



# **American Ambulance Association**

## **Legislative Advocacy Handbook**

**LEADING THE WAY TO SUCCESS  
ON CAPITOL HILL**

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**Dear Ambulance Service Professional:**

As part of our ongoing effort to serve the needs of our members, the American Ambulance Association (AAA) has revised this handbook for grassroots legislative advocacy. Filled with practical tips on how to become a successful advocate, we have designed this information to help ambulance service professionals make the greatest impact on federal legislation that affects the services we provide America's communities.

The opportunity to involve oneself in legislative decision-making is a privilege enjoyed in only a few nations of the world. By becoming an active grassroots participant, you will help pass laws that ensure our industry's prominent role in the redesign of the nation's emergency medical services (EMS) and public health care system. You will also be assisting in the effort to assure that government regulations support the evolution of a vibrant and sustainable ambulance industry.

***In order for favorable federal legislation to pass, each of us must generate support in our local community.***

We hope you will use this information to communicate with lawmakers, engage others in your efforts, and create more awareness in our communities about the challenges facing our industry. Our collective effort to provide solutions to these challenges will have a profound impact on the continued health and prosperity of millions of Americans.

Thank you for getting involved in the AAA's effort to improve the services the ambulance industry provides America's communities. We appreciate your commitment to leading the way to success on Capitol Hill. We also hope that you make political action part of your organization's business plan and part of the job description of key managers of your service.

**Mike Hall, President  
American Ambulance Association**

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## **INTRODUCTION: Why Advocacy is Important**

**“Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”**

**- First Amendment of the  
Constitution of the United States**

Our nation sprung from the courageous efforts of advocates. Sparked by an unwillingness to live without certain freedoms and blessed with community leaders willing to break the bonds of convention, our founding fathers waged a massive advocacy campaign that assembled citizens behind a common cause. Their advocacy efforts resulted in an entirely new system of government and a radical new way of living based on the philosophies of freedom and choice.

The AAA’s *Legislative Advocacy Handbook: Leading the Way to Success on Capitol Hill* is designed to teach and inspire you to also be an effective advocate.

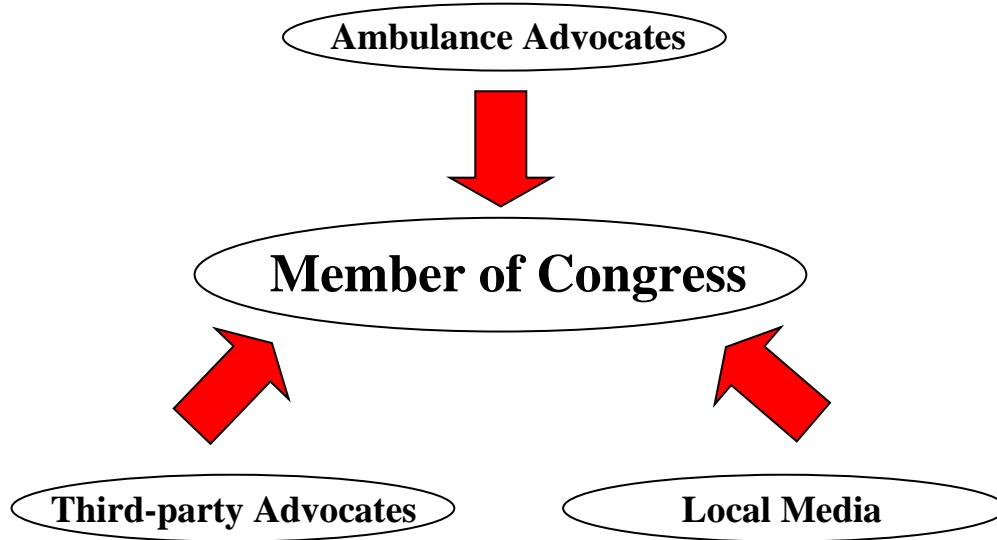
Filled with practical tips on how to become a successful advocate, the AAA has designed this information to help ambulance services make the greatest impact on the federal legislative process and, ultimately, assure that federal laws allow the industry to continue to provide the best ambulance services in America’s communities.

### **Forces Influencing Members of Congress**

The three groups of individuals with the potential to influence the actions of members of Congress related to ambulance issues are:

- **Ambulance Advocates**—Ambulance executives, managers, employees and organizations familiar with ambulance issues and who are able to take immediate action to influence lawmakers. Ambulance advocates make direct contact with the member of Congress through personal meetings, phone calls, letters, emails, and faxes.
- **Third-Party Advocates**—Individuals, organizations and the public-at-large who are constituents of the member of Congress and are urged to take action to influence lawmakers. Third party advocates support issues affecting their community by contacting a member of Congress through phone calls, emails, letters, and faxes.
- **Local Media**—Newspapers, television news, radio news and business journals that report current news events and information about issues that affect the local community. The local media highlights community issues through news articles,

news broadcasts and editorials, with potential to generate public support for solutions.



