

ENGAGING LAWMAKERS AT TOWN HALL MEETINGS

A key element of advocacy is the town hall meeting. When Congress goes on recess in August, many members of Congress host or speak at town hall-style meetings and other events in their states and districts. Normally about 20 to 40 constituents attend the average town hall meeting held by a House member.

A town hall meeting provides an opportunity for you to communicate directly with your members of Congress and learn their concerns, engage on issues of the day and ask them important questions. The best political education many lawmakers get is when they travel off "the Hill" and attend town hall meetings.

Surveys of congressional staff confirm town hall meetings' value. A survey of more than 200 senior congressional staff asked: "In your opinion, how important is each for understanding constituents' views and opinions?" Near the top of the list, **82 percent of staff noted that "in-person town hall meetings" would be somewhat or very important.**

Here is a top ten list for how to engage lawmakers at Town Hall Meetings:

1. BE PREPARED

Most people don't approach their Member of Congress with a well-researched, well-rehearsed pitch. They just say what they think – which has value. But **those that come to town hall meetings with thoughtful arguments, good data, and persuasive stories are more likely to be remembered.**

2. TELL A PERSONAL STORY

This is why Members of Congress hold town hall meetings – to get first-hand accounts of the impact of policies on their constituents. **Think in advance of how a policy might affect you, your family, your business, or your community.** Whether the congressman supports you or not, they want to hear your story.

3. USE NUMBERS IF YOU HAVE THEM

Politicians live for one thing: 50% plus 1. This keeps them re-elected and in a job. Nearly every person to come before a Member of Congress represents other constituents, either by a class or as a spokesperson. Use those numbers. "The county Farm Bureau has 175 members," "There are 500 people in my community that think just like me." The legislator is trying to do the math the minute you stand up – so make it easy!

4. BE RESPECTFUL

You'd be surprised how many people start a conversation with, "I pay your salary, so you'd better listen to me." It doesn't matter if you're talking to your grocer or a public

official — starting any conversation with another person in a rude manner is no way to persuade them. **Members of Congress want to hear your views. You don't need to badger them to get your message through.**

5. GO IN GROUPS

Nothing says "listen to me" to a public official like a group of like-minded constituents. **A chorus is better than a solo performance.** Said another way, without friends, you risk looking like the "loner" that sometimes dominates the meeting.

6. TALK TO STAFF

Every representative brings staff to town hall meetings. They may seem to blend into the woodwork, but a sharp citizen seeks them out. Talk to them before the meeting; get their business card; tell them your story (as well as asking a public question at the meeting). Nearly all congressional town hall meetings are attended by a senior staffer in the office, the State Director or District Director. This is a rich opportunity to build a relationship with someone who has their ear.

7. LEAVE PAPER

Town hall meetings are usually staffed by district-office staff who do not deal with legislative issues on a daily basis. If you leave background memos or talking points, they'll likely be shared with the Washington office and the legislative assistant who covers your issue.

8. FOLLOW-UP POLITELY

Politely persistent people persuade politicians. Congressional offices are harried, so they often respond to the squeaky wheel, the one who follows up with a phone call after attending a town hall meeting.

9. DEMONSTRATE YOU'RE NOT GOING AWAY

If you continue to show your presence at town hall meetings, the legislator must deal with you...if only to avoid an uncomfortable encounter at a future town hall meeting.

10. USE OTHER MEANS TO COMMUNICATE

The town hall meeting is only one way available to citizens to build relationships with lawmakers – and **the key to any long-term strategy is relationship building.**

The list of congressional town hall meetings is in states which are vital to agricultural trade. Please consider visiting one of these town hall meetings.

Georgia

Senator Johnny Isakson

Representative holds telephone town halls, confirm with office about schedule and participating:

Representative David Scott (GA-13)

Congressman David Scott's 14th Annual Health Fair
Saturday, August 11, 2018 at 9:00 AM
Mundy's Mill High School
9652 GA-54, Jonesboro, GA 30238

Illinois

Senator Tammy Duckworth

South Chicagoland Small Business Workshop
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 11 AM
Olive-Harvey College
10001 S Woodlawn Ave
Chicago, IL 60628

Representative Robin Kelly (IL-2)

South Chicagoland Small Business Workshop
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 11 AM
Olive-Harvey College
10001 S Woodlawn Ave
Chicago, IL 60628

Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi (IL-8)

Public Discussion of School Safety and Gun Violence Prevention
Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Beth Tikvah Congrtn
300 Hillcrest Blvd, Hoffman Estates, Illinois 60169

Climate Change Round Table with WGN Meteorologist Tom Skilling
Saturday, August 11, 2018 at 1:00 PM
Schaumburg Township District Library
130 S Roselle Rd, Schaumburg, Illinois 60193

Representative Bradley Scott Schneider (IL-10)

Health & Wellness Fair hosted by Rep. Brad Schneider
Saturday, August 11, 2018 at 9:00 AM
Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Episcopal Church
2415 N Butrick St
Waukegan, IL 60087

Consumer Protection Event hosted by Rep. Brad Schneider
Thursday, August 23, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Northbrook Senior Center
3323 Walters Avenue
Northbrook, IL 60062

Rep. Schneider hosts an Alzheimer's Awareness Information Panel
Monday, August 27, 2018 at 6:00 PM
College of Lake County, Southlake Campus - V336
1120 S Milwaukee Ave
Vernon Hills, IL 60061

Representative Bill Foster (IL-11)

