Residential Providers Association of Minnesota

Advocacy Toolkit

Get Involved & Be Heard

What You'll Learn

This toolkit outlines how to jump into advocacy and ensure your needs, wants and opinions are represented in the MN State Capitol. Learn who your representative is, what you can do as a constituent or community member and staying in the loop.

Included:

Who's My Representative?

Prep Your Meeting

Do's & Don'ts

Stay Up To Date

rpamn.org

Meeting Tips

Preparing & Meeting With Your Rep.

Know your legislator! Look up their party, committees, and public statements. (E.g., Are they on Health/Human Services Committees? What did they run on?)

Don’t know who your representative is? Find out here: https://gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/

Have a crystal-clear ask. Don't just complain; request specific legislative action (e.g., immediate short-term loans, a state fund to cover 90-day payment lag, or legislative oversight hearings).

Legislators are busy. They need to know exactly what you want them to do.

Use a single, powerful constituent/provider story. This is your most effective tool. It makes the abstract audit concrete.

Data informs, but stories move people. Ensure you have the story-teller's consent (or anonymize it).

Identify yourself as an RPAMN member and a CONSTITUENT*. Lead with: "Hello, Senator/Representative [Name], I am [Your Name], an RPAMN member and a constituent from [Your Town/City]."

*Legislators prioritize their constituents. RPAMN affiliation shows you represent a collective, informed voice. If you are not a constituent, you can still reach out as a provider and member of the community.

Bring a one-page leave-behind. Include the key topics (see Section 2), your primary "ask," and your contact information.

Provides a reference for the legislator and staff after your meeting.

During The Meeting

What to do and what to avoid when meeting with your local rep.

DO!

- **Be respectful and courteous.** Even if you disagree, maintain a professional tone.
- **Be brief and focused.** You often only have 10-15 minutes. Stick to your key points & your "Ask."
- **Follow-up.** Send a thank-you note (email is fine) that re-states your Ask & includes your 1-pager.
- **Thank them for their time.** Always end on a positive, appreciative note.

DON'T.

- **Be overly technical or use excessive jargon.** Speak clearly about the people affected, not just the regulations.
- **Get drawn into debating** Acknowledge disagreements & pivot back to the impact of the solution."
- **Overwhelm them with too many stories or statistics.** Pick the most impactful one.
- **Threaten or make demands.** You are there to educate & request action as a constituent.

Digital Outreach

Advocacy Done By Email/Snail Mail

Email

- **Direct Subject Lines:** Include your zip code and the specific bill number or issue (e.g., "Constituent Inquiry: HB 101").
- **Hyperlink Sources:** Link directly to news articles or data instead of using attachments, which may be blocked by security filters.
- **Body Text Only:** Paste your message into the email body; staffers are often hesitant to download external files.
- **Mobile-Friendly:** Keep paragraphs short (2–3 sentences) so they are easily readable on a staffer's smartphone.

Snail Mail

- **Use Letterhead:** If writing on behalf of a business or group, use official stationery to establish immediate credibility.
- **Hand-Sign:** Always provide a "wet-ink" signature to prove the letter came from a real person, not a mass-print campaign.
- **Include a Return Address:** Ensure your full address is on the letter itself, as envelopes often get discarded during processing.
- **Account for Delays:** Remember that mail to state or federal capitals undergoes security screening that can add 3–5 days to delivery.

Tips

- **The "Constituent" Flag:** Explicitly state that you live and/or vote in their district in the very first sentence.
- **Quality Over Quantity:** One well-reasoned, personal letter is often more influential than ten "copy-paste" form letters.
- **The Power of "Why":** Connect the policy to a real-world consequence (e.g., "This will force me to lay off three employees").
- **Single Issue Focus:** Stick to one topic per correspondence to ensure it gets routed to the correct legislative aide.
- **Be a Resource:** Offer to provide more data or local context, positioning yourself as an expert they can call on later.

Example Letter

"Dear [Title] [Last Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am a constituent from [City/Zip Code].

