



Washington Presentation²⁰²⁶

Acronyms to Know

AGI	Adjusted Gross Income	NLRA	National Labor Relations Act
CBO	Congressional Budget Office	NLRB	National Labor Relations Board
CFPB	Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	OBBA	One Big Beautiful Bill (Tax Extenders)
CLEC	Competitive Local Exchange Carriers	OIRA	Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
CR	Continuing Resolution	OMB	Office of Management and Budget
CTA	Corporate Transparency Act	OPM	Office of Personnel Management
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	OSDBU	Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization
EO	Executive Order	OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
ERISA	Employee Retirement Income Security Act	PPACA	Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
EXIM	Export-Import Bank of the United States	QHP	Qualified Health Plan
FCRA	Fair Credit Reporting Act	RFA	Regulatory Flexibility Act
FEHBP	Federal Employee Health Benefit Program	SBA	Small Business Administration
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act	SBDC	Small Business Development Center
FMLA	Family and Medical Leave Act	SBEA	Small Business Exporters Association
FR	Federal Register	SBIR	Small Business Innovation Research
FSA	Flexible Spending Accounts	SBREFA	Small Business Reg. Enforcement Fairness Act
GAO	Government Accountability Office	SBTC	Small Business Technology Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act	SEP	Simplified Employee Pension
HRA	Health Reimbursement Account	SHOP	Small Employer Health Options Program
IRA	Individual Retirement Account	SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
JCT	Joint Committee on Taxation	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
MSA	Medical Savings Account	STTR	Small Business Technology Transfer Program





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Hill Etiquette

Before You Leave the Hotel | Be sure to wear shoes that are comfortable for walking long distances and standing for long periods. Pack an umbrella and/or overcoat in anticipation of inclement weather.

September in Washington is typically warm and humid – be prepared for temperatures between 70 and 85 degrees.

Consider what materials you will need to have for each of your meetings throughout the day. It can sometimes take up to 25 minutes to get through the metal detectors and security to enter a building; especially given updated security escort requirements, be sure you plan your arrival and logistics accommodations accordingly. Please dress in business attire, and note that NSBA is not providing transportation back to the hotel from the Hill.

Contacting Hill Offices | If you need to contact or locate your lawmakers' offices on Capitol Hill, please refer to the VoterVoice app or call the Capitol Switchboard to connect you to the office: 202-224-3121.

Before Your Hill Visits | View the map of the U.S. Capitol complex (see enclosed) to become familiar with the location of the buildings where your scheduled meetings will take place. The Capitol Hill campus consists of the Capitol Building (with a Senate side and House side), the House Office Buildings on the south and the Senate Office Buildings are on the north side of the Capitol. The three principal Senate Office Buildings include: Russell, Dirksen, and Hart. The three House Office Buildings include: Cannon, Longworth, and Rayburn.

To travel between the U.S. Capitol, House buildings, and Senate buildings, you will need to travel on surface streets, either by walking or by taxi. The nearest Metrorail stations to the Capitol complex are Union Station (Red Line) on the Senate side and Capitol South (Blue Line, Orange Line) on the House side. There is not a direct route between the House and Senate sides using the Metro, but walking between the two sides shouldn't take more than 15 minutes.

Getting turned around in Washington, D.C., is a rite of passage for the city's best advocates. Don't be afraid to ask for directions.

Things to Know

House/Senate Legislative Bell System | When you are visiting the Capitol or one of the House or Senate office buildings, you may hear bells ringing and wonder what they mean. These signals inform lawmakers the type of activity that is taking place on the floor of their respective chambers by summoning them for quorum calls, recorded votes or other activities. Hall clocks and wall fixtures in the House/Senate office buildings light up with the respective number of bell rings.

Food | There are numerous cafeterias, carry-outs and other eateries located inside of the House, Senate, and Capitol buildings. The schedules regularly change according to the legislative calendar. However, in Union Station (landmark train station on the Senate side), there is a wide assortment of small takeout eateries and full-service restaurants not subject to Congressional schedules. Additionally, on the House side, you can find assorted restaurants along Pennsylvania Ave., S.E. (past the Library of Congress Building). A few blocks further down Pennsylvania Avenue are the Eastern Market and Barracks Row neighborhoods, with even greater selection.



