

OUTLINE FOR YOUR PUBLIC FORUM COMMENTS

1. Introduce yourself



Introduce yourself and make a brief, one-line preview of why you're speaking. For example, you could say "I am here today to request your support on my campaign to get this institution to serve fewer disease-promoting ingredients because I care about the health of this community."

2. Explain the issue



Briefly explain the problem, and ideally frame the issue to show how it will benefit a broad base of people who are served by the institution. For

example, serving fewer disease-promoting ingredients in schools could improve test scores and lower healthcare costs for their employees and for their students. Show the gain it will create in your community.

3. Address concerns



Address any arguments someone might make against your case. For example, how would you respond if somebody said what you want is too

expensive? Add a line into your speech about the cost-savings the institution could find by making this change.

4. Ask for action



Clearly state what you want people to do about it. For the audience, that may be signing your petition. For the decision-makers, perhaps it is

using their influence to sway an institution leader, or making the decision themselves. When you've finished, be sure to thank them for their time!



SPEAKING AT PUBLIC FORUMS

Public forums and meetings are great opportunities to make your message heard by both decision makers and potential supporters of your campaign. With some practice and preparation, you can deliver powerful speeches that show you're one of many who support this change and get decision-makers to come to your side.

If you are organizing a group, make sure that each person's statements provide something new to the conversation. Nobody wants to listen to the same speech over and over again. Instead, each person can simply say "I agree with what what has been said about this campaign," and continue to their own statement with unique talking points.

As many public meetings limit the length of testimony, you may have anywhere from 1-4 minutes to make your case. Do your research ahead of time so you know how long of a statement to prepare.

Appeals to emotion are important; it's because you care so deeply about your family and community that you're engaging in this advocacy! But it's important to not be combative or overly emotional. Your credibility as a community member and leader depends upon your ability to provide a reasoned argument for your cause.