I am writing to you today as a [your role, e.g., small business owner, healthcare provider, parent] to urge your immediate intervention regarding [Briefly name the issue, e.g., DHS payment hold policies].

Currently, [describe the problem in 1-2 sentences]. Without legislative oversight, this situation poses a direct threat to [mention what is at stake: e.g., provider sustainability, community jobs, or public services].

I am asking you to advocate for the following specific measures to balance [Goal A] with [Goal B]:

[Policy Request 1]: [Details of the request, e.g., Reduce hold periods from X to Y days].

[Policy Request 2]: [Details of the request, e.g., Establish a bridge loan or grant fund].

[Policy Request 3]: [Details of the request, e.g., Implement a time-bound due process hearing].

Implementing these changes would ensure that [positive outcome] while preventing [negative consequence].

Specifically, for my [business/community/family], this would mean [one sentence on personal impact].

I would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this further with your office or to provide additional data regarding the impact on our district. Will [Legislator's Name] commit to supporting these protective measures?

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

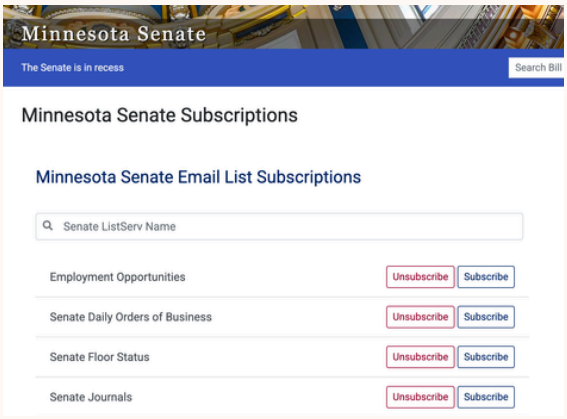
[Your Name]
[Your Title/Organization, if applicable]
[Your Phone Number]
[Your Address]

Tap In

Stay in the loop with hearings, testimony & email updates

Utilize upcoming House & Senate event sites and navigate to the calendar (See page 2)

Sign up for email notifications



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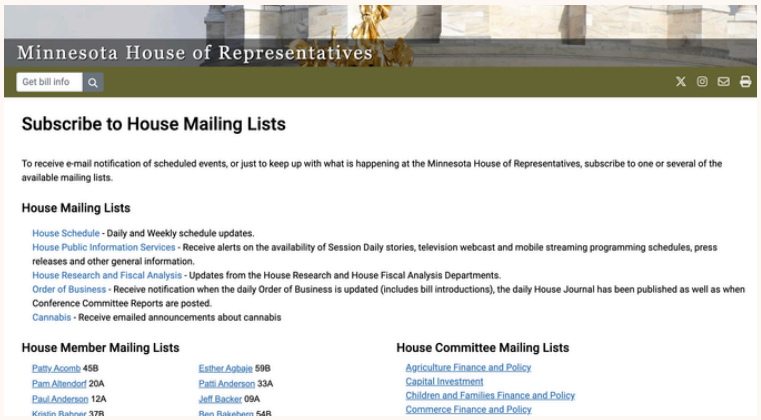
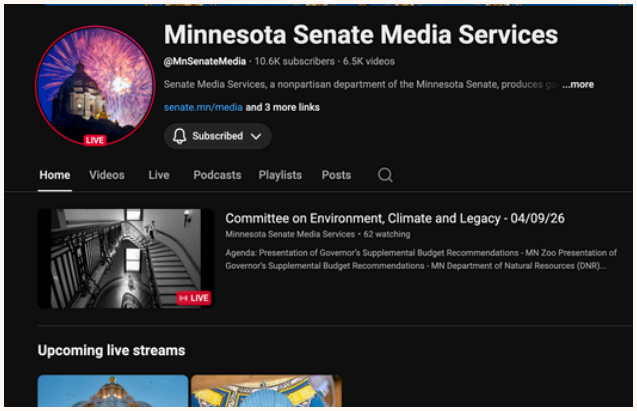
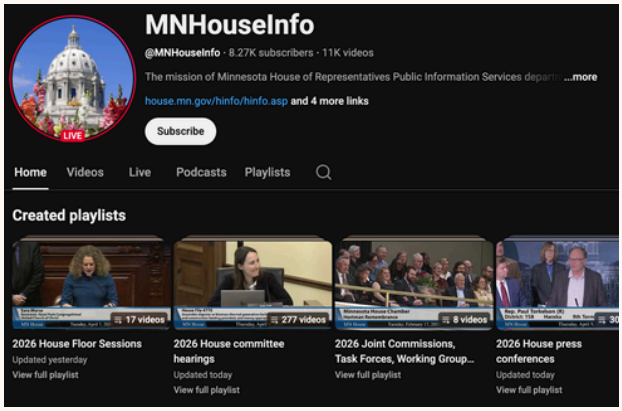


