

## Capitol Hill Toolkit:

### ***How to Set-up a Meeting with your Legislators in Washington DC and What to Expect While You are There***

#### Why Meet with your Legislators?

A face-to-face meeting with your legislators or their staff is the most effective way of making your issue memorable. Whether it's research funding, insurance parity, or simply introducing yourself to them, elected officials listen to their constituents.

In fact, taking the time to meet with your legislators before you need their assistance puts you in a better position to ask for help down the road. Here are a few tips for having an effective personal meeting with your elected officials while you are in Washington, DC.

#### How to Set-up a Meeting in Washington, DC

Your federal Representative and Senators are generally in Washington, DC from Tuesday through Thursday. In order to meet with them in DC, you will likely have to be in town mid-week. If you are in Washington on a Monday or Friday, plan to meet with your legislator's health staff person.

Keep in mind you may meet with a staff member regardless of what day it is, as most legislators have extremely busy schedules. Do not take this personally. Usually, the staff members specialize in specific issue areas and advise the legislator on how to vote. In fact, staff members often know more about an issue than the legislator.

In order to set-up a meeting, call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected to your legislator's office. Once you are connected to the office, ask to speak to the scheduler. Identify yourself as a constituent, and explain the purpose of the meeting. Try to limit yourself to one issue per meeting.

What to say:

"Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_. I will be in Washington on \_\_\_\_\_ and I'd like to meet with [elected official] to discuss the importance of research funding on brain disorders."

#### Preparing for the Meeting

Know your issue well and have examples prepared. If possible, share stories that impact the legislator's district or constituents. If you plan to discuss mental health parity, for example, describe a situation when you or a loved one faced barriers to accessing appropriate care.

Know with whom you are meeting and how to get to the meeting place ahead of time.

Determine if your legislator has taken an official position on your issue of concern. If you are unsure, contact the American Brain Coalition's staff in Washington, DC:

Kerri Wade  
Government & Public Affairs Manager  
(202) 462-6688  
kerri@sfn.org

Also, it is helpful to know if your legislator serves on any relevant committees. (For a list of key committees, see below.)

Lastly, be sure to bring your business card to leave behind at the meeting. If possible, also bring a brief fact sheet or outline on your issue and leave it with whomever you are meeting. The ABC website has legislative issue papers that you may find useful to print out prior to the meeting. The website is: [www.americanbraincoalition.org](http://www.americanbraincoalition.org)

### Other Tips to Keep in Mind

Do \*not\* begin your meeting by:

- 1.) saying that you voted for her/him
- 2.) talking about campaign contributions
- 3.) badmouthing the opposition
- 4.) claiming you are entitled to any sort of special consideration

Always remember to:

- 1.) assume the best of elected officials - they are there for the public good
- 2.) keep current fiscal and political constraints in mind
- 3.) avoid using jargon
- 4.) be concise

### What to Expect at the Meeting

Although you need to know basic facts about your issue of concern, you are not expected to be an expert on legislative details. If you are asked a question that you do not know the answer to, it's best to say, "I don't know, but I'll get back to you." This is common practice and, in fact, gives you an excuse to stay in touch after your meeting in Washington is over.

Be flexible. As previously mentioned, your legislators have extremely busy schedules and you need to accommodate them accordingly. This may translate into a "meeting" held during a walk to the Capitol for a vote. Do not be alarmed; this is common practice.

Be brief. Plan to spend no more than 15 minutes in your meeting. Explain your concerns and provide examples. Do your best to present your side persuasively, and if you do not already know, ask your legislator for his or her position on the issue. Understand that there may be times when your legislators cannot support your position. Regardless, be sure to keep the meeting friendly, as he or she may be able to support you the next time around.

Thank each participant in the meeting for his or her time.

### After the Meeting

Send a thank you note to the people that participated in your meeting. In the note, briefly restate your position on the issue, and offer yourself as a resource to the legislator's office.

Remember, the key to gaining quick access and help with specific federal problems is to have developed a personal relationship with your elected legislator. Continue to stay in touch with your legislator's office in order to maintain the relationship.

