



AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY

Washington Office

HOW TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL HILL MEETING

The key to a successful meeting on the Hill is to keep in mind the purpose. Any visit should not be a one-shot meeting. Rather the primary objective should be to establish rapport, with other objectives being to make a request, obtain information, and to provide material. The following suggestions will help you in achieving your objectives. If you have any questions or would like more material, please contact opa@aps.org.

CONSIDER THE AUDIENCE-

1. Most likely not a scientist
 - a. Don't get into details, especially scientific ones
 - b. Stick to broad themes
2. Most likely to meet with staffer
 - a. Don't misjudge influence of young staffers. They are your conduit to the Member and it may help if you acknowledge that.
 - b. What's the background of the staffer?
 - c. Don't lecture; ask, listen
3. Has the Member been supportive in past?
If so, extend thanks to the Member. Also, don't preach to choir (present material that might be useful to them in making their case to others such as appropriators)

MEETING STRUCTURE

1. Introductions
 - a. State who you are or represent. Here you are establishing why they should listen to you.
 - b. Thank
 - i. Staffer for taking time to meet. (They have hectic schedules)
 - ii. Member for past support or action
2. Make the "Ask"
3. Make supporting arguments. Some suggestions for making the meeting effective and interactive:
 - Always include local angle.
 - Be succinct. (Most meetings run 20-25 minutes.)
 - Take pulse to decide where to take meeting (E.g., Is this something the Congresswoman can support?)
 - Ask if they have questions
 - If the Member has not been supportive in past, ask staffer how to gain Member's support.
4. Wrap-up (Repeat ask, Gauge support, Thank again)

(OVER)

FOLLOW-UP

After the meeting,

1. Send a note to:
 - a. Thank them for the meeting and discussion
 - b. Send additional materials that they may have requested.
 - c. Ask about reaction to your “ask”
 - d. Offer to be a resource (you may already have done this in the meeting)
 - e. Perhaps offer a tour of your lab when they are in the area
2. Keep in touch with the staffer.

SCRIPT FOR INCREASING RESEARCH FUNDING

Below is a recommended script to use when urging more federal funding for the physical sciences. Please also consult the APS document, “How To Have a Successful Hill Meeting.” That document and other supporting material for you Hill visit can be found at http://www.aps.org/public_affairs/congressvisits/.

Introduction

Ice breaker (if it seems appropriate)

Who you represent

Thank the staffer for meeting (and Member for support or particular action)

Ask:

We are here to ask Congresswoman/Senator Einstein to support increases for science research funding. In particular, we’d like:

- Him/her to sign Dear Colleague letters for NSF or DOE SC
- Send an individual letter to the appropriators
- (Check with APS Washington Office for time-appropriate ask)

Supporting Argument:

The federal government’s decades long under funding of the physical sciences has allowed many countries to challenge our science leadership and undermine the basis of our innovation economy. As a result, we are rapidly losing our market share of high-tech products and the jobs that go with them. We must respond to the current challenges by re-invigorating our investments in physical sciences research, just as our country did in response to the Sputnik launching.

[Use charts to illustrate the following arguments, where applicable. If the Member is already a supporter, present charts as a means to help them make their case to others. **Avoid preaching to the choir since lecturing a supporter is a turn off.** Instead, ask how you can help. If they have seen the charts, thank them again and wrap up the meeting. Staffers like short meetings since their schedules are hectic.]

- A. The U.S. economy is an innovation economy
 - a. Compare our economy today with that of the early 1900's. The advent of technologies like the automobile, aircraft, communications, microchip, computers, and lasers exemplify our innovation.
 - b. Def'n of an innovation economy
 - i. Goal: Prosperity and high-standard of living
 - ii. Depends on continual, robust creation of new jobs, which
 - iii. Depends on continual, robust creation of new products, which
 - iv. Depends on continual, robust creation of new ideas, which
 - 1. requires research investment and scientists & engineers
 - 2. can be measured by articles and patents
- B. Countries like China and India are making rapid advancements while U.S. is complacent in the 5 vital components of an innovation economy:
 - a. Research Investment
 - b. Future generation of scientists and engineers
 - i. Undergraduate
 - ii. Graduate
 - c. Science and Engineering articles
 - d. U.S. Patent applications
 - e. High-tech products
- C. U.S. must respond and robust research budget increases are a necessary first step
 - a. Economic arguments
 - i. Cite that half of economic growth since WWII can be attributed to technology
 - ii. Economic studies show annual return on investment for research to be 20-50%
 - iii. An MIT study showed that MIT alumni, faculty and staff have spun off 5000 companies resulting in more than a million employees and annual world sales of \$232B
 - b. Students follow the money (See charts on APS Advocacy tools page)
- D. Make local argument. For example,
 - a. Students stay to work for high-tech businesses
 - b. Examples of local start-ups
 - c. Funding difficult for young faculty
 - d. Faculty being recruited to other countries where funding is better
 - e. Hard to recruit American students
 - f. Quality of foreign graduate student declining
 - g. ...
- E. See if they have questions. (Possible context: are they prepared to be the advocate for your request when making the case to the Member.)

(OVER)

Wrap-Up

- A. Repeat ask
- B. Gauge support
- C. Thank again

Frequently raised points

- ***No money:*** Science research funding is an investment in the future. Just as prudent planners continue to make payments to retirement funds and their children's college funds, our country must make science research funding a priority.
- ***If science research funding is so helpful to industry, why don't they fund more of it?***
 - i. Today's global, highly competitive environment doesn't allow companies to make long-term investments like research.
 - ii. Industry commitment to research actually punished. The average stock-holder owns a particular stock for about a year, a time scale must shorter than research investment payoffs. As a result, there are numerous examples of company's stock decreasing with research investments or increasing with research lab sell-offs.
 - iii. Research can spawn whole new industry. So internet companies weren't around to invest in development of internet; similarly with semiconductor companies.
 - iv. Research may not benefit company funding it. Norm Augustine, the retired CEO of Lockheed Martin, tells the story of a Martin Marietta employee who approached management about pursuing applications of his materials research to sports equipment. Management said no, giving him the green light to found the company *Head*.