

# 10 TIPS FOR WORKING WITH CONGRESS

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## **ASK FOR HELP.**

Federal Relations is happy to help you prepare to share your expertise with a policymaker.



## **LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND.**

Leave behind a one-page document that reiterates your points and provides contact information.



## **KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING WITH.**

Review the legislator's website and social media profiles to understand their background, community represented, committee assignments, and legislation introduced.



## **BE POLITE.**

And always say "thank you." Policymakers do not respond well to demands, rudeness, threats, or hostility—no matter what you see on cable TV.



## **KNOW WHAT YOU WANT ... AND ASK FOR IT.**

Whether it's to introduce a bill, reject an amendment, organize a hearing, hold a press conference, or write an op-ed, let them know.



## **STAY IN TOUCH.**

Send a thank-you note and provide any follow-up materials you discussed.



## **BE BRIEF AND BE CLEAR.**

Legislators are busy. Speak in lay terms, not jargon. Identify two or three easy-to-understand key points and present them quickly.



## **RESPOND QUICKLY.**

Congress expects responses in hours, not days. If someone reaches out, get back to them. Even if that means just a quick note to acknowledge their request and promise a considered response.



## **MEET THE STAFF.**

You are more likely to talk with staffers than a legislator, so get to know them. They are important—treat them as such.



## **REPEAT, REPEAT, REPEAT.**

Politely follow up often in person and via email or social media—repetition cuts through the clutter.

**Questions? Please contact us for further advice at [federal@bu.edu](mailto:federal@bu.edu).**

