

# FPC Webinar Agenda



**NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
REALTORS®**

- Welcome – Victoria Givens, NAR
- Legislative Update – Joe Harris, NAR
- Training Session – Jordan Davis, CMF
- Q&A

# Connecting the Dots with Policymakers

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*Jordan N. Davis*  
*VP Communications & Programming*



CONGRESSIONAL  
MANAGEMENT  
FOUNDATION

# Today's Training

- Importance of Researching Policymakers
- Connecting the Dots Between You, Your Issue, & Policymakers
- Connecting the Dots in Your Network



# Researching Policymakers



# Congressional Insight



“It’s disappointing when constituents and/or lobbyists come in for meetings and **they are clueless about the Congressman**, the district, and committee assignments.”

-House Chief of Staff



# Building a Legislator Profile

## Research your Members and Senators:

- Build a profile to better understand the policymaker(s) you intend to interact with
- Create a system for collecting and sharing this data within your group or among your fellow advocates



# Example Elements of a Legislator Profile

## Legislative

- District Dynamics
- Political Party
- Committees
- Leadership
- Champion Issues
- Voting History
- Sponsor/Cosponsor

## Relational

- Key Staff
- Friends
- Family
- Caucus Membership
- Legislative “Buddies”

## Personal

- Previous Profession
- College
- Clubs/Groups/Civic Orgs
- Interests/Hobbies

# Don't forget about Staff

## Get to Know the Staff and their Roles

- Chief of Staff
- Communications Director
- Scheduler
- Legislative Director
- Legislative Assistant
- Legislative Correspondent
- Staff Assistant
- Intern
- District/State Director
- Field Representative
- Caseworker

Who handles your issue?

Who has the policymaker's ear?

Who can get you a meeting?

Would a staff level meeting be just as effective?

Always keep in mind: Congressional offices are really **535 unique small businesses**, so each office's approach may be different





# Connecting the Dots Between You, Your Issue, & Policymakers



Connecting the Dots with Policymakers

# Congressional Insight



*“How frequently do you  
experience the following in  
constituent meetings?”*

# 87%

of Legislative Staff say constituents frequently did not know the policymaker’s history on a policy/issue.



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# Congressional Insight



“...be informed about the member’s record. Frequently, constituent groups come into DC **meetings asking the member to take an action that he’s already taken.**”

-House Legislative Staffer



# Analyzing the Current Relationship

It's important to know where you're starting so that a relationship can be built and strengthened over time.

- Policymaker's familiarity with your issue?
- Policymaker's personal connection to your issue?
- Policymaker's familiarity with your organization?
- Have you or someone from your organization ever met with the policymaker or their staff before?
  - If so, when did your last interaction occur?
  - What was the result or takeaway from your last interaction?

