Sample Opening Statement

“My name is **[NAME]** and I am **[INSERT YOUR PROFESSIONAL TITLE, ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERTISE, OR PERSONAL CONNECTION TO ISSUE]** in our community. My hope is that when you think about the future of **[STATE**], you think of families with infants and toddlers – because when babies thrive, we all benefit. My question for you is. . .”

Sample Questions

* What is your position on access to quality, affordable child care?
* How would you address ensuring families have time to bond with their babies in the earliest months when so much of their development is at stake?
* How would you address ensuring families have the time they need to take care of a child or other family member in the event of serious illness?
* How would you ensure all families have the resources needed to provide safe housing, nutritious foods, adequate clothing and diapers, and regular access to medical care for their young children?

Formulating a Question

**To ask the most powerful question you can, that will elicit an equally powerful response, it is important to create and practice your question before an event. Use this worksheet to create your own message-based question to use at an event.**

1. Start with an introduction.

Give the candidate a simple introduction. This is as easy as stating your name and one other fact, such as why you are attending the event.

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am here for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

1. Give a short story.

Giving a short story helps the candidate connect the question back to real life situations and gives more power to the question. Write a quick two or three sentences to tell a story related to the issue you would like to ask about.

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1. Tie in the issue.

Give a follow up to your story that connects your personal story to a particular policy issue. Again, this doesn’t need to be long, just a quick sentence or two statement.

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1. Hard ask.

This is where you flat out ask the candidate what they would do to help solve your problem. Do not offer them a solution, just ask the most basic question about the issue that you can and let them elaborate on it in their answer.

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1. Put it all together to finalize your opening statement and question.

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