

**Tips when meeting a Member of Congress or their Staff:****1) Do Research!**

- 1) Know their voting record, general views on federal employees, committee assignments, etc.

**2) Budget Your Time**

- 1) Keep it concise; Pick 2-3 issue briefs
- 2) Meetings typically run 15-20 minutes
- 3) For Groups – Decide who will lead on what issue

**3) Be Flexible and Patient**

- 1) Be prepared to meet with a staffer; Committee hearings, floor votes, other commitments
- 2) Might meet in hall or escorted to another place
- 3) The Member could drop in in the middle of a meeting – get a photo together if you can!

**4) Be Respectful and Non-Partisan**

- 1) “Conversational, not confrontational”
- 2) Don’t look at your smartphone about extraneous issues
- 3) Keep politics out

**5) Personalize Meeting with Real Life Examples**

- 1) “All Politics is Local”
  - a) Share a personal story if you have one — constituent experiences are genuinely powerful and memorable.
  - b) Staffers care about how issues affect their district or state specifically.

**6) Leave Issue Brief Folders****7) Request Specific, Actionable Requests**

- 1) Introduce legislation
- 2) Cosponsor legislation
- 3) Vote Yes / Vote No

**8) Say Thank You!!**

- 1) Send a thank-you email within 24–48 hours, reiterating your ask and offering to be a resource.
- 2) Stay in touch. Relationships with staff are built over time, not a single visit.

**The biggest thing staffers appreciate is constituents who are prepared, respectful of their time, and clear about what they want. A well-organized visit can genuinely move the needle.**

## Common Day on the Hill Scenarios

Meeting 1	Legislator / Staff Reaction	Your Response	Other Suggestions
<p>Educational / Non-Committal</p> <p>Familiar with FMA</p> <p>Very common meeting</p>	<p>Legislator / staff listen carefully and ask few or no questions.</p> <p>“I’ll think about what you said.”</p> <p>“I’ll share this with the Senator.”</p>	<p>Allows you to tell your story and express your opinions.</p> <p>Try to get specific feedback or comments.</p>	<p>Ask questions to find out what could influence a decision.</p> <p>Does the legislator know how this issue impacts their district, state, community or installation?</p>

Meeting 2	Legislator / Staff Reaction	Your Response	Other Suggestions
<p>Educational / Non-Committal</p> <p>Not familiar with FMA</p>	<p>Legislator not on relevant committee or unaware of issue.</p> <p>“I’m new”</p> <p>“I don’t know much about federal employees</p>	<p>Provide additional context; Who FMA is and what we do, information about your agency/mission.</p> <p>Introduce issue(s) in general terms; why it’s important</p>	<p>Describe the roll the installation/agency provides in their district or in broader context.</p> <p>Encourage questions.</p>

Meeting 3	Legislator / Staff Reaction	Your Response	Other Suggestions
<p>Friend or Champion</p>	<p>Upon introducing the issue, the legislator or staffer agrees with you.</p> <p>“We agree. We support this. We’ve cosponsored, voted in favor, etc.”</p>	<p>Say, “Thank you!!”</p> <p>Briefly talk about positive aspects, and ask them to work with other members of Congress to secure further support.</p>	<p>Tell them the FMA National Office will be in touch with them for any follow-up.</p> <p>They will likely be excited to hear of formal support from FMA.</p>

Meeting 4	Legislator / Staff Reaction	Your Response	Other Suggestions
<p>Foe (for now)</p>	<p>Upon introducing the issue, the legislator or staffer disagrees with you.</p> <p>“That’s not my (our) position. We oppose this. We are against this.”</p>	<p>Be understanding; Try to determine why the legislator’s position conflicts.</p> <p>Respectfully share your story, how it impacts you.</p>	<p>Most common rationale:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Unions are opposed</li> <li>2. \$\$\$</li> </ol> <p>Try to find common ground and/or compromise</p>