This grassroots roadmap will teach you how to implement key strategies to help you win your issue on Capitol Hill. You will be provided with step-by-step instructions to plan activities to support your issues, develop a relationship with your members of Congress and to provide information to the entities that influence members of Congress.

Those who do not engage in the political process send the message that they approve of the status quo. When every ambulance provider in America reaches out to their elected Congressional representative (House and Senate) and educates him or her about ambulance issues, our collective efforts on Capitol Hill will achieve the following results that benefit ambulance providers nationwide:

- Creates or maintains a favorable business environment
- Enhances a lawmaker's opinion of our industry
- Minimizes unfavorable legislation
- Establishes contacts within government before a crisis arises

Effective legislative advocacy, or lobbying, will produce these benefits for your local operation as well:

- **Local field and management personnel** are more politically aware and involved in community activities
- **Local and state officials** understand the issues that are beyond local control and support federal advocacy efforts

- Relationships with **local community leaders** build opportunities to ask for support as “third party advocates”
- The **local public** is better informed about quality and efficient ambulance services
- **Local media** is educated about the issues affecting ambulance services in the community

We know that time is precious. However, we project that you will invest just 3 to 6 hours per year to become politically active with your members of Congress. This includes contacting by letter or telephone your member of Congress approximately six times per year on issues; and making personal contacts approximately once per month at a community event or activity.

While lobbying a member of Congress can appear to be overwhelming, taking the time to place a call or schedule a meeting will pay off for your operation. Inaction will not. The most difficult and critical task is devoting time to the issue.

For questions about this guide, contact the AAA headquarters at 1-800-523-4447. To learn more about the AAA and its advocacy efforts go to [www.the-aaa.org](http://www.the-aaa.org).

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **How a Bill Becomes Law**

#### **Bill Drafting and Introduction**

Only members of Congress may propose or sponsor a new law. Ideas for laws can come from citizens, interest groups, or public officials such as a Governor. The ideas for new laws are then drafted as bills and filed with the clerk of the House and/or the Senate who assigns the bill number. The bill is formally introduced when the clerk of the chamber of origin reads aloud the bill's number, sponsor and title on the floor during a legislative session. Bill sponsors will seek support for their legislation from other members of Congress by asking them to become a "co-sponsor" of their legislation. In keeping with a "bicameral" or two chamber legislature, frequently a "companion" bill will be introduced in the opposite chamber.

#### **Debate in Committee**

The bill is then sent to the committee that has policy-making authority to make any changes or additions in the form of amendments. This is called the "mark-up" process. After debate, members will vote on the bill to pass it out of their committee. If the majority votes against the bill, it is reported "unfavorably" out of committee and is considered "dead." If the majority votes in favor of the bill, it will be reported "favorably" and sent back to the floor for consideration by the entire chamber.

#### **Full Chamber Debate**

Once the committee of jurisdiction approves the bill, it will be formally read to the full chamber and opened for debate and voting. Because of strict governing rules, it is very difficult to amend a bill on the House floor. By limiting debate, the House floor process is more efficient than that of the Senate. The House spends several hours to consider a typical bill and up to three days for a major bill. Any Senator may offer an amendment on the Senate floor, often resulting in a much slower and deliberate legislative process than that of the House. It is common for a major bill in the Senate to contain more than one hundred amendments. The Senate will debate a typical bill for one or two days and as long as a week or more for a major bill.

When bills are debated on the floor, they are subject to a multitude of tactics employed by members of both houses to delay or prevent a vote on a bill. The most common of these is called a "filibuster" and is most frequently used in the Senate where parliamentary rules are less stringent than in the House. Members who are in the minority or people who oppose the passage of the bill can use time-delaying tactics in an attempt to symbolize their opposition or draw out more debate. The stricter rules used by the House make filibusters more difficult, but delaying tactics are employed occasionally through various procedural devices allowed by House rules.

### **Conference Committee**

Once the bill has passed both the House and the Senate, it is then ready to be “conferenced” with its counterpart in the other chamber. A conference committee consisting of members of Congress from both chambers will be assigned to work out any differences between the House and Senate versions resulting in agreement on the final version. This final bill will be voted on by both chambers, and if passed, will then be sent to the President for his signature.