# Congressional Insight



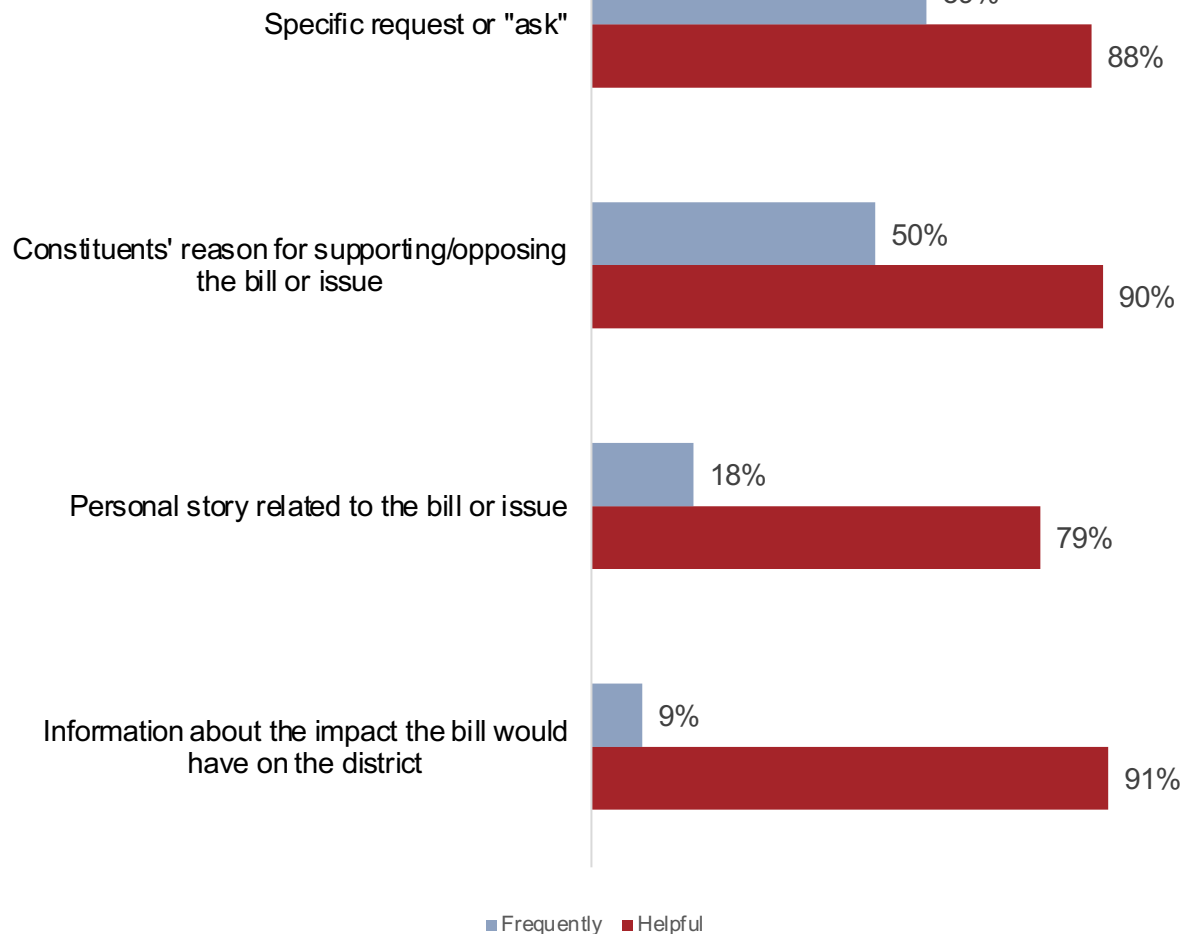
*“How helpful is it for messages from constituents to include the following?”*

*Vs.*

*“How frequently do messages from constituents include the following?”*



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# Congressional Insight



*“How frequently do you  
experience the following in  
constituent meetings?”*

# 90%

of Legislative Staff say constituents frequently do not have data on the impact of a policy/issue on the district/State.



Connecting the Dots with Policymakers

# Making Relevant Connections

## Consider Connection to the State/District

- Number of employees/patients/members
- Economic impact to the State/District
- Benefits or concerns to constituents
- Other members of the delegation support/opposed

## Consider Connection to Policymaker's Work, Position, or Legislative History

- Previous action on your issue
- Committee jurisdiction or policy relevance
- Relationship to other relevant supporters/opposers of your issue