## **Key Congressional Committees 109<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Committees are the workhorses of Congress. Before any bill is debated by the full membership of the House of Representatives or Senate, it must be approved by the Committee to which it has been referred. Because a bill must first be considered at the Committee level, the members of each Committee often have more knowledge and power over the issues that their Committee considers.

The Committees that have jurisdiction over the issues of importance to the American Brain Coalition are as follows:

### House Committees

Ways & Means  
Appropriations  
Energy & Commerce  
Budget

### Senate Committees

Finance  
Appropriations  
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
Budget

Below is a detailed list that includes the members and jurisdiction of each key Committee. If your legislators sit on any of these Committees, it is particularly important that you contact them, as they are especially influential over the issues that matter most to the caregivers and patients suffering from brain disease.

## House Committee on Ways and Means

*Jurisdiction: The Committee controls all revenue raising activities for the federal government (i.e. taxes), as well as oversight of Social Security, Medicare, and welfare.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>
William M. Thomas, CA (Chairman)	Charles B. Rangel, NY (Ranking Member)
E. Clay Shaw Jr., FL	Fortney H. Stark, CA
Nancy Johnson, CT	Sander M. Levin, MI
Wally Herger, CA	Benjamin L. Cardin, MD
Jim McCrery, LA	Jim McDermott, WA
Dave Camp, MI	John Lewis, GA
Jim Ramstad, MN	Richard E. Neal, MA
Jim Nussle, IA	Michael R. McNulty, NY
Sam Johnson, TX	William J. Jefferson, LA
Rob J. Portman, OH	John S. Tanner, TN
Philip S. English, PA	Xavier Becerra, CA
J.D. Hayworth, AZ	Lloyd Doggett, TX
Jerry Weller, IL	Earl Pomeroy, ND
Kenny C. Hulshof, MO	Stephanie Tubbs Jones, OH
Ron Lewis, KY	Mike Thompson, CA
Mark Foley, FL	John B. Larson, CT
Kevin P. Brady, TX	Rahm Emanuel, IL
Thomas Reynolds, NY	
Paul D. Ryan, WI	
Eric I. Cantor, VA	
John Linder, GA	
Melissa A. Hart, PA	
Bob Beauprez, CO	
Chris Chocola, IN	

## House Appropriations Committee

*Jurisdiction: The Committee has broad responsibility for annually appropriating federal monies to specific agencies and programs, such as the National Institutes of Health.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>
Jerry Lewis, CA (Chairman)	David R. Obey, WI (Ranking Member)
C. W. Bill Young, FL	John P. Murtha, PA
Ralph Regula, OH (Vice Chair)	Norman D. Dicks, WA
Harold Rogers, KY	Martin Olav Sabo, MN
Frank R. Wolf, VA	Steny H. Hoyer, MD
Jim Kolbe, AZ	Alan B. Mollohan, WV
James Walsh, NY	Marcy Kaptur, OH
Charles H. Taylor, NC	Peter J. Visclosky, IN
David L. Hobson, OH	Nita M. Lowey, NY
Ernest J. Istook, Jr., OK	Jose E. Serrano, NY
Henry Bonilla, TX	Rosa L. DeLauro, CT
Joe Knollenberg, MI	James P. Moran, VA
Jack Kingston, GA	John W. Olver, MA
Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, NJ	Ed Pastor, AZ
Roger F. Wicker, MS	David E. Price, NC
Randy "Duke" Cunningham, CA	Chet Edwards, TX
Todd Tiahrt, KS	Robert E. "Bud" Cramer, Jr., AL
Zach Wamp, TN	Patrick J. Kennedy, RI
Tom Latham, IA	James E. Clyburn, SC
Anne Northup, KY	Maurice D. Hinchey, NY
Robert Aderholt, AL	Lucille Roybal-Allard, CA
Jo Ann Emerson, MO	Sam Farr, CA
Kay Granger, TX	Jesse L. Jackson, Jr., IL
John E. Peterson, PA	Carolyn C. Kilpatrick, MI
Virgil Goode, VA	Allen Boyd, FL
John Doolittle, CA	Chaka Fattah, PA
Ray LaHood, IL	Steven R. Rothman, NJ
John Sweeney, NY	Sanford D. Bishop, Jr., GA
Don Sherwood, PA	Marion Berry, AR
Dave Weldon, FL	
Michael K. Simpson, ID	
John Abney Culberson, TX	
Mark Steven Kirk, IL	
Ander Crenshaw, FL	
Dennis R. Rehberg, MT	
John Carter, TX	
Rodney Alexander, LA	