### **Presidential Signature or Veto**

Once the President signs a bill, it is considered a law. The law takes affect on the date of enactment. The President may veto a bill by refusing to sign it and returning it to the Legislature. In some cases, Congress can override the veto with a two-thirds roll call vote in both chambers making the measure law without the President’s signature. Fewer than ten percent of all bills introduced actually become law.

### **Implementing the Law: The Regulatory Process**

Enacting legislation is only part of the process. After a legislative body enacts legislation, departments and agencies of the Executive Branch are responsible for implementation. The new law provides the outline of a program or policy. It is the responsibility of the Executive Branch, through the regulatory process, to create specific policies and procedures established by the new law. The regulations may specify a program’s operating procedures, determine how funds may and may not be spent or determine qualifications for participation in a program. The process begins with the publication of the proposed regulation. It is during this official public period that interested parties can comment and influence the proposed regulations.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Legislative Advocacy: Understanding What Moves Politicians and How to be a More Persuasive Advocate**

#### **What Moves Politicians?**

Members of Congress follow hundreds of bills presented each session and do not have enough time to study each bill. For this reason, many lawmakers rely on personal visits from lobbyists and constituents to give them information on issues. While a variety of factors influence the decisions of members of Congress, two principal concerns guide them:

- Desire to make good public policy; and
- Desire to make decisions to help their constituents who in turn will vote for the member's re-election.

Lobbying is the ultimate manifestation of a citizen's right to speak freely and to petition the government for change. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees these freedoms and affords every American the opportunity to contribute input on the policies created by the federal government.

#### **How to be a More Persuasive Advocate**

Being a persuasive ambulance advocate and achieving success with your issue involves relatively simple tasks. Successful advocates do four things consistently to make contact with their member of Congress and to lobby ambulance issues:

- **Personal Visits** are the most effective way to make your case and should be conducted with regularity—*especially if Congress is taking action on your issue.*
- **Letters and emails** should communicate the issue and ask for the member's support. Individually written letters from a state association, the leadership of ambulance providers, and individual constituents remain an important lobbying tool. *Members of Congress often indicate they introduce or support legislation because they receive constituent mail.*
- **Telephone Calls** placed to the member's staff continue the rapport established by personal meetings and can help you stay on top of any developments taking place.
- **Social Media Engagement** informs the member of Congress, their staff, and the public-at-large about your issue and its importance to the community around them.

**Ambulance Advocate**

Ambulance advocates are ambulance executives, managers, employees and organizations familiar with ambulance issues and who are able to take immediate action to influence lawmakers. Ambulance advocates make direct contact with the member of Congress through personal meetings, phone calls, emails, letters and social media posts.

**An Investment in Political Action**

Developing a relationship with a member of Congress and their staff requires a minimal investment of time. When there is action on an issue that affects the bottom line of your company, *Congress expects to hear from you*—you should, therefore, expect to make regular contact with your member of Congress.

At a minimum, plan to make approximately one contact (telephone, email, or letter) with your member of Congress, or staff, per month on issues throughout the term of a legislative cycle (approximately 8 months). In addition, you should plan to meet with your member at least once in the district and at least once in Washington each year.

**Estimated Investment of Time  
in Legislative Advocacy**

1 call or email/letter (15 minutes) per month (over 8 months)

+

two meetings (1 hour) per year (over 8 months)

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3 to 6 hours of legislative advocacy per year

There are normally two sides to every issue and there are usually individuals or other forces (such as budget concerns) working to defeat your efforts. Therefore, devoting 3 to 6 hours of time every eight months is an important minimum investment that will protect your interests and influence the passage of legislation that benefits your operation.

## Personal Visits

The following guidelines will assure a productive face-to-face meeting with your member of Congress:

- **Plan your visit carefully.** Be clear about the purpose of the meeting; determine in advance which staff member handles your issue. Identify which colleagues need to attend the meeting and clarify their role. Assign one person as the lead to open and close the meeting.
- **Make an appointment.** When setting up a meeting with a member, contact the lawmaker's Secretary or Scheduler. Explain your purpose and the organization you represent. It is easier for congressional staff to arrange a meeting if they know what you wish to discuss and your relationship with the member.
- **Be prompt and patient.** When it is time to meet with a member of Congress or staff, be punctual and be patient. Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early. It is common for a member to be late, or to have a meeting interrupted due to their crowded schedule. If interruptions do occur, be flexible. When the opportunity presents itself, continue your meeting with the member's staff.
- **Be prepared.** Whenever possible, provide information and materials supporting your position. Members of Congress take positions on many different issues. In some instances, a member may lack important details about the pros and cons of a particular issue. It is helpful to provide information and examples that clearly demonstrate the impact or benefits associated with a particular issue or piece of legislation. Before you leave, get business cards from staff.
- **Be political.** Members of Congress want to represent the best interests of their district or state. Whenever possible, demonstrate the connection between what you are requesting and the interests of the member's constituency.
- **Be responsive.** Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information, in the event the member expresses interest and asks questions. Follow up the meetings with a thank you letter that outlines the different points covered during the meeting and send along any additional information requested.
- **Focus on your priority issue.** Stay on point and discuss your ambulance specific issue. Don't stray to other topics which may be highly partisan in nature.
- **Be concise.** Most meetings only last 15 minutes. Therefore, it is important to manage this short period effectively with no more than five minutes for introductions, five minutes to describe local impact and statistics and five minutes to make a clear request for action.

