



## Tips for Successful Congressional Meeting

**NOTE:** Congressional buildings are secure and require all visitors to pass through security at entrances. Be sure to leave yourself enough time to arrive at the legislator's office 3-5 minutes before your scheduled meeting.

### During Visit:

- Introduce yourself (BRIEF). All attendees introduce themselves and their agency and say one or two sentences about their involvement with allergy and/or asthma issues. If there are more than 3 people in the meeting, determine who will lead or do the introductions.
- Start on a positive note by finding some common ground. For example, thank your legislators if they are noted as Sponsors/Co-Sponsors to bill(s) or highlight an event you attended that the legislator participated.
- Clearly describe the issues and organization's position early in the discussion. This is key if your meeting is cut short due to a pending vote or committee hearing. *(Remember to provide the legislator and/or their staff with the "leave behind" folder of materials provided to you during the breakfast briefing.)*
- Use personal anecdotes. Explain your position with facts and use personal stories when possible; make sure legislators understand the personal ramifications or benefits resulting from their actions.
- Stay focused. Avoid overloading the legislator with too much information. Keep the conversation simple and polite.
- If you don't understand something, ask for an explanation.
- Have the legislators clarify their position and/or vote on the issue.
- Show openness to counterarguments and politely respond to them if it seems appropriate to do so.
- Firmly and fairly direct the conversation, especially if the conversation begins to veer off track.
- Ask the legislator to take some specific actions: sponsoring a bill, voting for/against a pending measure.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say so, but offer to get an answer.
- Summarize any commitments made by the Member/staff.
- Thank them and ask when and with whom you should follow up.

### After the Visit:

- Don't forget to snap a picture! We encourage all Hill Day participants to post their pictures on social media using the hashtag **#AADCH2019**.
  - **TIP:** Be sure to include your Members of Congress in your post. Many will retweet and repost messages from constituents.
- Share the results of your meetings with Allergy & Asthma Network, including insights about legislators' concerns/comments so we can provide any additional follow up in Washington, D.C.
- Write a thank you letter summarizing priority points *(A sample letter will be made available on Allergy & Asthma Network's website)*.
- Maintain ongoing communication with legislators and their staff through letters, emails, or calls.
- Find out when legislators will be back in their home district and organize a local meeting/host a visit at your office if applicable.