

# LOBBY 101

## PAINLESS ADVOCACY: The Art of Successfully Engaging with Your Elected officials

PRESENTED BY

Ellen Teller, Food Research & Action Center

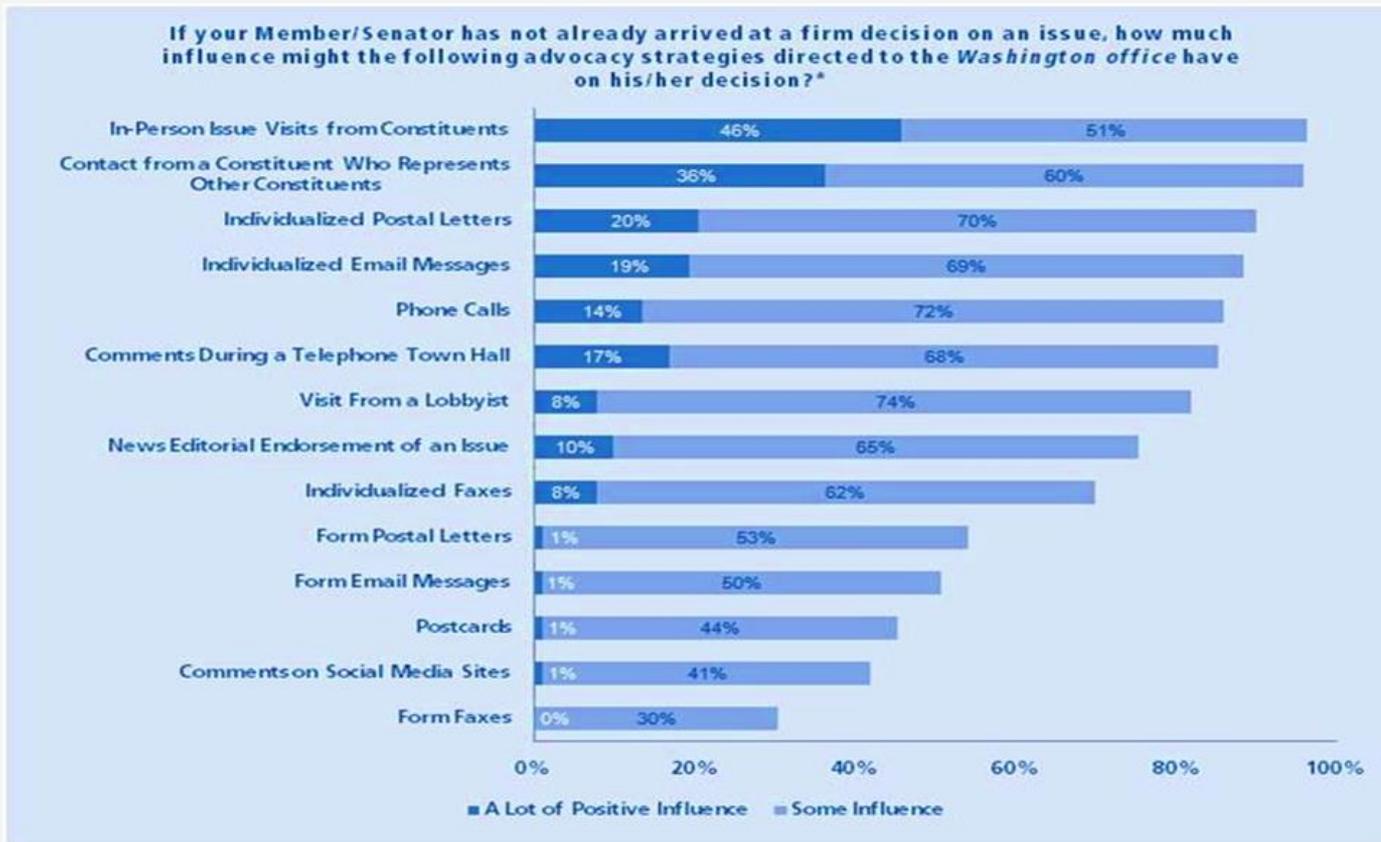
Kate Leone, Feeding America

February 6, 2018, 1:00 PM EST

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# Local Voices Matter!



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# PREPARING FOR YOUR VISITS TO CAPITOL HILL

## STEP ONE:

**Schedule appointments with your Members of Congress (MOC) and their staff before you arrive in Washington, DC.**

Call or e-mail the staff handling food/nutrition issues.

