Meeting with Your Legislator – A Guide to Your Congressional Visit

Meeting with your Congressional delegation is vital to ensure they understand key workforce training issues in their state and across the country. Even if you are not an expert on legislative issues, or have never talked to an elected official, you can still hold an effective meeting with your Senators and Representatives and/or their staff. By making an introduction and leaving behind information, you are taking the first step in developing a very important relationship.

Before the Meeting
Which other stakeholders needs to be there. It is great to get a cross-section of partners together. If you are a WDB, consider including WDB Board Members, community-based organizations, government partners, and labor unions.
If possible, invite an employer and/or an employee who received training to share their success story. Members of Congress rely on hearing directly from their constituents.
Prepare for your meeting. Take a moment to review NAWB’s Policy Priorities and gather relevant data from your WDB. Be prepared to talk about the impact your WDB has on your community and your state.

Meeting Day
Be prepared, be on time, and be flexible. Most meetings last about 15 minutes, but be shorter or longer depending on the schedule of the office.
Here is a sample meeting agenda you may find helpful:
- Introduce yourself, your WDB, why you are in town, and where you are located. Share NAWB’s Policy Priorities one-pager with the legislator/staff
- Using materials from your organization, discuss the important role your WDB plays in workforce development and skills training.
- Ask for District office contacts so you can establish a relationship at home as well as in Washington, DC.
  Do not worry about covering every point. The most important part is educating your legislator/staff about your program, its effectiveness, successes, and challenges.
Offer to serve as a resource. Ask how you and your organization can be helpful in the future.

After the Meeting
Thank the legislator/staff with an email promptly after your meeting. If you took a picture, send a tweet with a thank you message or post on your Facebook/website; tag your legislator in the photo.
Reiterate your request to establish a relationship at the District office.
Add the legislator/staff to your newsletter and be sure to invite to your next event.