## Telephone Calls

Telephone calls, versus letters, can give you direct access to the lawmaker and his or her staff which may result in a more immediate response to your issue. In addition, calls can be particularly effective when a crucial vote is suddenly approaching. You can reach any member of Congress through the Capitol switchboard at (202) 225-3121 (see *Chapter 7—Resources for Effective Advocacy*).

You should not expect to speak directly to a member of Congress when you call, although this sometimes occurs. More often, you will speak with a Staff Assistant or Legislative Assistant. The following guidelines will assure an effective telephone call:

- **Become familiar with the issue before making the phone call.** Know the basic details of your issue such as the bill's number and name. By communicating these details, the lawmaker will have a better understanding of your request.
- **Locate appropriate office.** Lawmakers can be reached at either their Washington DC office or at their state or district offices. Members of Congress spend much of their time in their home states and are often more accessible at the district office than their Washington office. A member's Washington office can give you the phone number of their state/district offices (often there is more than one local office).
- **Be sure to identify yourself.** Provide your name, organization, phone number, mailing address and e-mail address.
- **Be informed, direct, and polite.** Lawmakers or staff may sometimes disagree with you at first, but may change their opinions later.
- **Express appreciation.** Remember to thank the lawmaker or staff for talking with you and acting on your suggestions. A friendly thank you will encourage the lawmaker and staff to agree with your stance and give you an opportunity to call again on future issues.
- **Follow your call with a thank you letter.** Briefly restate your issue and the specific action your request of your member. If they promised action during your phone conversation gently remind them by thanking them for their commitment.

## Emails and Letters

Individually written letters from a state association, the leadership of ambulance providers, and individual constituents remain an important lobbying tool. *Members of Congress often indicate they introduce or support legislation because they receive constituent mail.*

However, as congressional mail security has tightened and technology has advanced, email has become the most efficient way to get your message to your member of Congress and their appropriate staffer. Emails can be sent through your member of Congress's website, or directly to the staff member who handles ambulance related issues.

It is also important to know that your emails and letters will likely be read and responded to by your congressman's staff. Because of the high amount of emails and letters received in congressional offices, most emails/letters are the responsibility of Staff Assistants, Legislative Correspondents and Legislative Assistants. This does not mean that your emails and letters will not be handled properly. Often times, congressional office staff have the ability to influence a congressman's decision based on email and letter correspondence with constituents.

The following guidelines will assure an effective email or letter:

- **Keep the email/letter brief.** A one page, typed letter/email is more effective than longer ones.
- **Say thank you first.** Begin by thanking the lawmaker for previous support of ambulance industry issues. This praise will encourage the lawmaker to continue to take favorable positions.
- **State your point early.** A sharply focused letter discussing a single issue will generate better results.
- **Use your own words.** The lawmaker wants to read your thoughts and learn about your circumstances.
- **State the bill by its number (when available) or name.** A specific reference will help the lawmaker and staff identify your interest and investigate the bill.
- **Relate the legislation to personal experience.** Give the lawmaker specific examples of the way the bill will help people in your community and your operation.
- **Ask specific questions.** For example, ask the member to support your position. If you ask direct questions, you will have a better chance of receiving direct answers.
- **Use official letterhead.** When sending a letter on behalf of a state association or individual Ambulance provider, be sure to use an official letterhead. Doing so will help the member of Congress or staffer pay closer attention and associate your letter with past contact from your group.
- **Email letter and send original by mail.** It is appropriate to email letters on official letterhead as attachments in addition to sending the original by regular mail.
- **Handwritten thank you and e-mail follow-up.** Consistently follow-up with your members of Congress by sending thank you letters. A handwritten thank

you note is an effective method. It is also appropriate to maintain contact with staff members via email.

## Social Media

Members of Congress rely on social media to help them engage with voters and obtain an understanding on the issues that matter most to the constituency. With nearly every member of Congress having established an online presence, social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn provide an opportunity for the public to engage their member of Congress in a real-time two-way conversation.

