Advocacy 101: Making the Most of Your Meetings with Lawmakers

1:15pm – 2:15pm

Michael Petruzzelli, National Council for Behavioral Health
Al Guida, Guide Consulting Services
Overview

- Hill Day 2019 Logistics
- Setting Expectations
- What is success?
- Crafting a Good Ask
- Answering your Questions
Thank You to our Hill Day 2019 Partners

#HillDay19
Thomas Jefferson said...

“We do not have a democracy of the majority. We have a democracy of the majority who participate.”
Hill Day: Top Things to Know

• **Hill Day State Captains**: Most states have a State Captain who is the point of contact and will coordinate Hill visits for attendees. List of Captains can be found in the App.

• **State Delegation Meet-up Breakfast | 7:45 AM Regency Ballroom**: Hill Day participants gather to get leave behind packets and discuss the meeting times for the day. All Hill Day attendees are **strongly encouraged** to attend this breakfast.

  *Hill Day Sendoff with Special Guest*
  8:45 AM: Congressman Markwayne Mullin (R-OK)

• **Hill Day materials** will be handed out at the Wednesday Meet-up Breakfast at 7:45 AM.
Getting Around on Capitol Hill
What to Expect on Capitol Hill

- Who will I be meeting with?
- How much knowledge will the staff member have about my issue?
- How do I run a successful meeting?
- What type of information is helpful?
Know Your Audience
Who are you meeting with?

• What do they care about?
• What are their goals?
• What do they know? What are their pre-existing biases?
• What constraints might they have?
• What can you accomplish together?
Influencing Legislators’ Decisions
How influential are...?

If your Member/Senator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, how much influence might the following advocacy strategies directed to the Washington office have on his/her decision?

- In-Person Issue Visits from Constituents: 94%
- Contact from Constituents’ Reps: 94%
- Individualized Email Messages: 92%
- Individualized Postal Letters: 88%
- Local Editorial Referencing Issue Pending: 87%
- Comments During Telephone Town Hall: 87%
- Phone Calls: 84%
- Letter to the Editor Referencing Your Boss: 84%
- Visit From a Lobbyist: 83%
- Form Email Messages: 56%

(n = 190-192)
Source: Congressional Management Foundation 2015 survey of congressional staff, including Chiefs of Staff, Communications Directors, Legislative Directors, and Legislative Assistants.
In the past year, have you...?

- Written or called any politician at the state, local, or national level:
  - General Public: 14%
  - Lobbyists: 100%
- Been an active member of any group that tries to influence public policy or the government:
  - General Public: 9%
  - Lobbyists: 100%
- Attended a political rally, speech, or organized protest of any kind:
  - General Public: 48%
  - Lobbyists: 100%
# Congressional Staff Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief of Staff</td>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>6 Years</td>
<td>45% Post-Grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Director</td>
<td>25-40</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>40% Post-Grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Assistant</td>
<td>20-35</td>
<td>3 Years</td>
<td>25% Post-Grad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduler</td>
<td>20-40</td>
<td>5 Years</td>
<td>6% Post-Grad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Good ideas don’t speak for themselves

- Different audiences have different agendas
  - Economic impact
  - Managing their own organization’s budget
  - Promoting a different aspect of health
  - Promoting an agenda unrelated to health
  - And more...

“It’s not what you say, it’s what people hear.”
Tips to Run a Successful Meeting?
Figure Out the Human Element

• Why must your problem be solved?
• What impact is it having on the community?
  – Can you quantify the impact?
• What one story can you tell as an example?
• How will your solution solve the problem?
What does success look like?

• What expectations should I have for my meeting?

• What if my legislator already cosponsors the bill...what else can I ask for?

• How do we approach meetings with legislators who have not historically supported these issues?
Preparation prior to making contact

• Learn about the elected officials you will be meeting:
  ✓ Do they support and value mental health and substance abuse treatment?
  ✓ What are their key issues/interests?
  ✓ Have they sponsored/supported any behavioral health initiatives in the past?

• Memorize your elevator speech
  ✓ We serve ___ people in ____ counties in your district. We employ ___ people and bring $___ into your district. Our ask is ______________.
Most powerful person in the Free World...
Questions?

We look forward to seeing you at the Hill Day State Delegation Meet-up Breakfast!

When: Wednesday, September 18 at 7:45 AM

Where: Regency Ballroom

Special Guest: Rep. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) at 8:45 AM