

Preparing for Your February Lobby Visit: Pro-Tips and Issue Briefing

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#NETWORKWebinar @NETWORKLobby

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Have a question?

- ☀️ Expand the “chat” window of the GoToWebinar control panel.
- ☀️ Select “send question to staff” from the drop-down menu.
- ☀️ Type your question or comment into the chat box.
- ☀️ *We will respond to questions at the end of the webinar.*



Overview

We will be discussing:

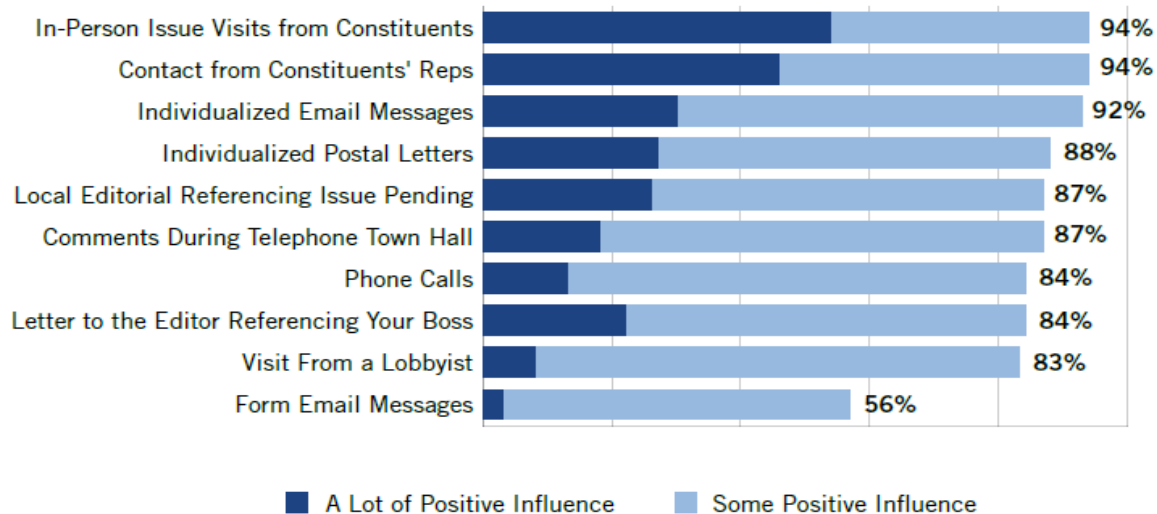
- ☀️ How to have an effective in-district visit
- ☀️ For the People Act
- ☀️ The Raise the Wage Act
- ☀️ Paycheck Fairness Act

There will be plenty of time for questions! Be sure to type them in the Chat Box



The Most Influential Communication

If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the Washington office have on his/her decision?



(n = 190-192)

Source: Congressional Management Foundation 2015 survey of congressional staff, including Chiefs of Staff, Communications Directors, Legislative Directors, and Legislative Assistants.



Constituent Power

- Every member of Congress has offices in their home state and their home district
- Specialist vs. Constituent
- Gathering and providing information
- They want to hear from YOU!



Relationship Building

The key is building relationships

- ☀ In-district staff members are important allies
 - They are day-to-day members of your community
 - You are a valuable resource to them for information about issues in the community, as well as social services and stories about the people they serve
 - Building relationships with them leads to meetings with your Members of Congress.
- ☀ It's important to meet with your Members of Congress at home
 - Learn about them, their priorities, and their goals
 - Invite them into your spaces
 - Engage non-traditional advocates



Relationship Building

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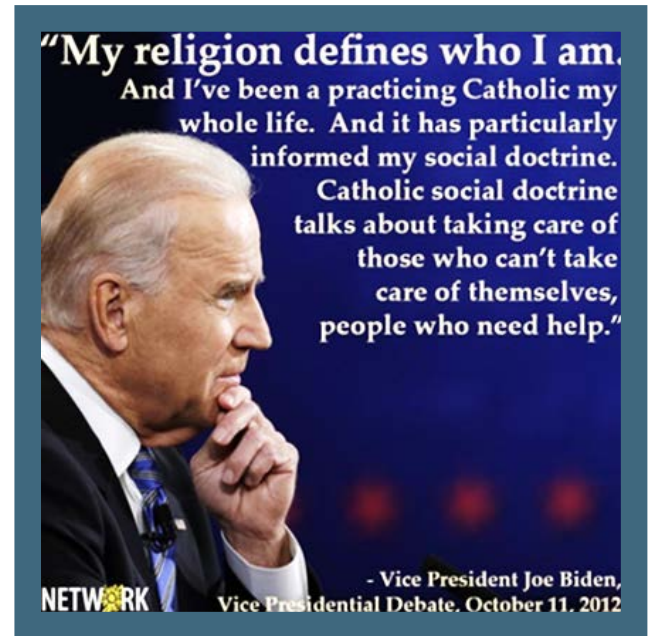
- ☀ In-State District Directors are often close political advisors to the lawmaker and tend to stay in their position longer
 - Average tenure of House Legislative Assistant = 1.7 years
 - Average tenure of House District Director = 8.4 years

