



TESTIFYING ON ISSUES

How do I testify on issues I care about?

At some point, you may want to provide testimony during a city, county, state, or federal hearing. We can assist in preparing you if you are testifying on an issue for which the Seminole County Chamber is taking a position. Please notify us in advance when you are planning to provide testimony.

When should I provide testimony?

We believe that our investors provide a unique prospective on issues. In certain circumstances, we may call upon you to directly represent your company and to provide testimony.

How do I schedule a time to submit testimony?

If you wish to testify on an issue, you can visit the county, city, state, or federal website to see where your issue is placed on the agenda. Show up early to hearings and allow yourself plenty of time. Hearings can run long or short, so be prepared to testify earlier than you had intended or later than you anticipated.

Do I need to sign up to testify?

Generally, there will be a sign-up sheet or card inside or outside the chambers. Provide all the information required on the card. You may also be able to contact the entity before which you are testifying to express your intent to appear.

How do I address the elected officials?

- Opening remarks should always contain a formal introduction to the body including your name and whom you are representing. Here is an example: "Thank you Mayor and Commissioners. My name is (insert name) and I am here today representing (insert company) regarding the matter of..."
- You can begin your testimony after a formal introduction is made.
- You will generally have two to three minutes depending on where you are speaking.
- Many people feel more comfortable reading a prepared statement. The statement enables them to touch on specific points you might forget once you are standing before elected officials.
- Remember to speak slowly, clearly, and into the microphone provided.

Want to see how you did?

Most public hearings are televised, live streamed, and/or recorded. Ask the clerk what options are available to view or listen to your testimony.

What if they ask me questions?

- Sometimes members of the body will ask you a question about your testimony. The proper response to any member asking a question is to acknowledge the person asking the question and then answer the question: "Thank you Mr. (Madame) Chair..."
- Many get nervous when public speaking, even seasoned professionals. Our best advice is to remain calm and refer to your notes or prepared statement.