING]. We respectfully ask that you confirm your attendance at this meeting by [DATE TWO WEEKS BEFORE MEETING].

Sincerely,
[EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR]
[BOARD CHAIR]

Doughnuts with Your Delegation
Sample Agenda

The length of the meeting will vary depending on how many legislators and CDCs are in attendance, but we suggest an hour for these meetings, with it potentially being a bit longer or shorter depending on whether you are meeting in person or not.

1. Introductions
2. Set the context
 - a. You are all there for a reason – you strongly support something that will have an immense impact on your neighborhood and community
 - b. The pandemic exacerbated many crises that we've been seeing for a long time in our communities - affordable housing, climate change, small businesses trying to stay open.
 - c. We have an opportunity here to not only support our communities through the pandemic, but also create lasting change for our community well into the future.
3. Explanation of each legislative priority
 - a. Summarize the legislative priority by going through the fact sheet
 - b. If possible, have a board member or community member share a personal story related to the issue
 - c. Directly ask for their support of this priority and ask them what they can do to help make it happen.
4. Open the floor to the elected official
 - a. Now that they've heard from their constituents and CDCs, turn it over to the elected for a chance to ask any questions they have, and share their reaction and initial thoughts to these legislative priorities
 - i. You might not be able to answer all their questions about the legislation. A lot of answers will be on the fact sheet, but it's also okay to say that you don't have the answer right now, but that you will look into it for them and follow up with an answer after the meeting. MACDC staff will also be joining many of these meetings and may be able to help with these details although in general MACDC staff will remain quiet.
5. Calibrate your response
 - a. For supportive legislators
 - i. Will you support our legislative priorities: [LIST THEM HERE] in this session and in the FY23 budget?
 - ii. Will you talk to [LEADERSHIP MEMBER] about these priorities?
 - b. For on-the-fence or unsupportive legislators

- i. Is there any information you need to clarify the bills or any questions you have about them?
- ii. How do you believe we should address the housing and climate crises and support our small businesses?