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

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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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>A Lot of Positive Influence</th>
<th>Some Positive Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Person Issue Visits from Constituents</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact from Constituents' Reps</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Email Messages</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualized Postal Letters</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Editorial Referencing Issue Pending</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments During Telephone Town Hall</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Calls</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letter to the Editor Referencing Your Boss</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visit From a Lobbyist</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form Email Messages</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(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!

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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

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Relationship Building

The key is building relationships

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

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 him/herself 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!)

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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!

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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

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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

**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: NEWORK’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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