

HILL VISIT PLANNING CHECKLIST

Whether you are taking meetings on your own or with a team from your state, the checklist below will help ensure you are fully prepared to share the CTE message during your visits!

Review the talking points and background info on each policy area.

Talking points are included on the NPS website to help guide your visits, and there are background resources as well to help build your knowledge. Don't feel the need to work in every talking point but choose the ones that most relate to your work and concerns.

Identify relevant information about each Member of Congress.

Make sure you know key details about the Members you are visiting, including the exact geographic area they represent, the committees they serve on and their key issues and interests. This information can usually be found on the Member's website. If you have communicated with the office in the past, review those interactions.

Ensure you are on time and abiding by all Capitol Hill safety and security requirements.

While the Capitol complex has re-opened to the public, not all entrances are always available to visitors and security lines may be long. Make sure to leave plenty of time to navigate the Capitol complex and get through security. If you do get into the building more quickly than expected, find a public space to wait in and plan to arrive in your legislator's office no more than five minutes before the start of your meeting, as Capitol Hill offices rarely have extra space to accommodate guests waiting for meetings to begin.

Select a leader for each visit.

If you are conducting visits with multiple people, a leader should be designated to kick off the meeting, facilitate introductions and ensure the dialogue covers all key topics. If possible, choose a meeting leader that is a constituent of the Member's office or that is in a statewide position of leadership.

Assign each member of the group a topic or set of discussion points to share.

Make sure speakers know what order information should be presented in but be prepared for questions during the meeting to lead in new directions. If you are on your own, outline the topics you want to cover.

Determine how to incorporate leave behinds and any other materials you will reference.

While you should leave all your materials with the Member and/or staff you meet with (and send copies electronically as follow-up), you may not have time during the meeting to review each piece in depth. Decide in advance where you would like to focus, and if there are other state or local materials in addition to ACTE-provided leave behinds you plan to share.

Note a few key statistics, data points or anecdotes you want to share during the meeting.

Prepare these personal talking points in advance so that you can easily work them into the meeting as time and conversation flow allow.

Ask questions!

ACTE Public Policy staff will be available to answer any questions you have about your visits and the key policy issues Congress is considering. E-mail publicpolicy@acteonline.org with all your Hill visit questions!