## House Committee on Energy and Commerce

*Jurisdiction: The Committee oversees energy, conservation, telecommunications, consumer protection, and commerce issues. Additionally, the Committee has jurisdiction over public health issues and drug abuse. This includes its power as the authorizing Committee for the National Institutes of Health.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>
Joe Barton, TX (Chairman)	John D. Dingell, MI (Ranking Member)
Ralph M. Hall, TX	Henry A. Waxman, CA
Michael Bilirakis, FL (Vice Chair)	Edward J. Markey, MA
Fred Upton, MI	Rick Boucher, VA
Cliff Stearns, FL	Edolphus Towns, NY
Paul E. Gillmor, OH	Frank Pallone Jr., NJ
Nathan Deal, GA	Sherrod Brown, OH
Edward Whitfield, KY	Bart Gordon, TN
Charles Norwood, GA	Bobby Rush, IL
Barbara Cubin, WY	Anna Eshoo, CA
John M. Shimkus, IL	Bart Stupak, MI
Heather A. Wilson, NM	Eliot Engel, NY
John B. Shadegg, AZ	Albert Wynn, MD
Charles Pickering Jr., MS (Vice Chair)	Gene Green, TX
Vito Fossella, NY	Ted Strickland, OH
Roy Blunt, MO	Diana L. DeGette, CO
Steve Buyer, IN	Lois Capps, CA
George P. Radanovich, CA	Mike Doyle, PA
Charles Bass, NH	Thomas H. Allen, ME
Joseph R. Pitts, PA	Jim Davis, FL
Mary Bono, CA	Janice D. Schakowsky, IL
Greg Walden, OR	Hilda L. Solis, CA
Lee Terry, NE	Charles A. Gonzalez, TX
Michael A. Ferguson, NJ	Jay Inslee, WA
Michael J. Rogers, MI	Tammy Baldwin, WI
C.L. Otter, ID	Mike Ross, AR
Sue Myrick, NC	
John Sullivan, OK	
Timothy F. Murphy, PA	
Michael C. Burgess, TX	
Marsha Blackburn, TN	

## House Budget Committee

*Jurisdiction: Annual development of the budget resolution, which establishes the overall size of the federal budget and defines the parameters for all subsequent budgetary actions. Additionally, the Budget Committee lays out how much money should be spent on broad categories of spending, such as the amount of money that will be available for all federal healthcare programs each year.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>
Jim Nussle, IA (Chairman)	John M. Spratt, Jr., SC (Ranking Member)
Rob J. Portman, OH (Vice Chair)	Dennis Moore, KS
Jim R. Ryun, KS	Richard E. Neal, MA
Ander Crenshaw, FL	Rosa DeLauro, CT
Adam Putnam, FL	Chet Edwards, TX
Roger Wicker, MS	Harold E. Ford Jr., TN
Kenny C. Hulshof, MO	Lois Capps, CA
Jo Bonner, AL	Brian Baird, WA
Scott Garrett, NJ	Jim Cooper, TN
J. Gresham Barrett, SC	Artur Davis, AL
Thaddeus G. McCotter, MI	William J. Jefferson, LA
Mario Diaz-Balart, FL	Thomas H. Allen, ME
Jeb Hensarling, FL	Ed Case, HI
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL	Cynthia McKinney, GA
Dan Lungren, CA	Henry Culler, TX
Pete Sessions, TX	Allyson Y. Schwartz, PA
Paul D. Ryan, WI	Ron J. Kind, WI
Mike Simpson, ID	
Jeb Bradley, NH	
Patrick McHenry, NC	
Connie Mack, FL	
Mike Conaway, TX	

