



TIPS FOR VISITING YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS' OFFICE

INTRODUCE YOURSELF: Begin each meeting by introducing yourself to the staffer. If you are a constituent, state what part of the district you are from. Is your profession relevant to the topic at hand? If so, mention you are a small business owner, healthcare professional, teacher, parent, auto-worker. Otherwise, your name and city is perfect.

HAVE A CLEAR AND SPECIFIC PITCH: Begin the discussion with a short, clear pitch. Provide the background of the issue and a specific ask. Will your boss support this legislation and vote for it on the floor? Will your boss support this legislation and co-sponsor the bill? If you are meeting with the Member themselves, address the question directly to them. When all else fails, remember to “keep it simple.”

BRING A HANDOUT: Bring research, a fact sheet, or polling information you want your member of Congress to remember. A little goes a long way—aim for one handout per topic you hope to cover.

TELL A PERSONAL STORY: Sharing a personal story of how a policy has impacted you can be the most persuasive argument for why a piece of legislation should be supported or opposed. Alternatively, share polling data that illustrates how constituents in their district back your proposed policy.

ASK QUESTIONS: Ask the congressman their thoughts on the issue and be specific. Asking thoughtful questions can help Sentinels best understand the congressman's position, and share the most compelling arguments for the conservative position.

FOCUS ON THE FACTS: Focus on the facts of the policy debate, and keep the discussion professional. Even if you have strong policy disagreements with your member of Congress, always treat them and their staff the way you would want to be treated—with respect.

PICK UP BUSINESS CARDS: Be sure to pick up the business card of the staff member you met with! It can help you remember who you met with, and have their direct contact info for any follow up.

FOLLOW UP: After your meeting, email the staffer you met with to say thank you. Thank you's are a great way to stay in touch even after your meeting, and have another chance to make your point. A hand-written thank you card can also be a great touch—just remember all physical mail takes at least two weeks to go through security.

TAKE A PICTURE: Ask the member of Congress or their staff if they will take a picture with you! Or, get a picture of yourself or your group outside the office. Share about your visit with friends and fellow activists on social media.