Source: Congressional Management Foundation



Using Faith/Morality

- Using your faith as the basis for your visit should be considered a strength
- Not every member of your lobby teams need to be of the same faith, or even of any faith at all
- Be authentic



Storytelling

- Real impact of policies verses focusing on detached data and theoretical
- New and vital perspective to a member of Congress
- Cannot dispute experiences



Preparing to Lobby

- ☀️ If in a group, divide up what each person will say
- ☀️ Prepare any materials you wish to leave behind for the office to review.
- ☀️ Practice your talking points and prepare for a conversation!



Lobby Visit Planning Sheet



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LOBBY VISIT PLANNING AND REPORTING SHEET

Elected Official	Office Location
Staff Attending Meeting	Date and Time of Visit

1. The issue or bill you are talking about: _____

2. Facts about the Member of Congress
Party: _____ Hometown: _____
Religion: _____ When Elected: _____ When up for re-election: _____
Committees: _____
Record on related legislation: _____
Other Positive Contributions: _____

3. People attending this visit:	Organization and/or Title:
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Pro Tip: Have each person introduce her/himself by sharing name and where they are from. If you are a constituent, say so. Name groups you represent and tell how many people are involved in each.

Introducer _____ Note-taker _____ Timekeeper _____
Who's making the ask? _____

Pro Tip: Say something positive about the Member at the beginning of the visit to break the ice.



Lobby Visit Planning Sheet

Pro Tip: Don't let the Member/staff person take the conversation off track!

Speaker:

Chosen Talking Point about the Issue/Bill:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Pro Tip: Tell a personal story that connects you with the issue.

4. Make the Ask (Write the question down here):

Answer:

*Pro Tip: End the meeting by thanking the Member/staff for their time and consideration.
Don't forget a group photo!*

5. Follow Up

Who will write the thank you email? _____

Does additional information need to be sent to the Office?

What is the next step?

What did the Member/staff commit to do?

Was there anything particularly interesting that needs to be shared with NETWORK or clarified?

Please remember to send the names & contact information of each person in the lobby visit, plus the group photo AND notes from the meeting to NETWORK staff and info@networklobby.org



When You Arrive

- ☀ Meet with your entire team outside of the office at least 10 minutes before the scheduled meeting
- ☀ Silence your phone
- ☀ Take a moment to review everyone's roles for the meeting
- ☀ Have one member introduce your group to the person at the front desk
- ☀ Use the group's name (NETWORK), the staffer/MOC's name, and the scheduled meeting time

Note: They may ask you to sign in. Use the address you are registered to vote with.

Pro-Tip: Ask the staffer/MOC how much time they have for the meeting!



Lobby Meeting Order

- ☀️ Brief introduction
- ☀️ Thanks (say something positive about Member – requires research)
- ☀️ Introduce the issues you are lobbying on
 - Frame with your faith/moral component
- ☀️ Tell your personal story—with policy ask
- ☀️ Listen to your Member's position on the issue/policy
 - Ask for more information, like why the Member holds that view or where they get their information
- ☀️ Respond to any pushbacks or concerns
- ☀️ Repeat your ask
- ☀️ Thank them for their time and share your leave behind documents



During Your Meeting

Be Sure to Ask:

- ☀️ Would the Member like to go on a site visit?
- ☀️ How do I sign up for your newsletter?
- ☀️ How can we support you?
- ☀️ When will the Member next be in town?
- ☀️ May I have your business card?
- ☀️ What is the best way for me to follow up with you?



Tips About Tone

- ☀️ Avoid direct antagonism in your criticism
- ☀️ Be polite, yet firm, when explaining your position and proposed solution
- ☀️ Ask serious questions
- ☀️ Ask “When will the Member next be in town?”
- ☀️ Don’t be afraid to say “I don’t know” or “I can get back to you.”
- ☀️ Make sure your “ask” is clear and concise



Finishing Touches

- ☀️ Thank the staffer/Member of Congress for their time
- ☀️ Take a picture with the Member or staffer—and be sure to share it on social media (tag the Congressional office and @NETWORKLobby!)



After Your Meeting

- ☀️ Debrief with your group
 - What did you hear? What went well? What might you do differently next time?
- ☀️ Send a thank you email within 24 hours of the meeting
 - Repeat the ask
 - Include materials
- ☀️ Continue to follow your Member's work, and hold them accountable



H.R. 1 The For the People Act



H.R. 1 The For the People Act

- ☀️ This is a response to the state of our Democracy
- ☀️ Influence from the Declaration for American Democracy Coalition
- ☀️ Reforms supported by voters in the 2018 Election
- ☀️ Support from incoming newly-elected members of the U.S. House



For the People Act (H.R.1)

What is it?