## Senate Committee on Finance

*Jurisdiction: Similar to the House Ways & Means Committee, the Senate Finance Committee controls all revenue raising activities for the federal government (i.e. taxes), as well as oversight of Social Security, Medicare, and welfare.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>	<b>Independent</b>
Charles E. Grassley, IA (Chair)	Max Baucus, MT (Ranking Member)	James M. Jeffords, VT
Orrin G. Hatch, UT	John D. Rockefeller IV, WV	
Trent Lott, MS	Kent Conrad, ND	
Olympia J. Snowe, ME	Jeff Bingaman, NM	
Jon L. Kyl, AZ	John F. Kerry, MA	
Craig Thomas, WY	Blanche L. Lincoln, AR	
Rick Santorum, PA	Ron Wyden, OR	
Bill Frist, TN	Charles E. Schumer, NY	
Gordon Smith, OR		
Jim Bunning, KY		
Mike Crapo, ID		

## Senate Committee on Appropriations

*Jurisdiction: This Committee is the counterpart to the House Appropriations Committee. It also has broad responsibility for annually appropriating federal monies to specific programs such as the National Institutes of Health.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>
Thad Cochran, MS (Chair)	Robert C. Byrd, WV (Ranking Member)
Ted Stevens, AK	Daniel K. Inouye, HI
Arlen Specter, PA	Patrick J. Leahy, VT
Pete V. Domenici, NM	Tom Harkin, IA
Christopher S. Bond, MO	Barbara A. Mikulski, MD
Mitch McConnell, KY	Harry Reid, NV
Conrad Burns, MT	Herbert H. Kohl, WI
Richard C. Shelby, AL	Patty Murray, WA
Judd Gregg, NH	Byron L. Dorgan, ND
Robert Bennett, UT	Dianne Feinstein, CA
Larry E. Craig, ID	Richard J. Durbin, IL
Kay Bailey Hutchinson, TX	Tim Johnson, SD
Mike DeWine, OH	Mary Landrieu, LA
Sam Brownback, KS	
Wayne Allard, CO	

## Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP)

*Jurisdiction: The HELP Committee oversees measures related to wages, employment and occupational safety; private pension plans; student loans; and aging. Additionally, similar to the House Committee on Energy & Commerce, the HELP Committee has jurisdiction over public health issues. This includes its power as the authorizing Committee for the National Institutes of Health.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>	<b>Independent</b>
Michael B. Enzi, WY (Chair)	Edward M. Kennedy, MA (Ranking Member)	James M. Jeffords, VT
Judd Gregg, NH	Christopher J. Dodd, CT	
Bill Frist, TN	Tom Harkin, IA	
Lamar Alexander, TN	Barbara A. Mikulski, MD	
Richard Burr, NC	Jeff Bingaman, NM	
Johnny Isakson, GA	Patty Murray, WA	
Mike DeWine, OH	Jack Reed, RI	
John Ensign, NV	Hilary Rodham Clinton, NY	
Orrin G. Hatch, UT		
Jeff Sessions, AL		
Pat Roberts, KS		

## Senate Budget Committee

*Jurisdiction: This is the counterpart to the House Budget Committee. It develops the budget resolution each year, which establishes the overall size of the federal budget and defines the parameters for all subsequent budgetary actions. Additionally, the Budget Committee lays out how much money should be spent on broad categories of spending, such as the amount of money that will be available for all federal healthcare programs each year.*

<b>Majority Members (Republicans)</b>	<b>Minority Members (Democrats)</b>
Judd Gregg, NH (Chair)	Kent Conrad, ND (Ranking Member)
Pete V. Domenici, NM	Paul S. Sarbanes, MD
Charles E. Grassley, IA	Patty Murray, WA
Wayne Allard, CO	Ron Wyden, OR
Michael B. Enzi, WY	Russ Feingold, WI
Jeff Sessions, AL	Tim Johnson, SD
Jim Bunning, KY	Robert Byrd, WV
Mike Crapo, ID	Bill Nelson, FL
John Ensign, NV	Debbie A. Stabenow, MI
John Cornyn, TX	Jon S. Corzine, NJ
Lamar Alexander, TN	
Lindsey O. Graham, SC	