Engaging your member of Congress through social media is incredibly beneficial for two reasons. First, it allows you to bring important issues to the attention of your member of Congress in efficient and diverse ways. Posting original content, pictures, videos, or links to traditional news stories and websites lets you tell your story in limitless ways. Second, your message will be available to the public-at-large helping you to gather grassroots support from those who may never have advocated for your issues otherwise.

The following guidelines will help you effectively engage your member of Congress through social media:

- **Keep your messages concise and on point.** Social media platforms are not built for posting lengthy messages about your issue, and some even limit the amount of characters you can use. Be polite, but state your point early and stick to the facts of a single topic.
- **Ask specific questions.** For example, ask the member to support your position. If you ask direct questions, you will have a better chance of receiving direct answers.
- **Say thank you.** As often as possible post a thank you for your previous support of ambulance industry issues. This praise will encourage the lawmaker to continue to take favorable positions.
- **Use Links.** Wherever possible share a hyperlink where viewers can learn more. Share links to the AAA, state association, and individual organization websites. Share links to news articles, video clips, and any other media that effectively conveys the importance of ambulance issues. Just be sure that all links are made to highly credible sources.
- **Use hashtags.** Using hashtags on important key words like #ambulance, #EMS, #EMT, #paramedic, and #medicare, etc. will help organize all similar posts across the social media platform. This in turn allows the member of Congress, their staff, and the public-at-large to see all additional support for the issue. Additionally, these hashtags will help highlight the key words and phrases that your lawmaker and their staff should be associating with our industry.

- **Be sure to identify yourself.** If you are not posting via your organizations account, ask for permission to share the name of your organization and provide appropriate contact information should the member of Congress or their staff wish to contact you.

### Developing the Message

First, be prepared to tell your unique story:

- **Profile your service.** Develop a one-page overview of your operation, including the types of services offered, area served, number of employees, years of service, local innovations, and partnerships with local public safety, public health and health care organizations.
- **Emphasize contributions to community.** Explain how your service benefits local constituents. Also provide an overview of the contributions you make to charitable organizations.
- **Research local statistics.** Become familiar with basic statistics about your community, including population, uninsured, economic status, etc.
- **Describe the impact of federal policies.** Carefully articulate the impact of federal policies on your service and the member's constituents. For example, accurately describe how federal reimbursement is below the cost of providing services.

Second, be prepared to explain the national solution:

- **Review national solution and talking points.** Obtain information about the issue from the American Ambulance Association, including position papers, talking points, and sample letters.
- **Relate the national solution to local community.** Explain the benefit of the national solution to your operation and your community. Describe how the solution serves the public interest, is practical to implement and has widespread support among constituent groups.
- **Determine position of your member of Congress.** Research the position of your member of Congress on your issue or similar issues. Determine the member's voting record, public comments and previous advocacy on similar issues.

### Communicating with Your Member: The Do's and Don'ts

Regardless of the manner by which you communicate with your lawmaker—whether it is by face-to-face meeting, letter, phone call, or via social media do:

- **Know something about the lawmaker you are lobbying.** At least, know his/her background, party affiliation, hometown, and if possible, whether he/she is on a congressional committee with jurisdiction over your issues.
- **Have something to ask for.** Before communicating with a lawmaker, be prepared with a specific request, such as co-sponsor a bill or send a letter of support—those that don't ask, won't get.
- **Remember that all politics is local.** Define the problem in terms of the cost to your community—give a specific local example that illustrates your point.
- **Be concise.** Lawmakers and their staff are extremely busy and are interested in the "bottom line."
- **Focus on your legislative priorities.** Avoid highly partisan issues during your contact and focus on the issues that affect your ambulance service.
- **Know the political dynamics.** Who is for and against your issue, who has influence over the politician, what is the lawmaker's political philosophy, etc.?
- **Be confident.** Be positive and assertive in making your case, but do not dismiss opposing arguments—different views can help guide your future efforts.
- **Stress why the issue is so important.** It is essential to explain how the solution helps ambulance service providers and why the lawmaker should support or oppose the issue.
- **Provide the most up-to-date and accurate information.** You are the expert about your business and community so use accurate data to support your arguments.
- **Ask for a commitment.** However, don't expect a commitment. No elected official can be supportive 100 percent of the time. Do not expect to hit a "home run" every time you meet with a member.
- **Organize group meetings.** Rehearse before the meeting and task someone to be the leader or facilitator of the meeting.
- **Take notes of your conversation.** To use in follow-up with the member and to assure you provide information requested.
- **Follow-up your contact.** Send a letter or make a phone call that says thank you and briefly re-states your issues and asks for a position.
- **Offer something new.** On repeat visits, offer new information.