Call the Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121, and they will direct you to your Member's office.

Check your Member's website, [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) & [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

## POWER IN NUMBERS!

### STEP TWO:

**Collaborate.** Schedule appointments with representatives from other organizations attending the conference from your state. It's the best way to guarantee a meeting with your Member (staff will be there, too).

You can contact FRAC or Feeding America to access a list of conference attendees from your state.

You are part of a larger movement: **Over 1,000 registered!**

Wear your conference buttons on your Capitol Hill visits.

You will receive buttons at the conference.



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## ADVANCE PREP

### STEP THREE:

#### Get to know your Members of Congress

- Check out the websites of your Members for biographical information, committee assignments, caucus memberships, recent press statements & other useful information.
- Google your Members for the latest on their priorities and activities.
- New to your organization? Make sure you know his/her history with your organization and issues. This is especially important with new Capitol Hill staff.
- Study his/her voting records.
- Follow your Member on Twitter.



# WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

## STEP FOUR:

### Create your own “Leave Behind” Packets

- FRAC/Feeding America “Leave Behinds” – will be emailed to you in advance of the conference and will be available at the conference and at the Tuesday morning Breakfast on Capitol Hill
- Information about your organization (including Board Members, and local support – e.g., key donors)
- Any recent media “hits”
- Newsletters, reports, studies, or any special analyses
- And yes – also bring comfortable shoes!

The image shows the cover of a report titled "Farm Bill: Congress Must Protect and Strengthen SNAP and Other Anti-Hunger Programs" published in March 2017. The report is co-authored by Feeding America and FRAC (Food Research & Action Center). The cover features the logos for both organizations at the top. Below the title, there is a section titled "SNAP/Food Stamps:" which states that SNAP is the cornerstone of the nation's nutrition and food security safety net, helping to put food on the table for 43 million low-income participants each month. A highlighted box titled "SNAP Action Needed:" contains a call to action for Congress to protect SNAP from harmful policy proposals. The bottom section of the cover lists "SNAP has extraordinary strengths:" followed by several bullet points detailing the program's impact, such as its effectiveness in lifting families above the poverty line and its role in supporting the economy during recessions.

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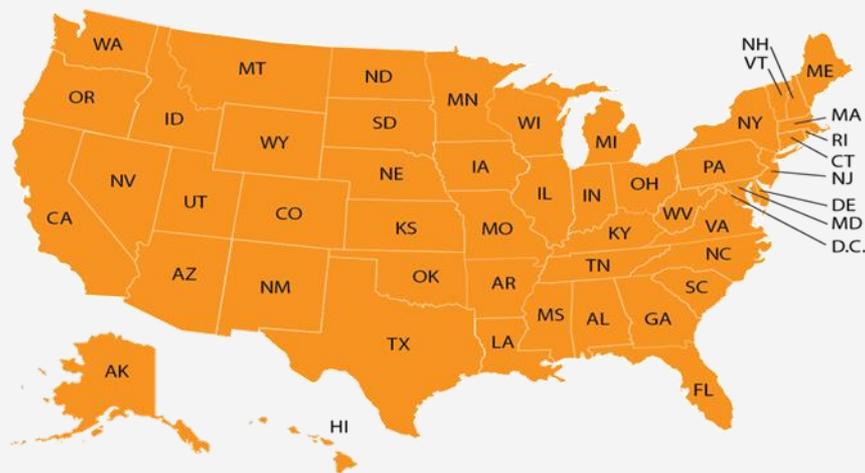
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## All Politics *IS* Local

### Always emphasize what is happening in your District and State

- Give local examples and the impact your programs have in alleviating hunger and poverty in your state and community. You can also compare it to the national stats.
- Relate a specific incident or story that puts a face on the issue/proposal that you are discussing.

## State and District Specific Data



**Don't Forget to Include District and State  
Specific Data**

FRAC's [Resource Library](#) and [Interactive Data Tools](#)

[Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap](#)

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# PICTURES AND STORIES

## STEP FIVE:

### Share pictures and stories from back home

- Organize an advocacy campaign from the District/State and share the results with your Members during your visits (you might want to paste messages on paper plates to emphasize messages).
- Create and bring a photo album illustrating your work in your community.
- Create and bring a storybook with personal stories from clients, success stories from your organization, and other stories you want to share.



