Tricks of the Trade: Preparing for a Successful Meeting

Congressional Scorecards, Hill Asks and Leave Behinds

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Congressional Scorecards,
Hill Asks & Leave Behinds

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Your Congressional Scorecard

RDLA compiles Legislative Scorecards based upon membership in the Rare Disease Congressional Caucus & action taken on rare disease legislation.

You can find the scorecards in your group folders.

Your state scorecard shows how effective your legislator has been on rare disease issues.
Your Congressional Scorecard

- Include the Scorecard in your conversation about rare disease issues.
- If your legislator has a strong score – thank them.
- If your legislator’s score is poor, ask them what their main concerns were with the legislation.
- Ask for a commitment for an improved level of support – an easy way to improve their score is to join the Rare Disease Caucus!
Things to Remember About the Scorecards

• Our goal for is to thank Members of Congress who have truly been champions for rare disease patients.

• Use your scorecard as a tool to help the rare disease community reach out to Members of Congress and educate them on bills that are important to patients.

• A legislator’s poor score is a reflection of the work we need to do as advocates to educate legislators on rare disease issues. You’ll see the scores on Members that we haven’t had meetings with are remarkably lower than the scores of members we have visited. Proof that we have and continue to make a difference on Capitol hill.
Your Hill Asks & Leave-Behinds

Principles for Health Coverage Reform

Before the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was enacted in 2010, many Americans faced challenges to access health care coverage due to various socioeconomic, economic, individual, structural, scientific, financial, and distributional factors. The ACA is the most significant health reform to become law in generations and aims to increase access to health care, reduce costs, and improve health outcomes. The ACA is a major milestone in health care reform and has been implemented through various programs and initiatives.
Your Hill Asks & Leave-Behinds

- **Be early and keep note of you are meeting.**
  - Is it a Senator? Talk about a bill in the Senate.
  - Is it a staffer? Staffers can often be more helpful since they know the issues off-hand.

- **Coordinate with your team members and be respectful.**
  - You’ll only have 2 minutes.
  - Each of you has an important story to tell. Keep yours short and pass the baton.

- **Share your personal story.**
  - Tell them why the issue is important to you.

- **You don’t have to be an expert.**
  - If you are asked a question and don’t know the answer, write it down & tell them you’ll follow up.
Your Hill Asks & Leave-Behinds

• **Be respectful.**
  • Your legislator may not be able to support a specific bill – if they say “no,” ask them to join the caucus.
  • Thank them for agreeing to meet with you.

• **Prioritize**
  • Limit to 1-2 asks, and make sure it’s something the office can actually do.

• **Remember your ask!**
  • Be specific. You want to make sure they remember.

• **Leave-Behinds**
  • Avoid leaving large packets about your disease or organization.
  • One sheet about your bill, your business card, photos... and...
• **You will be sharing a group packet.**
  • This packet includes your members of Congress’ bios and office locations.

• **Stories of patients and constituents who could not make it to DC.**
  • Patient stories are a very valuable leave behind and leave an indelible impact. Make sure to visit the other state offices in your downtime.
  • Look on the left side of your packet for a guide to the offices.
  • The patient stories are on the right side.

• **You are their voice on Capitol Hill.**
  • Remember that you are there on their behalf.

• **The location sheets are not always 100% accurate.**
  • Check office locations when you enter the building.
  • Legislators often change offices.
Need a reminder?

**RARE DISEASE WEEK**
**ON CAPITOL HILL**
**FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 2,**
**PRESENTED**

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**RDHALA**
**Rare Disease Legislative Advocates**

**CONGRESSIONAL MEETING TIPS**

- Arrive on time, not more than five minutes early.
- Share your personal story and explain why the issue is important to you.
- You don’t have to be an expert on legislation. If you are asked a question that you are not sure how to answer, write it down and promise to follow up.
- Respect a staffer’s time by limiting meetings to 20 minutes.
- Report back to RDHALA staff on how the meeting went.
- Thank each staffer for agreeing to meet with you.
- Make a specific legislative “ask”. You have to give Congress the solutions.
- Leave behind a one-pager with a summary of each issue as well as your contact information.
- It’s okay to ask for a photo with a Member of Congress. Make it a group shot and do it quickly.
- Follow up with a thank you note reiterating your ask.
Thank your Member if they are part of the Caucus.
  • (Hint: you can find out on your Scorecard!)

If they are not, ask them to join!

If you are meeting with a Senator:
  • 2015 was the first year with a bicameral Rare Disease Caucus to help elevate Congressional awareness of the rare disease community. We have since grown, but there’s still work to do!
  • In order to grow the Caucus in the Senate, we need more Senate Champions to join the Caucus. If they want to join please take note.
And remember...

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Questions?

Contact Information:

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