As you prepare your communication, don't:

- **Threaten, cajole or berate a member of Congress, their staff, or a fellow constituent.** Whether in person, through a letter/email, or via a social media, do



not engage in threatening or impolite and argumentative dialog. This is one sure way to lose a lawmaker's support.

- **Be impatient.** Understand that you are one of many constituents vying for a lawmaker's time and attention and that there are many sides to every issue. Respect that a decision may take time.
- **Ignore or forget a request for further information.** Being responsive to such requests not only observes a basic courtesy, but it gives you another opportunity to keep your name and issue under consideration.
- **NEVER discuss political contributions while in a meeting with a member of Congress.** At best, discussing political contributions is bad form and at worst, it is illegal and can be viewed as bribery.
- **NEVER give a member of Congress or their staff a political contribution while in a House or Senate building.** They are precluded from accepting political contributions while at work.

### Developing a Relationship with Your Member of Congress

Members of Congress are constantly looking for volunteers to help them get re-elected or support local projects and charities they support. Below are ways to get “face time” with a member in order to develop a relationship that can be mutually beneficial and result in “wins” in Congress:

- **Vote!** Many people overlook this powerful tool that holds members accountable for their actions.
- Volunteer for your member of Congress' re-election campaign.
- Volunteer with the local political party organization of your choice—this will give you numerous networking and advocacy opportunities.
- Volunteer at the local charity that is a favorite of the member.
- Volunteer to write “white papers” on matters affecting your industry to help the lawmaker develop stances on some of the key issues facing the voters in your community.
- Invite your member (or their staff) on an operations tour and ride-along—members and their staff enjoy getting firsthand experience and they often make site visits to a multitude of places. (*See Chapter 5 - How to Host a Congressional Ride-Along*)
- Invite your member and their staff to participate in local special events such as an *Employee Recognition* luncheon.
- Participate in AAA's annual *Stars of Life* gala and Congressional visits in Washington, D.C.

- Volunteer to host a fundraiser for your member (See *Chapter 6—How to Host a Fundraiser*).

With few exceptions, the stimulus to which members of Congress most readily respond is constituent pressure—pressure applied from grassroots actions and contacts. A disorganized, fractured and uninformed constituency will wield little influence and will be unable to achieve any legislative success.

Your involvement as a grassroots lobbyist ensures that your view, those of your colleagues and those of your industry are effectively channeled toward influencing congressional decision makers to support your issues. When members of Congress know that members of the AAA are well organized, informed about the issues and willing to communicate ideas, they will pay attention to our concerns.

### **Importance of Staff Contacts**

As you develop a relationship with your lawmaker, you will also realize the value of maintaining effective communication with his/her staff, including:

- Chief of Staff
- Legislative Director
- Legislative Assistant (such as health staff)
- Appointments Secretary or Scheduler
- Case Worker or Constituent Relations Representative (state or district office)
- Campaign Staff

Staffers will take action on your requests on behalf of the member, provide you with updates on progress of legislation, provide advice on how to generate support for your issue and provide feedback on what additional information is needed to make your case.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Community Outreach: How to Urge Others to Champion Your Issue**

Your member of Congress wants to know how many constituents will benefit and what other groups and individuals support your issue. Capitol Hill is crowded with a plethora of advocates and lobbyists—all making their case to Congress to support one issue or another. Competition is stiff to distinguish any issue in the mind of a lawmaker as a “worthy one”—and almost no health care provider can expect to “win” in this environment without the help of others.

These challenges are precisely the reason well organized and sophisticated advocates have reached out to third-party organizations to help build a groundswell of support for an issue. These third-party groups have the ability to access an even greater number of people who can make “noise” about your issue—and in the lively halls of Capitol Hill, an active and engaged third-party group can give your issue the edge it needs to succeed.

#### **Third-Party Advocate**

Third-party advocates are individuals, organizations and the public-at-large that are constituents of the members of Congress who are urged to take action to influence their lawmakers. Third party advocates support issues affecting community by contacting members of Congress through phone calls, letters, emails, social media, and faxes.