Democracy Reform: H.R.1 is a historic opportunity

- ☀ Speaker Pelosi announced it as the 116th Congress' first order of business
- ☀ Introduced on January 4, 2019 by Rep. Sarbanes (MD) as bold and comprehensive democracy reform



H.R.1 Mends the Gap: Access to Democracy

- ☀️ H.R.1 is a bold, transformative set of reforms to strengthen our democracy and return political power to the people.
- ☀️ NETWORK Lobby fully supports this bill
- ☀️ There are pieces that we are not working to promote or advance
- ☀️ There's enough to keep us busy!



H.R.1 Democracy Reforms

Massive bill with three areas of reform:

- ☀️ Ethics in government
- ☀️ Money in politics
- ☀️ Strengthen Voting Rights



NETWORK Lobby is focused on the third area of Voting Rights



NETWORK's Policy Position

We believe: No individual or community should be disenfranchised by federal policy.

☀️ H.R.1 Addresses voter disenfranchisement by:

- Opening up access to voting,
- Ensuring that votes count,
- Making votes representative,
- Improving election operations and infrastructure



Strengthening Voting Rights:

End Gerrymandering

- ☀️ Establish independent, citizen redistricting commission for Congressional districts.

Voter Registration Modernization

- ☀️ Same Day Registration
- ☀️ Automatic Voter Registration
- ☀️ Online Voter Registration



Strengthening Voting Rights:

Restore the Voting Rights Act

- ☀️ Repair the issues created by the SCOTUS decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013)

Stop Voter Purges

- ☀️ End voter roll purges based on failure to vote



H.R.1: What are the prospects?

- ☀️ Popularity is undeniable – “Drain the Swamp!”
- ☀️ States are building momentum/paving the way
- ☀️ Record number of congressional cosponsors



H.R.1: How will it work?

- ☀️ Committee Hearings are moving forward!
- ☀️ Mark Up: will get “marked up” before passing out of committee
- ☀️ Final Floor vote: will come to the House floor at the end of Feb./beginning of March
- ☀️ GOP is already rolling-out the attacks



Prospects: Messaging and Pragmatic Provisions

Complex Bill: messaging bill with pragmatic pieces.

Examples:

- ☀ Rep. Terry Sewell's Voting Rights Amendment Act
- ☀ Spin-off bills will continue emerging



H.R.1: The Goals

- ☀️ Pass House quickly and in-tact;
- ☀️ Build pressure in Senate;
- ☀️ Build platform for 2020 elections.

“The gift that keeps on giving.”



Mend the Income Gap: NETWORK's Livable Income Platform

We support policies to meet the needs of the current and future workforce:

- ☀️ Raise the federal wage floor
- ☀️ End wage discrimination
- ☀️ Guarantee workers' right to organize
- ☀️ Establish/enforce employer contracting practices that are fair to workers
- ☀️ Strengthen government's oversight and employment role in the labor market



Raise the Wage Act of 2019

The Table was Set:

- ☀️ Federal Min Wage hasn't increased since 2009 (cost of food > 25% in 10 years)
- ☀️ Republican Tax Law of 2017 has not helped American working families
- ☀️ Government shutdown highlighted the significance of wages
- ☀️ States have been building momentum / paving the way



Raise the Wage Act of 2019

- ☀️ Re-introduced in mid-January (Senator Sander's Bill in 115th Congress)
- ☀️ More than 200 cosponsors in House
- ☀️ Committee Hearing last week
- ☀️ Mark-up coming soon!
- ☀️ Likely vote in early or mid-March



Raise the Wage Act of 2019

- ☀ Gradually increase wage floor to \$15/hr. by 2024;
- ☀ Then, automatic adjustments to keep pace with growth in the typical worker's wages;
- ☀ Phase out tipped workers' wage;
- ☀ Phase out subminimum wage for workers with disabilities and those under the age of 20.



Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA)

Addressing Gender Pay Discrimination:

- ☀️ Women are paid, on average, 80 cents for every \$1 paid to a man—it was 76 cents on the \$1 in the year 2000.
- ☀️ Updates the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to address loop-holes allowing gender pay gaps and discrimination to persist.
- ☀️ Provides robust protection against sex-based pay discrimination.



Paycheck Fairness Act (PFA)

- ☀️ Introduced by Rep. Rosa DeLauro (CT) at the end of January
- ☀️ 10 year anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act
- ☀️ House Ed & Labor Committee Hearing...TODAY!!



Raise the Wage Act & Paycheck Fairness Act Goals

- ☀️ Pass House quickly and in-tact;
- ☀️ Build pressure in Senate;
- ☀️ Build platform for 2020 elections.



Report Back

Your meeting is contributing to a nation-wide strategy!

- ☀️ It's important to share what you heard with NETWORK
- ☀️ Send your notes—and pictures!—to Meg Olson at molson@networklobby.org
- ☀️ Schedule a debrief with Meg or Catherine—and strategize next steps!



Thank you!

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#NETWORKWebinar @megastl



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