

# MENTOR

CAPITOL HILL DAY

# Icebreaker

Share in the chat:

- Name
- Organization
- Location
- Who is your dream dinner guest?



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# Check in to become an Agent of Change

- MENTOR is launching a new grassroots advocacy program this spring
  - Advocates get points for taking action
- To check in and earn points, in your web browser, go to [mentoring.org/advocacy](https://mentoring.org/advocacy) or use the link in the chat



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# National Mentoring Month Video



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Abbie Evans (she/her)



Caden Fabbi (he/him)

## MENTOR National's Government Relations Team - 2024



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# Capitol Hill Day Overview



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# What to Expect – Before Next Week

- Participants should be receiving weekly communications from their state captain (MENTOR Affiliate rep or MENTOR Government Relations team member)
  - Check Capitol Hill Day webpage for additional updates (<https://www.mentoring.org/capitol-hill-day/>)
  - Advocates are encouraged to organize a virtual networking session with other advocates from your state
- MENTOR is scheduling all Congressional appointments
  - Instructions to access personal appointment schedule will be sent via email from *Advocacy Associates* in the days prior to the event



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# What to Expect – In-Person Training, Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup>

- *This training is for all Hill Day participants and is required for participation in the event*
- The training will help prepare all participants to hold successful Congressional meetings on Wednesday
- Participants will be seated with other advocates from their state
- The agenda will include workshops on message development and legislative asks, meeting practice, networking/planning with other advocates in your meetings, and a little inspiration from young people
- Snacks will be provided
- It will be fun. 😊



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# Capitol Hill Day Agenda

- 8:00 AM First buses depart outside the hotel
- 10 AM Capitol Hill Day kick-off
- 11AM – 4PM Scheduled Congressional Meetings
- 4-6 PM Welcome Reception



# Security on Capitol Hill

- Visible police presence
- Similar to airport security (and restrictions)
  - Pass through metal detector
  - Wand may be used
  - Bags scanned and searched
- Delays possible!



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## Additional Logistics

- A chartered bus will take you to Capitol Hill from the Westin
- Light breakfast will be provided at the Capitol Hill Day Kick-off
- You will have to get yourself back after your meetings (rideshare and public transportation are accessible, easy options)
- MENTOR will provide a Capitol Hill Day t-shirt – wear comfortable shoes and business-y clothing!



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# Capitol Hill Day 2024

- 385 advocates from 42 states!
- Sectors represented:
  - Nationally and regionally affiliated mentoring organizations
  - Faith-based programs
  - Educators and other school staff (K-12, higher ed)
  - Researchers
  - Law enforcement
  - Corporate and foundation partners
  - Programs serving targeted youth populations (Indigenous youth, foster youth, etc.)
  - Juvenile justice advocates and professionals
  - Youth sports programs



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# Why We Advocate



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# What words come to mind when you hear “advocacy?”

Respond at Menti.com,  
enter the code 3539 9533



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# What is Advocacy?

- Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions.
- Advocating happens on different levels. You can advocate in schools, public settings, and even from your home.
- People can advocate for other people (individuals or groups), animals, natural resources, businesses...anything they care about!

**Advocacy is how we enact social change.**

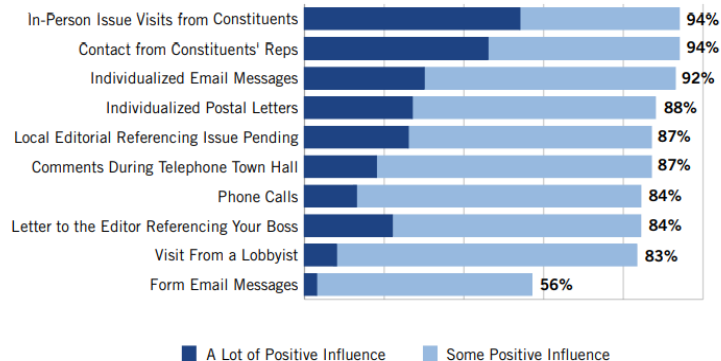


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# Direct constituent interactions have more influence than other advocacy strategies.

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?



