



How to Set Up a Meeting with Your Member of Congress:

Members of Congress' schedules fill rapidly so plan your meeting well in advance. You can find the congressional schedule by looking at the House or Senate website at www.house.gov or www.senate.gov or by calling the Member of Congress' office.

■ **Scheduling**

Schedule a meeting by calling the state or district office and asking for the scheduler or appointment secretary. Explain your purpose and whom you represent. It is easier for congressional staff to arrange a meeting if they know exactly what you wish to discuss, whom you will be bringing with you, and why you think the Member of Congress will be interested.

■ **Contact**

Fax a meeting request to both the Member of Congress' scheduler and his or her policy advisor or Legislative Assistant. Be sure to follow up a few days later. Members of Congress' offices process numerous requests a day and staff may not notice if your request goes unanswered.

■ **Preparation**

Prepare anyone who is attending the meeting with you. Be clear on who will speak about which issues and exactly what you would all like to get out of the meeting. Allow enough time for you or members of your delegation to answer any questions that may arise before the meeting.

Suggestions for the Meeting:

When it is time to meet with the Member of Congress, be prompt and patient. It is not uncommon for a Member of Congress to be late and to have the meeting interrupted, so be flexible.

■ **Inform Your Member of Congress**

Always bring a packet of information and materials to give to the Member of Congress or staff person. Contact JSA at (202) 296-7838 if you need materials.

■ **Connect With Your Member of Congress**

Remember to think about the issue from the Member of Congress' perspective. It is important for him or her to best represent the interest of the district, state or country. Whenever possible. Demonstrate the connection between your views and how many people or groups from their district support your cause. Also, be prepared to answer questions, though please remember never to make up an answer. If you do not know the answer, tell the Member of Congress you will get back to him/her later.

Follow-up:

Within one week write a thank you letter and include any additional information that was requested during the meeting.