The Hill Nitty Gritty: Resources for a Successful Visit

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Why are you here?

• To tell your school’s story
  • Your school in their district = kind of a big deal

• To tell your story
  • Remember you are a constituent
  • You aren’t a single person
  • You matter and have a story to tell

• To show solidarity and share a common message
  • 600,000+ students, 90+ schools, entirely student run, volunteer
Resources

• Thomas.loc.gov
• GovTrack
• Congress App
• Pop Vox
  • https://www.popvox.com/orgs/nagps
Knowing Your Way Around

• When to go, how to get there
  • Tunnels
  • Senate to House side
• Do I ever get to eat?
  • Cafeterias in
    • Rayburn House Office Building in the basement
    • Cannon Café, 1st floor
    • Dirksen Senate
Making a Successful Visit

• Do your homework
  • Committees?
  • Do you know your numbers?
  • Read the leave behinds

• Arrive early
  • Be prepared for anything
A Staff Perspective

“These days we just work, work, work ... in terribly crowded and inadequate facilities with no privacy, for extremely long hours, and not knowing whether or not we can count on Congress being in session or not for Thanksgiving or Christmas holidays. These jobs are very hard on family life, and frankly, I’m getting tired of it,” one House staffer told the study’s researchers.

Congressional staffers say low pay, long hours has them eyeing new jobs
By Emily Goodin - 09/09/13 12:01 AM ET

Low pay is the leading reason congressional staffers leave their jobs, according to a new study from the Congressional Management Foundation and the Society for Human Resource Management.

The survey, which was released Monday, found that 46 percent of staffers said they would look for a new job within a year because of a “desire to earn more money.”
Making a Successful Visit

• What to expect:
  • Walking in
  • While you wait
  • from your staffer
  • during the meeting
    • Who sponsored that?
  • What committee?
Making a Successful Visit

Thank
Represent
Connect
Describe
Ask (small, big)
Thank
Funding

• **Our position:**
  - Funding for graduate education is an investment in our future
  - Funding for science, research and education has long term benefits for the economy
  - We support sustained long-term funding

• **The Personal Anecdote:**
  - Federally funded?
  - **How does your work help society, jobs, the economy, THE DISTRICT**

• **The Ask:**
  - To support graduate education through continued investment through fellowships, grants funding and investment in higher education. STEM and Humanities.
  - To continue to support social sciences funding
  - To reinstate funding for the Javits fellowship program to prior levels
Higher Education Act Reauthorization

• **Our position:**
  • Graduate students lost their federal subsidized loans in July 2012
  • Graduate student interest rate caps are now 9.5 and 10.5%- very high for students
  • Open educational resources can help reduce costs for students

• **Personal Anecdote:**
  • I have personal loans...
  • I want to pursue a career in social work, government, non-profit but at current costs...

• **Our Ask**
  • Reinstate the Stafford subsidized loan for graduate students
  • Reduce the current caps on graduate student loan rates
  • Encourage opportunities for open educational resources
Immigration

• **Our position:**
  • We have invested in international students who have contributed significantly to our nation’s wellbeing and economy. Let’s retain them.
  • Need to provide resources to allow international advanced degree students to stay here, and make visas easier
  • Provide opportunities and pathways for students that are undocumented

• **Personal Anecdote:**
  • If you are an international students
  • If you are an undocumented student
  • If your school represents a large proportion of these students

• **Our Ask:**
  • Support comprehensive immigration reform that helps graduate students that are undocumented or international students by increasing visas and green cards and providing pathways to citizenship
Open Access

- **Our position:**
  - We should best utilize the public research out there, especially in tough economic times
  - The American taxpayers have a right to the information they have funded
  - Our world and economy are better off because of open access

- **Personal Anecdote:**
  - Congressional staffers can’t get most articles
  - Have you ever needed access and couldn’t get it?
  - Medical access
  - Need for data sharing- genome project

- **Our Ask:**
  - Sponsor FASTR

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS
So remember

- You are more than yourself
- Your school matters, your story matters
- There is power in numbers
- Don’t lose sight on what brought you here: You have a story to tell
- Be professional and be thankful even if you don’t agree