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# ORGANIZE YOUR MEETING

## STEP SIX:

**Be Organized- Arrange a “prep” call before coming to Washington, DC.**

- 1. Agree on an outline, agenda and handouts for the meeting**
  - All participants must agree on the core issues to be discussed during the meeting (and what shouldn't be discussed).
  - Make sure everyone in the group has a role in the meeting.
- 2. Appoint a meeting facilitator**
  - One person from the group should make introductory remarks, organize introductions, and keep things flowing and on topic.
- 3. Agree on ‘the ASK’ – and make sure this happens at the meeting – regardless of the amount of time you have with your Member.**
- 4. Take a picture with your Member/Staff and post on #hungerpc18.**

# “THE ASK”

## STEP SEVEN:

### Make Your ASK

Be *very* specific about what you want your Member to do - e.g., sign letter, cosponsor legislation, speak out and vote against/for a bill/proposal, join the House Hunger Caucus.

Make sure your Member knows exactly what you expect from him or her and that you will be following up!

Do not leave the meeting without asking your member or staff to do SOMETHING. Even in a difficult meeting, you can always ask your member to agree to a site visit when they are home.

## MEETING TIPS

- Be on time. Allow time to get through security (metal detectors in every House and Senate building) and time to walk between offices. Once in a building- whether on the House or Senate side- you can travel through tunnels to each of the three Senate buildings and to each of the three House buildings. You cannot travel underground between the House and Senate – through the Capitol - without a Member or staff.
- Be patient. Members and Aides are often running late. Make sure you give yourself some additional time between meetings.
- Determine the amount of time you have for the meeting at the onset.
- Stay on topic – your Member will stray – you need to bring the conversation back to YOUR issue. It's your meeting!
- Be specific- bill numbers, written proposals that you want to discuss.



# “ELEVATOR SPEECH”

## **STEP EIGHT:**

### **Know Your Elevator Speech**

If there is one thing you should take away from this webinar is that you need to be prepared if your appointment gets cut short.

Make sure you have your “60-second and/or 2-minute elevator ask.” This is your “quick” pitch – summarizes your arguments and “ask” in the short time allotted. It also prepares you when you run into your Member on the elevator – you need to have your quick pitch ready.



# ALWAYS INVITE MEMBERS TO A SITE VISIT



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## Social Media - #hungerpc18, #EndHungerNow, #talkpoverty, #snapmatters



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## CHECK LIST OF WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW

- Never be partisan.
- Work collaboratively with others in your community/state in your dealings with your elected officials – agree on your collective ask.
- Avoid disagreements within your group – that just gives your Member an excuse to “sit this one out.”
- Members may get side-tracked to other issues during your meeting. You have limited time, so try to politely get back to your issue. Your facilitator should be tasked with keeping the meeting on track and on message.
- If you don’t know the answer to a question, simply say, “I’ll have to get back to you on that.” Never “wing” it.
- When you get back home, follow up with any materials or information that was promised during the meeting or simply to say “thank you.”

# 2018 Anti-Hunger Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill

## Quick tips:

1. Take the metro. The red line Metro station (Woodley Park) is one block from Omni Shoreham and will take you directly to Union Station Metro station. The Washington Court Hotel is a nine minute walk from Union Station.
2. If possible, schedule your first meetings on the Senate side.
3. When walking among the House buildings and the Senate buildings go to the basement and walk through the tunnels. That avoids going through security for each building. **Note: You cannot travel to the Capitol underground without a Member/Aide with you.**
4. Baggage storage at the Omni or Union Station

Tuesday, February 27: Breakfast begins at 8 AM at the Washington Court Hotel.

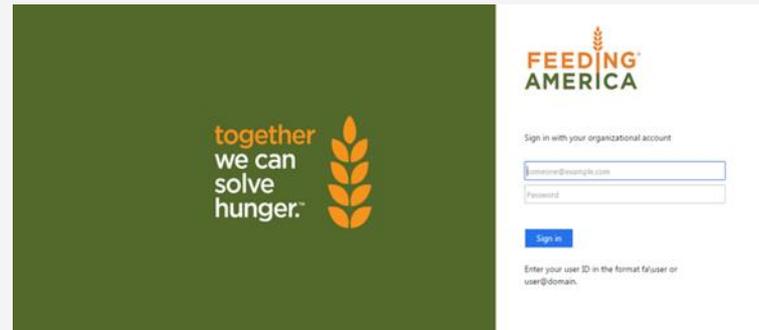


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## NEED MORE TECH SUPPORT?

Check out FRAC's Legislative Action Center, [www.frac.org/action](http://www.frac.org/action)

Feeding America network member? Check out HungerNet.



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# QUESTIONS?

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