



PRISONERS' LEGAL SERVICES OF MASSACHUSETTS

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General Tips for Oral and Written Testimony:

Here is a list of general tips borrowed from the ACLU and based on our experience on how to structure your testimony:

- **Opening:**
 - Begin your testimony by thanking the members of the committee.
 - State your name and any groups you are affiliated with (for example, Restorative Justice Working Group).
 - State which bill(s) you are speaking about and whether you are speaking in support of or against the bill. In most cases, you will likely be speaking in support of the bill.
- **Argument:**
 - Describe your personal connection to the issue. Personal stories can be incredibly valuable and help make the issue feel more real and urgent to legislators.
 - Outline the problem more broadly and identify statistics or arguments as to why the legislature should consider reform.
 - Discuss a few, or each, of the bill provisions and why your personal experience and/or the statistics and arguments you raised demonstrate a need for these provisions.
- **Closing:**
 - Thank the committee and ask the committee to consider reporting out the bill favorably.
 - You can also summarize your arguments here.