



Meeting Your Member of Congress

Our grassroots lobbying action is getting a meeting with your U.S. Representative, identify others to go with you, planning and rehearsing the meeting, having a great meeting and then doing great follow-up. In all of the money out of politics bills in Congress at the moment, there is only one Republican co-sponsor. This is an area where American Promise can cause a big breakthrough and push us closer to victory.

Key ingredients to a successful meeting:

- 1. Purpose.** Be able to share why you do this work. Write down some reflections on one of these three questions: a) what moves you to work to have a government run by people not money, (or) b) what values pull you to do this work, (or) c) share an experience that pulls you to work for a government run by people not by money?
- 2. Research your federal or state Rep. and find something you can thank them for:** Go online and find something they support that you can thank them for be it support for work on ending homelessness or some other issue. At minimum thank them for meeting with you.
- 3. Be the peace.** *Remember in your meetings with Congress or their staff to hold yourself in the most peaceful manner possible. We want to embody the values and principles for which we are advocating. Get support beforehand if needed (maybe you are meeting with an office that is opposed to many of your values?). They are more likely to “hear” you and welcome you back if you can connect with them and be gracious. Speaking your truth doesn’t have to be done in anger. Anger most often alienates. Clarify with your team that no matter what your member of Congress or their staff says, you can seek to empathize with their perspectives, and ultimately regard them as your allies and partners. Aim to engage with them through a common inquiry: “How can we most effectively deal with money in politics, in ways that are uplifting and truly effective?”*
- 4. Be clear on the asks**

3 Asks for Meeting Our Member of Congress:

- Co-sponsor a Bill Calling for a 28th Amendment:
Will you co-sponsor one or all of the bills calling for a 28th Amendment to overturn Citizens United and related cases?
- Build Awareness in Your District:
Will you write an Op-Ed in a local or national newspaper announcing your support for the 28th Amendment? (offer to draft one for them)

Will you have an open meeting in your district to educate constituents on the importance of this historic reform?
- Help Find Republican Colleagues to Join:
Will you find one or more Republican colleagues to join you in co-sponsoring a 28th Amendment bill?



Sample Meeting Outline:

1.) Thank you/ Introductions – 5-6 minutes

- Thank your member of Congress for the meeting. Thank your member for an action that he or she has taken that you appreciate.
- Introduce yourselves briefly (name, city, and what values or experience pulls you to work for a government run by people not by money.)
- Ask a question that will allow the member and aide to introduce themselves more fully. This helps establish a real connection. For example, you can ask, “What was your vision for entering politics?”

2.) Briefly outline our issue using the laser talk and the bill in Congress you would like them to co-sponsor – 4-5 minutes

- Basic background/ overview of the purpose and effect of the bill.

3.) Share your individual experiences and emphasize.

- Why is the bill’s purpose and provisions compelling to each of you?

4.) Welcome feedback, questions, or comments from member of Congress and staff regarding the bill or issue.

5.) Requests

- Become a co-sponsor of the bill?
- Write a letter to your colleagues or to the committee chairs to whom the bill has been referred?
- Speak at a public event in the district?
- Write an op-ed for a local newspaper? (You might offer to draft it for them)
- What else do you or your staff think you could do to help us pass this legislation?

6.) Wrap-up

- Set up necessary follow-up to learn their decision with contact information and expected response times. Thank them for their time and attention.

7) Celebrate the action and report it back!

- Supporting each other in taking action
 - Format: buddy system & report back. (e.g. If members agree to call Washington by 6 p.m. tomorrow, have people buddy up with a partner and check in with their partner at 6 p.m. to see how it went or make a new agreement about taking the action the following day. (5 minutes).
 - Set group meeting times and norms for the immediate term. (e.g. dates, times and locations for the next three trainings. Confirm the date, time and location for the next meeting. (10 minutes)
- Report the results back to us at http://www.americanpromise.net/citizen_uprising_reporting so we can hold Congress accountable! (5 minutes)