#### **Community Leaders Are Influential Advocates**

Asking other third-party organizations to get involved with the ambulance industry’s efforts is an excellent way to create a groundswell of support for legislation that will benefit all ambulance providers and the communities in which they operate. Listed below are examples of the groups and individuals that should be included in local and state community outreach efforts:

- Patient Advocate Groups
- Former Patients
- Senior Citizen Groups
- Business Coalitions
- Civic Organizations

- City and County Officials
- Local EMS Regulators
- Public Safety Officials (police and fire)
- Public Health Officials
- Health Care Facilities and Clinics
- Medical Community and Emergency Physicians
- Organizations for Health Care Professionals
- Disaster Relief Groups
- Charitable Organizations
- Other Community Leaders
- State Ambulance Associations
- State Health and EMS Officials

### **How to Engage Community Leaders in Advocacy Campaigns**

Listed below are a few suggestions for engaging community groups in advocacy campaigns:

- **How will the issue help the community?** Before you can expect third-party advocates to champion your cause, you must effectively and briefly explain how your solution will benefit the community.
- **Assure Simplicity** When community leaders express a willingness to support your issue, assure your request requires very simple action. Offer to provide all the necessary information and assure the instructions for action are very clear and concise.
- **Letters/Emails.** The most effective demonstration of community support is to ask community leaders, and, in some cases, the public-at-large to send a letter expressing support for your legislation or issue. The AAA has made this process very easy by providing a tool to help you locate your members of congress. Visit the following page on the AAA's web site to locate and find contact information for your representatives: <http://cqrcengage.com/the-aaa/home>
- **Media Quotes.** Community leaders, especially public officials representing local government, and including public health or health care officials, may be willing to make public statements about the need for Congress to support your legislation or issue. This may include offering interviews and quotes to local reporters working on a relevant story.

- **Public Testimony.** If you have effectively engaged in community activities over the long term, a few close allies affected by the issue may be willing to provide public testimony in support of your legislation or issue.

### **Ongoing Community Service Generates Credibility**

Before you can expect community leaders to support your issues and assist you in championing your cause, individually and as an organization, you must have credibility. One of the most effective methods to obtain credibility is an ongoing commitment to community service. Building relationships over time will generate good will and offers a positive way to interface with community leaders. Public education programs, focused on offering helpful health and safety information, are also effective. Listed below are just a few examples of community service and public education activities:

- Disaster drills
- Public service announcements on winter weather tips, drowning prevention campaigns, etc.
- Citizen CPR and first aid programs
- Tips for safe driving near emergency vehicles and accident scenes
- Child safety seat checkpoints
- Bike-safety courses
- Blood pressure screenings at health fairs
- Volunteer work in civic organizations
- Contributions to charitable organizations
- Donation of ambulance services to indigent patients
- Sponsorship of community events

Becoming familiar with your community's needs, opportunities and trends will help you identify the right combination of community service projects and public education campaigns. The goals of your community service activities should include targeting community projects to the most critical community needs; partnering with key community leaders; and providing a consistent organizational message.

### **What's In It for You?**

Organizations that are a positive force for community change and a strong resource for the community, by definition interface with community leaders. In addition to generating a network of individuals and organizations that could provide assistance in a crisis or support

federal legislation, effective community relations programs have many local benefits including the following:

- **Local field and management personnel** are more politically aware and involved in community activities
- **Local and state officials** understand the issues that are beyond local control and support federal advocacy efforts
- Relationships with **local community leaders** build opportunities to ask for support as “third party advocates”
- The **local public** is better informed about quality and efficient ambulance services
- **Local media** is educated about the issues affecting ambulance services in the community

The bottom-line is that effective community service contributes to “franchise protection” and secures your organization’s position in the community.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Media Relations: Why You Should be Courting the Press**

The most effective way to achieve greater success with legislative issues is to combine lobbying with community outreach and effective local media relations. Integrating these three strategies helps to reinforce your key messages and attract others to your effort.

Lobbying is designed to reach the small audience of people needed to win your issues—lawmakers. Media helps reach the other critical audiences (the general public, opinion leaders, and third-party organizations) who in many cases have great ability to influence key lawmakers.

#### **Local Media**

The local media includes newspapers, television news, radio news, social media and business journals that report current news events and information about issues that affect the local community. The local media highlights community issues through news articles, news broadcasts and editorials, with potential to generate public support for solutions.

#### **It's Easy to Become a Media Expert**

You do not need special expertise to secure print and broadcast media coverage. The process of getting the media to cover your issue is fairly simple but it does take preparation, patience and persistence—you are competing for space or airtime with thousands of other people who have the same objective.

#### **What's In It for You?**

In today's "information age," almost no one can hope to have an impact on Congress without the aid of the media. Effective media relations:

- Creates visibility for your operation.
- Creates a positive image for your operation and the ambulance industry as a whole.
- Lends credibility to your issue and the issues affecting the ambulance industry.
- Increases the urgency and or scope of your message.
- Creates the perception that your issue is important to the community.
- Determines whether your issue is considered in Congress.