# Connecting the Dots in Your Network



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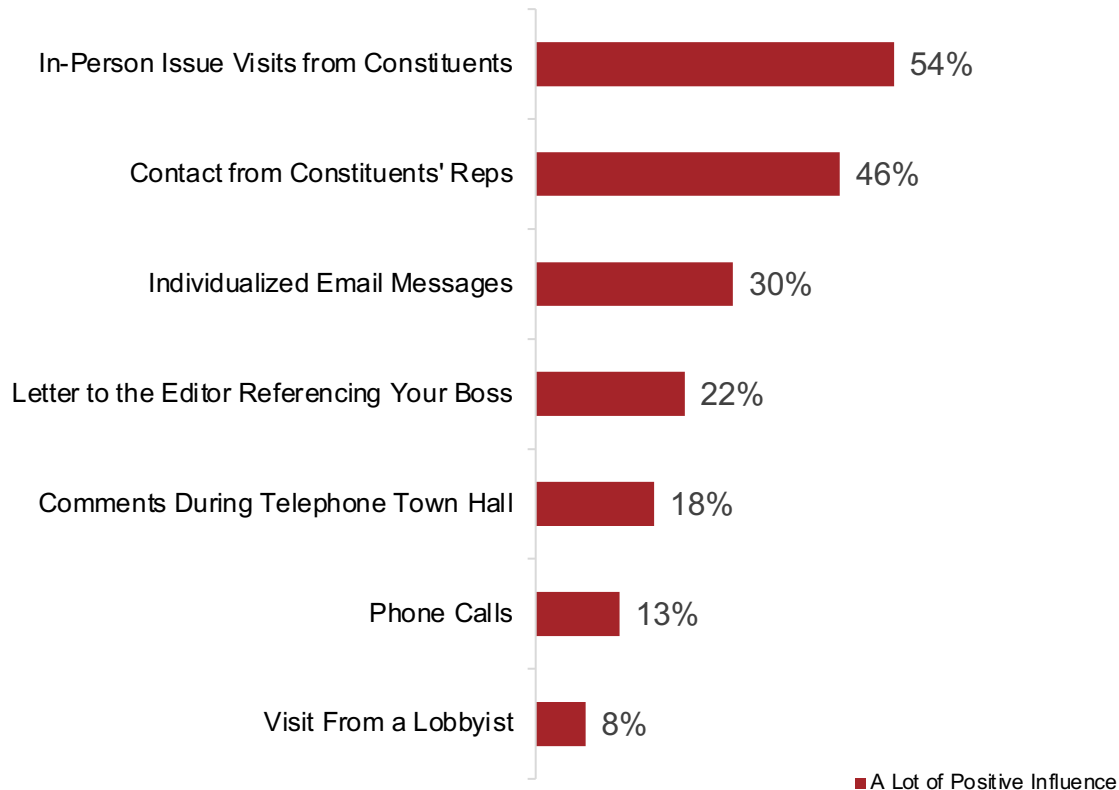
# Congressional Insight



*“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 your office have on their decision?”*



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# Congressional Insight



“In person meetings are the easiest way for staff to understand an issue because it gives us the chance to ask questions and **put a face with the issue/ask.**”

-House Legislative Assistant



# What we've heard



*“Humanization of policy is always good...”*



Former Long-Time House Chief of Staff



Connecting the Dots with Policymakers

# Engage your Network to Find Relevant Personal Stories

Bring your issue to life for policymakers and staff by putting a human face to the issue

- Identify potential individuals from within your personal network or organization
- Evaluate individuals and their potential impact
  - Connected to the district or state
  - Experience with the issue or experience *from* the issue
  - Skills as a communicator
  - Previous connection or interaction with policymaker or staff?
  - How much are they willing to do?
- Collect relevant information and verify the details
- Clarify with individual how stories will be used; or have them join you!
- Use stories to drive the connection between the policy and the people



# Bringing it All Together



# What Policymakers Want to Know

Be Prepared to Have Answers to These Baseline Questions:

- What specific action do you want me to take?
- Why would my constituents want me to do that?
- What are the impacts on my state or district?
- What are my constituents' personal stories or connections to the policy?
- Who else is supporting/opposing this policy or action?



# Connecting the Dots to Tell Your Story

Provide Context

“In our community there are...”

Explain the Need

“If x happens, then y...”

Add Details

“This is how this issue is impacting me...”

“A family I work with in our district is having this experience...”

Make The Ask /  
Thank for Acting

“We can fix this problem and make things better, if...”

“Thank you all you’ve already done, please continue to be a champion for...”



# What we've heard



*“When they come in prepared...[with] a story...it really does make an impact.”*



Former Deputy House Chief of Staff/Scheduler



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# Q & A



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# Next Webinar

March 19, 2025 | 3pm ET

“What to Do Before, During, and After Hill Meetings”



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# Thank You



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