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Author Presentation Guide

Authors will have three minutes to divide between their opening and summation speeches. This means that authors have a total of three minutes and can be divided anyway they see fit between the two speaking times, and will be asked to stop once that time is up. Authors should plan ahead and practice the length of time they take to speak so as not to run out of time. Successful Authors will strike a balance between using enough time at the beginning to clearly explain the concept to the committee and saving enough time for the end to address points made during debate and still make their own closing points.

Dividing time, labor, and issues between Authors can be difficult, so it is important that everyone decide how best to divide the work amongst the team so that the responsibility and rewards are even. Not everyone will have the same strengths in a group of authors, and this is to the benefit of everyone. Some will be better at research while others are more natural public speakers, but this does not mean that Authors should focus only where they are skilled. Author teams are expected to compromise based on the purpose of making everyone well rounded future leaders while still doing their best to present the bill. Dividing the labor is frequently done by separating the issue into various sub-topics and distributing them equally, so that when technical questions are asked there is always someone who should know the answer. The opening speech should be delivered by someone who is disciplined in their time management, so that the correct amount of time is left for the closing.

The opening speech occurs at the beginning of the bill hearing- before technical questions and pro/con debate. This is a time where authors can explain their bill in more detail and give the purpose for their bill. Delegates will have a copy of the bill in their bill book to look over, so Authors do not need to read from their bill directly during this speech unless they feel a point needs further emphasis. Important Questions to answer include explaining why the issue at hand needs to be addressed, who it effects and how deeply, why the proposed solution will work, and why any costs are justified. Stories of how specific individuals have been affected by this issue, citations of statistics and scholarly research supporting the points made, and finding other ways to help the audience relate to the idea behind the legislation are strong techniques to use when writing a speech. It is also a good move to use think of a clear and concise final line for your opening that your audience will find memorable and meaningful.



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Answering technical questions is a difficult process, and it is best to have practiced a method to allow the Author team to know without discussion who will answer the question. Often one delegate will be appointed as the person who answers the question if no one else steps forward, so that there is one person ultimately responsible. Otherwise, Authors are expected to answer questions promptly. There is no penalty for not knowing an answer, and Author's are encouraged to give the best brief answer they can. Authors should not use these answers as a chance to advance their argument, only to state facts. During the summation speech, Authors may address any points that were brought up during debate in hopes of either contradicting the speaker or using their thoughts as further support. Authors should always reference the ideas discussed and only refer to delegates as "a previous speaker" or "a previous delegate". Con speeches will address many details of the bill and authors should be prepared to explain why those specific parts are in place. Furthermore most issues will have several people diametrically opposed, so Authors should be prepared for any assumption made in their bill to be challenged, especially the central idea. Authors should also remind delegates of the importance and necessity of their bill for Kentucky, and why the citizens stand to see a positive outcome from the enacting of this policy. A strong closing will encourage the delegates to vote in favor of the proposed action by reminding them of the most persuasive and relevant arguments in favor.

For those Authoring their first bill, it is recommended that Authors use one minute for their opening speech and leave two minutes for their closing speech. Using this method leaves three one minute sections, an opening argument, time to address points made during the debate, and a closing summation. There is no perfect way to present a bill, and this is just one example of how to allot your time. Authors are encouraged to come prepared with a speech but capable of speaking extemporaneously on their chosen topic.