

How to Set Up Your Congressional Visits

Guidance on Congressional Meetings:

To reach a congressional office, call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask to be connected with the office you want or call the office directly. For direct dial numbers, refer to the phone lists for the House of Representatives at http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/TTD-113.pdf and the Senate at http://www.senate.gov/general/resources/pdf/senators_phone_list.pdf. Once you reach the intended office, ask to speak with the lawmaker's scheduler. Request a 20-30 minute meeting on May 22. Indicate that you are a constituent and an ACP member who would like to discuss health care and other practice issues **with the Member**. The legislative assistant who handles health care issues will probably participate in the meeting and may stand-in for the Member if an unanticipated conflict arises. But, again, to schedule a meeting with the Member, you will need to speak with either the Member's personal assistant or scheduler. The scheduler may inform you that the Member is not available to meet on that date but will then likely refer you to the health care legislative assistant to possibly set up a meeting with him/her.

Follow-up the phone request with a letter written on ACP stationery, if you are a Governor or Regent, or stationery used for your practice. ACP has drafted a sample letter for your convenience, which is included in the posted materials on this website as well as an "Appointments Arranged Form" so you can keep track of your schedule.

If you are bringing several ACP members with you, if at all possible, be sure to have the member of your party who is a constituent of the House Member take a lead role in that meeting. When the appointment is being made, it also would be appropriate to mention that someone from "the district" will be participating, if that is the case. In putting your delegation together, you may even want to consider asking someone to attend if he or she is a constituent of an important Member of Congress such as the Chairman or Ranking Member of a key health committee or subcommittee.

Most meetings typically last about 20 minutes. Try to schedule your Senate and House meetings together since Senate office buildings are located on one side of the Capitol and House office buildings are located on the other (see accompanying map of Capitol Hill). It is roughly a 15 minute walk from the House office buildings to the Senate office buildings (not including time to go through security, which could take as long as 15-20 minutes given recent cuts imposed by sequestration). You may want to divide up the meetings if there is more than one member of your delegation. If there is more than one of you from a state, please coordinate setting up appointments. In most cases, the Governor will be the lead in the meeting unless there is an ACP member who is a constituent.

Finally, while we strongly encourage you to be persistent in seeking a meeting with the Senator or Representative (you are a voter!), an appointment with health staff is an acceptable alternative. Staff members are responsible for advising lawmakers on health policy and legislation, among other issues, and therefore are quite capable of discussing issues with you.

Background on Congressional Committees:

In the Senate, the important health committees are Finance and Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). In the House, Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce are the primary health committees. The members of the Health Subcommittees of the Ways and Means and the Energy and Commerce Committees are especially important targets, due to their jurisdiction over specific health issues. The Labor/Health and Human Services Subcommittees of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees determine levels of discretionary funding for AHRQ, health professions programs, NIH and many other important health programs. For a listing of the Members who reside on these key committees, please consult the document, "Key Committee Information," which is also posted with these materials.

Members of these key Committees above, as well as Members of House and Senate leadership, are considered ACP priority targets because they have the most influence over issues of importance to the College. Lists of committee members also are contained in the pocket-size 113th Congressional Directory, which will be available at Leadership Day. To find out who your Member of Congress is, click on **My Officials** located on the Leadership Day webpage <http://capwiz.com/acponline/home/LD> under "Spotlight (on the right side bar) and enter your zip code. For a pronunciation guide for Members of Congress visit: http://inogolo.com/guides/113th_congress.