



# Contacting your Federal Representation: Quick Tips

*Follow this guide to secure a spot on your US Representative or Senator's schedule.*

## Overview

Every individual, business, or organization has **three** federal elected officials: the Member of Congress who represents the district with which they reside in and their state's two Senators. Outreach on national issues should include all three of the relevant federal officials.

## General Process

There are small differences in each officials' website, however, the process for requesting meetings will be generally the same for each. Navigate their website, and find the "Request a Meeting" or "Scheduling Request" option. When completing the form, be sure to include **the name of the organization**, the **number of attendees**, and the **specific issue that will be discussed**.

## Best Practices & Other Considerations

- **Federal officials are busy.** It's likely that the initial meeting will be referred to a staffer. This is expected and doesn't diminish the meeting's impact. Don't take this personally, and use this as an opportunity to start a relationship with a member's office. After a successful first meeting, it's more likely the next will be with the official.
- **Be mindful of the public calendar.** Both the US House of Representatives and Senate publish calendars that indicate when officials will be in Washington or in their state. To meet in Washington, be sure to suggest dates that align with the provided calendar, and follow a similar protocol to meet at home.
- **Avoid the "Contact" webpage.** Most officials' websites have both a general contact page as well as a specific meeting-request page. Review the official's website to understand the difference between both options. The general contact page is typically reserved for opinion messages, unlike the meeting-request page which will go directly to the office's Scheduling Team.
- **Consider the "ask."** It is most effective to not only provide a summary of the relevant issue, but also a proposal for a potential action (or ask). Actions like introducing new legislation, cosponsoring existing legislation, making a public statement, or sending a formal letter are typical actions that officials may take.
- **Other Requests.** Use the above tips to make other types of requests such as sending formal event invitations and requesting speaking engagements.

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## Questions?

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