Government Relations

Congressional Advocacy & Lobbying 101
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- What Makes a Successful Advocacy Day
- Get the Most Out of Meetings
- Meeting Do-s
- Meeting Don’t-s
- Making “The Ask”
- Organize a Prep-Day
- Helpful Meeting Tips
- Meeting Etiquette
What Makes a Successful Advocacy Day

- Be organized
  - Agree on an outline and agenda for the meeting (key messages)
  - Have materials easily available for everyone
  - Appoint a meeting facilitator
  - Stay focused on the “ask”
  - Take pictures with Congressional leaders or staff during meetings & share them on social media. Our hashtags are #SHPEonTheHill #GovRelationSHPE
Get the Most Out of Meetings

► Do not get mired in too much detail (age of staff, their attention span, disruptions, brief member drop-in)

► Time is limited, ensure all roles are worked out in advance

► Highlight what may be most of interest to the legislator – impact of ask in the community you serve, etc.

► Tell a relevant story – make an appeal to emotion
Meeting Do-s

- Brief introductions
- Be aware of time – time is limited
- Thank the staffer/legislator for previous support, public statements, or prior funding dedicated to your mission
- Discuss what your organization does and the positive effect of your work on their community/district/state
- Be specific about local impacts – tell a story that will give an example to the issue
Meeting Don’t-s

▶ Don’t be partisan
▶ Avoid disagreements within the group
  ▶ This give the Member of Congress or staff to find an excuse to be completely disengage or “sit this one out”
▶ If you don’t know the answer
  ▶ Simply say “I’ll have to get back to you on that”
▶ Don’t forget to send a follow up/Thank You email later that day
Making “The Ask”

► Be **VERY** specific about what you want the Member or staff to do
  
  ► Sign on letter, cosponsor a bill, vote for/against a bill

► Be polite but don’t be afraid to press if needed

► Let the legislator/staff respond to your request

► If the response is “I have to talk to my boss” – It means you should follow up with them for feedback via email at a later date

► Always offer to be a resource to the legislator/staff for information
Organize a Prep-Day

- Ensure meeting materials are available online for everyone & up to date
- Discuss and designate speaking roles for the meeting
- Develop your elevator pitch
  - If the meeting gets cut short, make sure to have a “2-minute pitch” that summarizes your ask
  - This is helpful when a Member of Congress drops-in or they/staff have to drop-off the meeting
Helpful Meeting Tips

► Take notes
  ► You will need these when sending a follow up email

► Don’t finish the meeting without an ASK

► Always thank the staff/legislator for his/her time

► If you/staff/legislator encounter any issues with the platform being used, make sure to have a backup available
Meeting Etiquette

► Arrive to the meeting early – No more than 5 minutes
► Business professional dress code
► Be fully present & engaged in the meeting
  ► Find a separate time to work on other tasks
► No chewing gum
QUESTIONS?