



What Is District Days?

District Days is a year-long effort focused on helping constituents build strong relationships with members of Congress and their staffs while lawmakers are back in their home states and districts. This event is co-hosted by the Council on Foundations and the Forum of Regional Associations of Grantmakers.

During District Days, foundation and regional association constituents from around the country actively engage members of Congress about the work of philanthropy in their respective states/districts. The objective is to illustrate to lawmakers the important role foundations and philanthropy play in serving the public good, and to educate lawmakers about philanthropy as an independent, innovative investment in our communities. This is critical to maintaining and enhancing a political environment that promotes philanthropy and charitable giving.

Read more about how you can [define philanthropy's role in society](#).

How can you engage members of Congress?

The Council and the Forum encourage foundation and grantmaking representatives to engage federal lawmakers in philanthropy year-round, and there are a number of opportunities to do so when Congress adjourns for recess. During that time, members of Congress are likely to hold town hall meetings, make public appearances, and have daily open house office hours. A recent Congressional Management Foundation survey found that meetings with lawmakers in their districts are just as effective as meetings with lawmakers in Washington, D.C. Therefore, we must take advantage of these district opportunities and help promote the role of philanthropy.

Congressional Recess Dates

The following congressional recess dates have been announced by House and Senate leadership offices for the 2011 calendar year:

2011 Congressional Recess Dates		
House and Senate	House	Senate
Aug. 8-Sept. 5	June 27-July 4	July 4-8
Sept. 26-30	July 18-22	Oct. 24-28
	Oct. 17-21	

View and print the full [congressional calendar for 2011](#)

How can you participate in District Days?

There are a number of ways to engage your lawmakers in the work of philanthropy during district work periods. In the past, District Days participants have scheduled meetings with their lawmakers; invited congressional members to ribbon cuttings, site visits, and luncheons; and even hosted events that lawmakers were invited to attend.

Some foundations may already have events scheduled and simply need to invite their lawmakers. Others may need to plan an event or schedule a meeting with lawmakers. Luckily, there is no cost to participate in District Days. Just [register](#) your event, telling us the details and which congressional member(s) were invited. After the event takes place, let us know how it went. This allows the Council and the Forum to conduct appropriate follow-ups with congressional offices if you think it is necessary. It also helps us identify supporters for legislative proposals promoting the philanthropic sector.

If you need help planning a District Days event or scheduling a meeting with a lawmaker, Council and Forum staff are available to help. For questions or more information, please contact Hal McCabe (darren.mccabe@cof.org or 703-879-0712) or Chloe' Pickle (chloe.pickle@cof.org or 703-879-0649) with the Council or Courtney Moore (cmoore@givingforum.org or 703-879-0809) with the Forum.

www.foundationsonthehill.org/districtdays