Hill Etiquette Continued



During Your Hill Visit

Be Prompt and Patient | When it is time to meet with a Member of Congress or their staff, be punctual, and be patient. It is not uncommon to have a meeting interrupted due to the Member's crowded schedule or voting.

If interruptions do occur, be flexible. It is often the case that when NSBA makes appointments for you at the Washington Presentation, you will be meeting with a staff member, rather than the elected official. These meetings are crucial parts to advocacy and should be regarded just as highly.

If there is a mix-up with the schedule or a meeting was not scheduled for you, NSBA encourages you to drop by the office of your elected official and see if there is anyone available to meet with you for at least a few minutes.

Be Organized | You will likely be meeting with your Members of Congress/key staff alongside other Washington Presentation attendees. Individual meetings were scheduled across NSBA members and delegations, so, it is a good idea to get to know your fellow district and/or state attendees before you make your way down Pennsylvania Ave. We have done our best to arrange seating for the awards luncheon in a productive manner to organically facilitate opportunities to connect prior to meetings.

Be Prepared | Members are required to take positions on many different issues. It is helpful to share information and examples that clearly demonstrate the impact or benefits associated with a particular issue or piece of legislation. NSBA staff has developed leave-behinds for each office; simply leave one of the one-pagers with the staff member.

The Members and their staff will likely ask you questions about the issue and/or your company's work. If you do not know the answer to any questions, there's no problem; simply let them know you'll find out and get back to them.

Members of Congress want to represent the best interests of their district or state. Wherever possible, demonstrate the connection between what you are requesting and the interests of the Member's constituency.

Be Open and Respectful | You may not share political affiliation with your Members of Congress, but keep in mind that you ARE on the same team when it comes to your District and State. Seek commonalities and ways you can work together – being an effective advocate is all about building relationships.

- Prepare to meet with your Reps. and Senators by reviewing their social media accounts
- Congress and the Administration are very active on X, but the majority of Members have profiles across all of the larger platforms, including LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and Threads.
- NSBA is also active on these platforms (**@NSBAadvocate**) and greatly appreciates your engagements with our accounts in your posts throughout WP'26!

Understanding what Members of Congress are discussing and posting about can help you tailor NSBA's Priority Issues. A quick review of the office and staffer you're meeting with can provide useful insight into how to make your case. After your Hill meetings, consider posting on social media, tagging and thanking those you met with. It's a simple way to extend the reach of your meetings and amplify NSBA's influence through the Washington Presentation.



Hill Etiquette Continued



Congressional Staff Roles

Each Member of Congress has staff assigned to various responsibilities during their term in office. To be most effective in communicating with Congress, it is helpful to know the titles and principal functions of key staff.

Chief of Staff | The chief of staff (CoS) reports directly to the Member of Congress. The CoS usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests. This is usually the person in charge of overall office operations, including the assignment of work and supervision of key staff.

Legislative Director, Senior Legislative Assistant, or Legislative Correspondent | The legislative director (LD) is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. In most congressional offices, there are several legislative assistants (LAs) and legislative correspondents (LCs) whose responsibilities are assigned to staff with particular expertise in specific areas. For example, depending on the responsibilities and interests of the Member, an office may include a different LA for health issues, environmental matters, taxes, small business, and trade, etc.

Press Secretary or Communications Director | The press secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain open and effective lines of communication between the Member, their constituency, and the general public. The press secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands, and special requirements of both print and electronic media, and how to promote the Member's views or position most effectively on specific issues.

Appointment Secretary, Personal Secretary, or Scheduler | This staff member is usually responsible for allocating a Member's time among the many demands that arise from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements, and constituent requests. The scheduler may also be responsible for making necessary travel arrangements, arranging speaking dates, visits to the district, etc.

Caseworker | The caseworker is the staff member usually assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing replies for the Member's signature. The caseworker's responsibilities also may include helping resolve problems constituents present in relation to federal agencies, like Social Security and Medicare issues, Veterans' benefits, passports, etc. There often are several caseworkers in a congressional office.

Don't hesitate to contact us with questions:

info@NSBAadvocate.org or +1 (571) 730-9485

bit.ly/nsba-wp-digital