(n = 190-192)

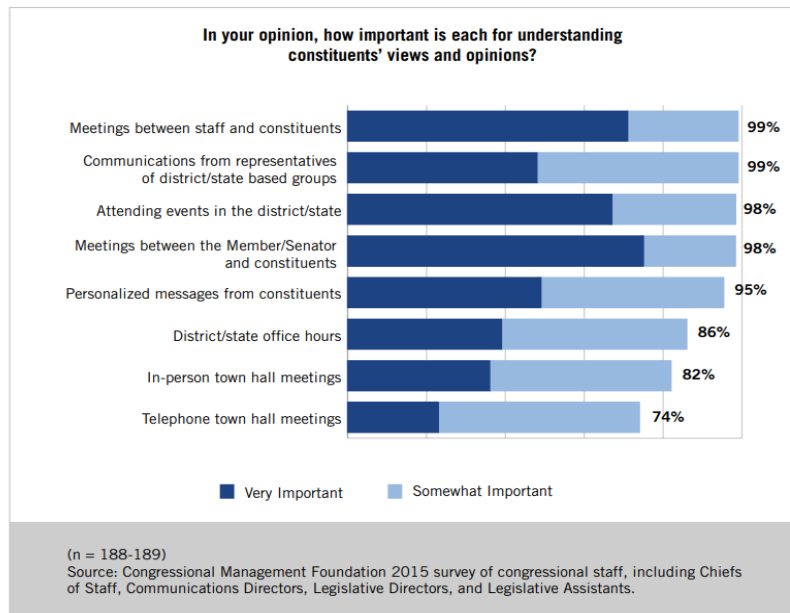
Source: Congressional Management Foundation 2015 survey of congressional staff, including Chiefs of Staff, Communications Directors, Legislative Directors, and Legislative Assistants.



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# What you're doing next week will make a difference.



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# Organizations and Movements that do Grassroots Advocacy well



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# Grassroots Advocacy

- Grassroots advocacy happens when people use strategic tactics to educate and persuade decisionmakers on the issues they care about
- The work can be done by organizations, campaigns, and concerned citizens

**Grassroots advocacy is what you're doing on Capitol Hill Day!**



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# How Does Grassroots Advocacy Influence Institutions?

- It is the duty of elected officials to listen to their constituents and address their concerns
  - Powerful motivators: reelection, recognition, and influence
- Effective grassroots advocacy can wield as much influence as the biggest corporation



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# Nuts & Bolts of a Congressional Meeting



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# Goals for successful meetings

1. Strengthen or establish relationships
2. Educate Members of Congress and staff
3. Ask for and determine their level of support for key policies and issues



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# Before your meetings...

- Do your research!
- Look over relevant documents and talking points
- Make a plan with your teammates
- Check in to your meeting early, if possible



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# During your meetings...

- Introduce yourselves
- Don't shy away from chit chat but be mindful of time
- Make your pitch and tell your story
- Carefully listen to how the staff/legislator responds; take notes
- Get a commitment when possible
- Promise to follow up with your contact information and materials
- Allow time for questions (both directions)

**Don't forget to take a photo!**



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# After your meetings...

- Send a thank you note to the Member or staff via the app
  - Personalize it!
  - At least one per team
- Post on social media
- Follow up immediately after meeting with any promised information
  - Again 2-3 weeks after that to check in on commitments

***and, most importantly...***



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# Feedback – it's really important!

- We require at least one feedback survey form from each Congressional meeting
- Be as detailed as possible!
- Please use the feedback form provided in the app – you can find it in the same place where your meeting information is stored
- Provide useful feedback:
  - “Meeting went well” is less helpful than “Staffer expressed interest in...”



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# App Schedules and Logistics Overview



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# Q+A with Congressional Staff



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# Preparing for the Big Day



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# Using what you Learned Today for Success on Capitol Hill Day

- Review asks
  - Youth Mentoring Grant, Foster Youth Mentoring Act, Youth Workforce Readiness Act Mentoring to Succeed Act, Transition to Success Mentoring Act, National Mentoring Month Resolution, Youth Mentoring Caucus
  - We'll cover these in depth at the in-person training – don't freak out about not knowing bill specifics!
- Prepare program information to share with congressional offices
  - Number of youth served, outcomes, focus of work, goals and deliverables, etc.



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# Preparing for Capitol Hill Day

- Keep your eye out for an e-mail from Advocacy Associates to log in to the app and access your schedule
  - Summit app is DIFFERENT than the Capitol Hill Day web-based app
- Consider organizing a virtual networking session with other advocates from your state



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# Q&A!



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