



A Delegation Captain's Guide to Scheduling Congressional Visits

- 1) **DECIDE WHO YOU WANT TO VISIT.** Do you have time to visit every member of Congress from your state? Or do you want to visit with just your two Senators and your Representative? You can meet with as many lawmakers as you like – just remember that you have from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm on Wednesday, March 17 to schedule your meetings.

THINK STRATEGICALLY. House and Senate offices are located on opposite sides of Capitol Hill. Try to give yourself at least 30 minutes to get from the House side to the Senate side and vice versa. One strategy is to try to schedule your Senate meetings in the morning and then meet with House members in the afternoon. Of course, your schedule will depend on the availability of your Senators and Representatives, so be prepared to move quickly between meetings if the schedule is tight.

- 2) **CONTACT THE CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES OF THE LAWMAKERS YOU WANT TO MEET WITH.** Make sure you contact your lawmaker's Washington, DC office – you can find a link to the phone numbers on the FOTH website: www.foundationsonthehill.org.
- When you get a hold of the office, ask for the lawmaker's scheduler.
 - Inform the scheduler that you are a 1) constituent, 2) that you will be in Washington, D.C. on March 17 and that you (or a group of foundation representatives) would like to meet with the lawmaker to discuss legislative issues affecting foundations and philanthropy. (If the scheduler is not available, please leave him or her a voice mail with this information)
 - Request and expect at least 15 minutes. Capitol Hill meetings are very brief.
 - You may be asked to e-mail or fax a letter stating 1) where you are from 2) the date and time you would like to meet, 3) why you will be on the Hill, 4) what you would like to discuss with the lawmaker and 5) your contact information. A sample meeting request letter is available on the FOTH website.
 - Meeting with the lawmaker AND the lawmaker's tax aide is your ideal scenario. If, for some reason, the lawmaker is unavailable, the tax aide should be able to meet with you.
- 3) **BE PERSISTENT.** Members of Congress are extremely busy people and it may take several calls to finalize a meeting.
- 4) **AS YOU START TO SCHEDULE MEETINGS, MAKE SURE YOU ALLOW ENOUGH TIME BETWEEN MEETINGS.** If you are going from a House meeting to another House meeting, give yourself at least 15 minutes. If you are going from a House meeting to a Senate meeting, try to give yourself 30 minutes so that you can get to other side of Capitol Hill. For example, if you have a 2:00 pm meeting with Rep. X, try to schedule a meeting with Senator Y at 3:00 pm.
- 5) **RUNNING INTO PROBLEMS SCHEDULING YOUR MEETINGS?** Need help finding the correct number to call or want to request that a Council or Forum staff member attend a meeting with you, contact Chatrane Birbal at the Council at 703/879-0689 or Courtney Moore at the Forum at 703/879-0809.

www.foundationsonthehill.org