



AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY

Washington Office

MEETING WITH YOUR CONGRESSMAN IN YOUR DISTRICT

While meeting with your Congressman and/or their staff in Washington, DC is one method of influence, the opportunity exists in your own backyard. Members of Congress are frequently at backing their districts throughout the year. These times include summer recess (August), around holidays, and at the beginning and/or end of each week or other recesses throughout the year. For a listing of the congressional calendar, please click [here](#).

There are many benefits to meeting with Members in their home offices:

- Members of Congress have hectic schedules when Congress is in session and you have a better chance of meeting with the Members themselves
- The meetings with Members in District offices tend to be longer (30-60 minutes). While a meeting with a Member in Washington will generally not exceed 10 minutes.
- During the meeting, the Member can better focus on your issues since they are less likely to be distracted by committee or voting obligations.
- It is easier to include other members of your department, such as interested graduate students, in the meeting since travel to Washington, DC is not required. This will help to raise overall awareness of policy issues within your department.

How to tweak your meeting strategy:

- Focus more on the **local angles** of the federal issue of research funding and education.
- Bring materials that speak to how your university/company, *and the district as whole*, is being affected by competitiveness and innovation.
- As mentioned above, include others from your department (or other relevant departments) to show a broad support for science. (Note: keep meetings to 3 or less and coordinate message prior to meeting with the Member).

After the meeting:

- Be sure to send a thank you email/letter to the Member for taking the time to meet with you while he/she was back at home. Also, if any the Member asked you for any additional information during the meeting, provide the information at this time.
- Let the Washington Office know how the meeting went and if any additional follow up is needed in Member's Washington Office.