Lobby Visit Guide

Before your meeting:

1. **Assign roles.**

Note that someone can perform more than one role. Also, please note that it is very important for that Member's constituent(s) to be featured prominently during the meeting, so be sure to give them important roles.

Fill out who on your team will perform each role:
- The Moderator (responsible for beginning and facilitating the meeting, asking the staffer how much time they have for the meeting, keeping time, and concluding the meeting with a request to follow up): _______
- The Note-taker (takes good notes during the meeting, including questions or concerns that the staffer has to address during followup): ___________
- The Asker (responsible for clearly and kindly making the asks to the Hill staffer during the meeting): ____________
- The Thanker: (responsible for thanking the staffer for something their boss has done for the district): ____________
- The Story-teller(s): (explains why they care about these asks, why they're important, and why the Member of Congress should support this issue): ________

2. **Do your research!**

Consult the Advocacy Toolkit to be sure you know about the asks you are making and the issue. Do some research to have a good understanding of this Member of Congress' past statements and positions.

3. **Practice, practice, practice!**

Meet with your team and role play the meeting to ensure that it goes smoothly.

During your meeting:

1. **Arrive early.**

If in person, arrive to the office early and check in. If a virtual meeting, be sure to get on the Zoom meeting early to double check video and audio.

2. **Moderator kicks the meeting off**

When the staffer greets you and ushers you to the meeting space (if in person), the Moderator should begin by thanking the staffer and asking them how much time they have to meet. The note-taker should record the staffer's name and begin taking notes.

3. **Moderator facilitates a BRIEF round of introductions.**

Each attendee should say their name, where they reside, and a quick sentence about any community affiliations they may have. Constituents, in particular, should identify local businesses, schools, religious institutions, organizations, or other recognizable district entities with which they are connected. Congressional offices are very interested in getting approval from their districts, so it is great if you can demonstrate that you are speaking to something that many others in the community care about, as well (but be accurate!)

4. **Thanker should say a brief "thank you" for something that the Member has done.**

Perhaps they've co-sponsored a bill on North Korea in the past. Perhaps they've co-sponsored other good bills. Perhaps they've done something that has nothing to do with this issue but you are appreciative of! If this Member is not very friendly to your values and you can't think of anything to thank them for, simply thank them for serving your district.

5. **Asker should clearly and concisely explain what the group is asking for in this meeting.**

You don't have to give a long explanation, but be sure the staffer is able to clearly understand the ask so they can reflect it back to the boss.

6. **Story-teller(s) should then say a bit more about why these asks are important, and why it would be meaningful for the Member to take this action.**

This may be a personal story, or simply more information that will persuade the staffer to encourage the Member to say "yes" to your ask. The Moderator should pay close attention to the clock to be sure that this section does not go over time. Other attendees should feel free to join the dialogue as appropriate.

7. **Moderator facilitates a conversation with the staffers**

Moderator asks the staffer if they have questions, concerns, and/or comments. Note-taker should note all questions and comments made.

8. **Moderator wraps up the meeting.**

Moderator reiterates the ask, thanks the staffer again for their time, clarifies next steps, and asks when to follow up.

After your meeting:

1. Ask the staffer if they are willing to snap a picture with the group (or if virtual, a screenshot!) Be sure to post it on social media, tagging the Member’s official account and describing what you asked for in this meeting. This is a crucial step: Members really like to be acknowledged on social media, plus it helps to influence your own network, as well.

2. When you’re able, send the staffer a thank-you email. Within a couple of weeks, follow up to check on what the Member thought of your ask(s), and whether there are any questions or concerns you can address.