Immigration & Our Community Forum
Saturday, August 4, 2018 at 10 AM
Prisco Community Center
150 W Illinois Ave
Aurora, IL 60506

Representative Mike Bost (IL-12)

Representative holds telephone town halls, confirm with office about schedule and participating:
<https://bost.house.gov/participate>

Representative Rodney Davis (IL-13)

Representative holds telephone town halls, confirm with office about schedule and participating:
<https://rodneydavis.house.gov/constituent-services/teletown-hall.htm>

Congressional Candidate Betsy Londrigan (IL-13)

Town Hall
Monday, August 20, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Garden Room, Monticello Community Building
201 N State St
Monticello, Illinois 61856

Representative Darrin LaHood (IL-18)

Veterans' Town Hall
Friday, August 24, 2018 at 2 PM
Moyer District Library
618 S Sangamon Ave
Gibson City, IL 60936

Indiana

Representative Todd Rokita (IN-4)

Opioid Abuse Epidemic Resource Fair
Saturday, August 18, 2018 at 10 AM
Hendricks County Fairgrounds: Hendricks Power Exposition Hall
1900 E Main St
Danville, IN 46122

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Iowa

Senator Chuck Grassley

Palo Alto County Meeting
Monday, August 6, 2018 at 10:15 AM
Palo Alto County Courthouse
1010 Broadway St
Emmetsburg, IA 50536

Audubon County Town Meeting
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 3:30 PM
Audubon County Economic Development
Corporation
800 Market St
Audubon, IA 50025

Adams County Town Meeting
Thursday, August 9, 2018 at 3:45 PM
Corning Opera House
800 Davis Ave
Corning, IA 50841

Kentucky

Representative James Comer (KY-1)

Russell County Town Hall
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 10 AM
Lake Cumberland Area Development District
2384 Lakeway Dr
Russell Springs, KY 42642

Casey County Town Hall
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 5:00 PM
Casey County Courthouse
231 Court House Square
Liberty, KY 42539

Dale Hollow Area Town Hall
Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 2 PM
Dale Hollow State Resort Park
5970 State Park Rd
Burkesville, KY 42717

Logan County Town Hall
Wednesday, August 15, 2018 at 5 PM
Logan Co. Career and Technical Center
2400 Bowling Green Rd
Russellville, KY 42276

Michigan

Representative Brenda Lawrence (MI-14)

Conversation with the Congresswoman
Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at 10:30 AM
Grosse Pointe Woods Library
20680 Mack Avenue
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236

Missouri

Did not find any scheduled town hall or similar events for August 2018

Nebraska

Representative Adrian Smith (NE-3)

Representative Smith holds telephone town halls, confirm with office about schedule and participating: <https://adriansmith.house.gov/media-center/telephone-town-halls>

North Carolina

Representative Patrick McHenry (NC-10)

Gaston County Town Hall
Monday, August 6, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Gaston County Courthouse, Gaston County
Commissioners Chambers
325 Dr M.L.K. Jr. Way
Gastonia, NC 28052

Cleveland County Town Hall
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 at 2:00 PM
The Don Gibson Theater
318 S Washington St
Shelby, NC 28150

Polk/Rutherford County Town Hall
Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Cool Springs Administrative Building Rutherford,
County School Board Chambers
382 W Main St
Forest City, NC 28043

Representative Mark Meadows (NC-11)

Veterans' Solutions Seminar
Thursday, August 9, 2018 at 2:00 PM
Caldwell County Health and Human Services
Building (Tammy Austin Conference Room)
2345 Morganton Boulevard
Lenoir, NC 28645

Veterans' Solutions Seminar
Friday, August 10, 2018 at 8:30 AM
Haywood Senior Center
81 Elmwood Way
Waynesville, NC 28786

Veterans' Solutions Seminar
Friday, August 10, 2018 at 2:00 PM
Fletcher Town Hall
300 Old Cane Creek Road
Fletcher, NC 28732

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Representative Alma Adams (NC-12)

Merge Mobility Community Conversation
Wednesday, August 8, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Weeping Willow AME Zion Church
2220 Milton Rd
Charlotte, NC 28215

Representative James Renacci (OH-16)

Opioid Action Panel
Monday, August 6, 2018 at 4:00 PM
Parma District Office
7335 Ridge Rd
Parma, OH 44129

Ohio

Representative David Joyce (OH-14)

Representative holds telephone town halls,
confirm with office about schedule and
participating:
<https://joyce.house.gov/join-my-teletown-halls/>

***Congressional Candidate Vanessa Enoch
(Running for OH-8)***

Meet and Greet with Dr. Vanessa Enoch
Monday, August 6, 2018 at 6:00 PM
Troy-Hayner Cultural Center
301 W Main St
Troy, OH 45373

Healthcare Town Hall
Wednesday, August 15, 2018 at 7:00 PM
Butler Tech
3603 Hamilton Middletown Rd
Hamilton, OH 45011

Healthcare Townhall
Thursday, August 30, 2018 at 7:00 PM
Edison State Community College
1973 Edison Dr
Piqua, OH 45356

Pennsylvania

Did not find any scheduled town hall or similar
events for August 2018

Tennessee

Representative David (Phil) Roe (TN-1)

Tele-Town Hall
Monday, August 6, 2018 at 5:15 PM
Sign up here:
https://vekeo.com/events_categories/government/

Wisconsin

Did not find any scheduled town hall or similar
events for August 2018