https://www.house.mn.gov/maillist/mailinglist.asp

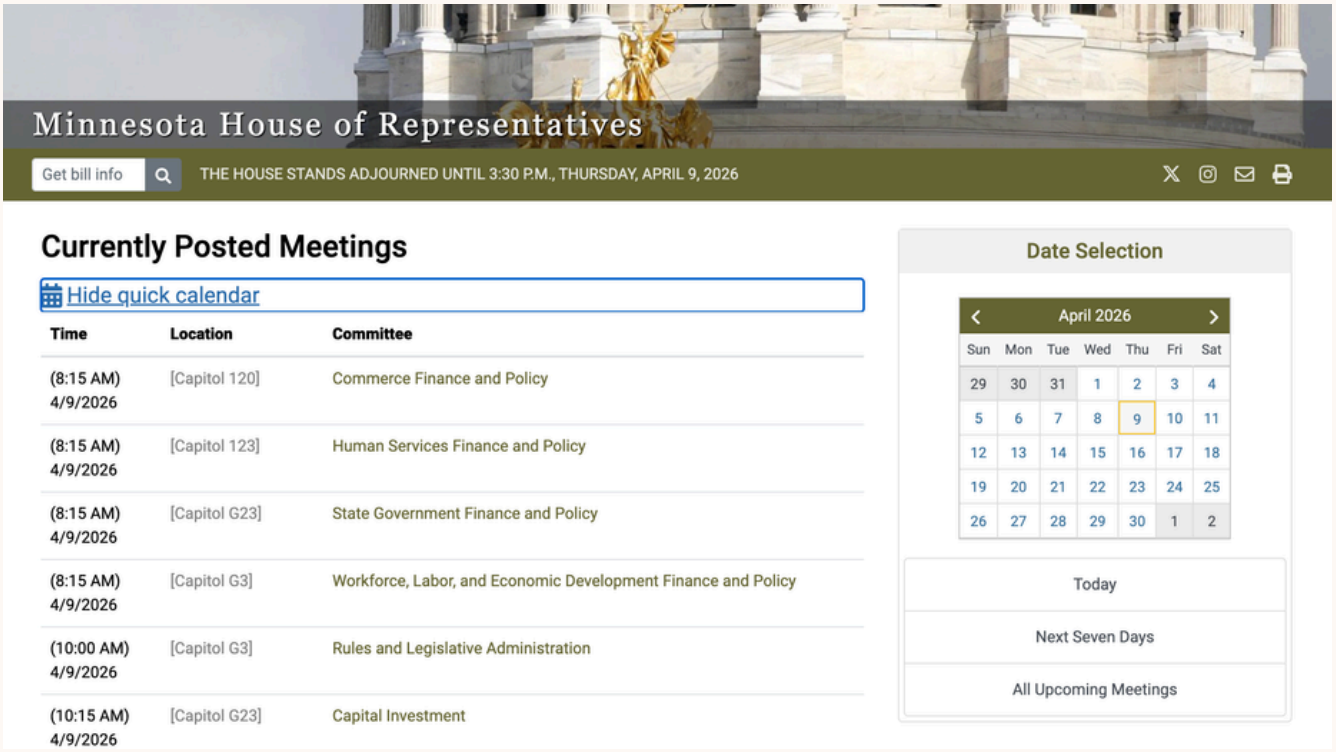
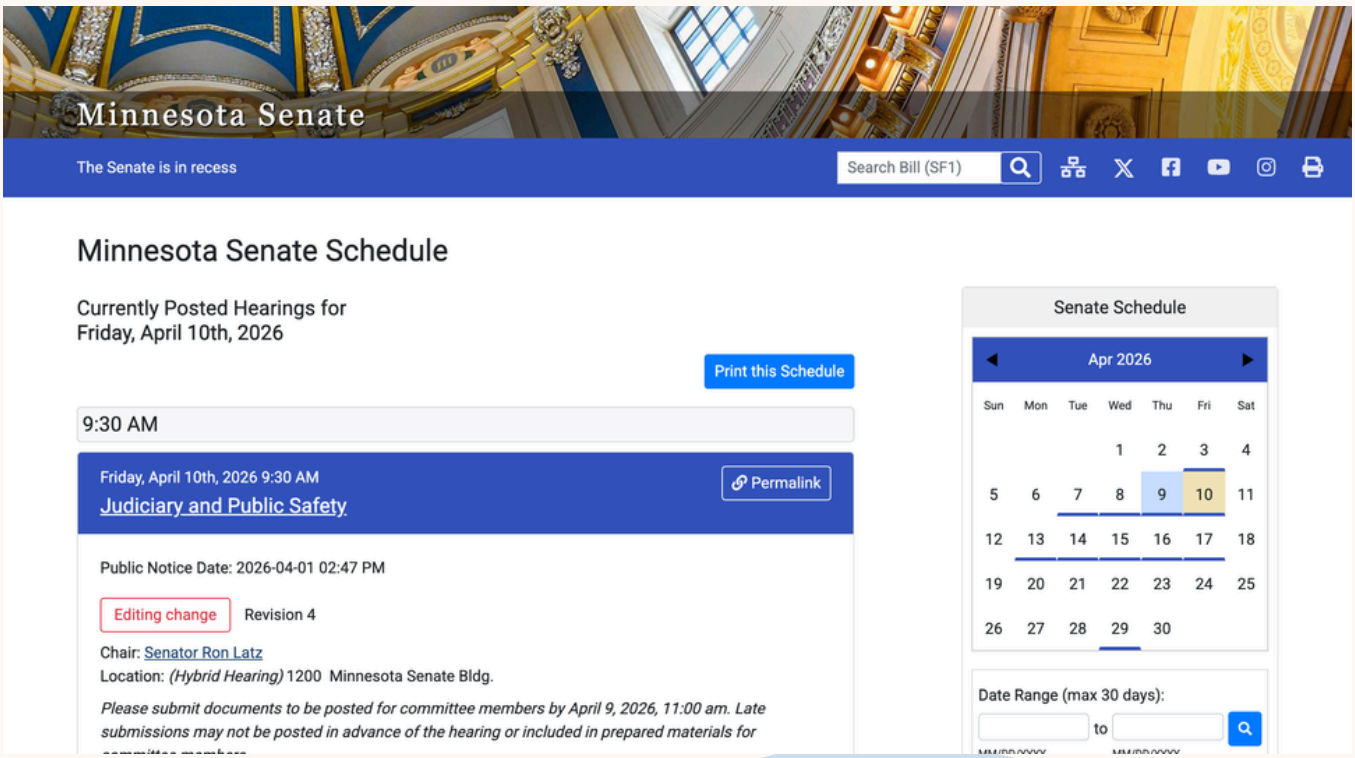
Subscribe to the MN House & MN Senate Youtube Channels





Livestream The Legislative Session

Livestream the MN House: https://www.house.mn.gov/Schedules/03122026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