One advantage the ambulance industry has over others competing for the media's attention is that ambulances are easily recognizable and provide an invaluable service to the community. If engaged properly and persistently, the media can help your operation increase opportunities for state and federal funding, create recognition for your services and increase the level of respect for the ambulance industry as a whole.

## How to Get Your Story in the News

Effectively cultivating the media is an ongoing process—use the tips below to help you get started and stay committed to the task.

### Create a Media List

Get started by regularly monitoring local media—newspapers, TV, radio, social media accounts, and local business journals—to get a feel for the coverage and reporters. Next, create a media list:

- **Monitor local news media.** Jot down names of reporters you see covering stories related to your business, mission or the community's activities as they relate to the services you provide.
- **Research local reporters and editors.** Call the local newspaper, television and radio station and local business journals. Ask for the name of the editor and reporters involved with health-related coverage and the “beat” reporter covering police, fire and ambulance calls.
- **Collect contact information.** Assemble a list of reporters including their name, mailing address, e-mail address, phone number, twitter account, Facebook page, and fax number.

### Distribute Press Releases & Pitch Your Story

To increase visibility for ambulance issues, regularly distribute information about your issues to your local newspaper, radio, television stations and social media:

- **Focus on three points.** Before contacting reporters to pitch your story, review your press release and fact sheet and decide what three points about your story might interest the reporter—jot them down.
- **Get attention.** Email, call, Tweet, post on Facebook. Any and all means of communication should be used to get the attention you need. If faxing your press release, use a magic marker to write the name of the reporter and/or editor in the header of the press release or fact sheet.
- **Clearly state your objective.** Once you have made contact with the reporter or editor, state clearly who you are and why you are calling. “I’m calling to let you know how [name of ambulance organization] is going to help the community prepare for terrorist attacks.”
- **Be persistent.** Ask if they received your press release and fact sheet and if they have time to discuss the issue. If they don’t have time to speak to you—ask if you can schedule an appointment. If they did not receive the information—tell them you will resend the information. Ask for permission to FOLLOW-UP to see if they have questions about the materials.



- **Handling voice mail.** If you get the voice mail of a reporter, it's best to not leave a message with the hope they will call you back (they most likely won't). Instead, make another phone call at a later time. If you decide to leave a voice message, sell your story as succinctly as possible and speak slowly and clearly when leaving your name and number.
- **Say thank you.** Before hanging up—thank them for their time.
- **Be patient.** Do not be surprised if the story you are “pitching” does not come out as you expected—or does not appear at all. Journalists report the news as they see it, not necessarily as you tell it.

## Interviews with Reporters

When talking to a reporter, remember:

- **Everything is *on the record*.** Never assume that you can safely provide information off the record.
- **Take notes during the interview.** This will help you follow-up with the reporter following the interview and the publishing of the story.
- **Control the exchange.** Inject your key points often into the conversation. For example, make statements such as, “What I would like people to remember is...” or “Something you should know is...”
- **Disagree with a reporter—politely.** For example, a reporter might ask, “Would you say that...” and then adds a quote. If you don't agree with what has been said, *politely* disagree and restate your position, fact, issue, etc. But don't lose your cool.
- **Be calm, cool and composed.** Reporters are free to report the “story” as they see it—that can sometimes include an in depth description of your attitude and reaction to questions during your conversation.
- **Do not offer personal opinions.** When representing your organization to the media, consistently repeat your key messages.
- **Be truthful and sincere.** If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the reporter you'll find out and get back to them.
- **Avoid saying “no comment.”** When replying to a question, this statement leaves the impression that you may have something to hide or are feeling defensive about an issue. If appropriate, say instead, “I'm not sure, I'll get back to you on that question.”

## How to Create a Press Release

Writing an engaging press release is easy as long as you follow simple principles that will help make your issue “newsworthy” to a reporter. If your press release does not entice the reporter immediately, your story will not get any attention. Follow these simple guidelines:

- **The most effective press release is one page in length.** Press releases contain four paragraphs: an introduction, background on the issue, a quote and conclusion.
- **Assure the headline grabs the attention of the reader instantly.** The topic must inform and be engaging to the reader.
- **Use the inverted pyramid method.** Start with giving the conclusion of your story, followed by the most important supporting information and end with the background information.
- **Answer the five W's.** The text of the press release should explain why your story is important: WHO, WHAT, WHY, WHERE, and WHEN. Answer, at a minimum, two of the W's in the very first paragraph—often the WHO and WHAT portions of your story.
- **Add quotes.** The quote should be from a credible source or “expert” on the issue. Assure that the quote has a clear purpose. For example, a good quote expresses an opinion, contains subjective ideas or explains actions taken.
- **Assure easy-to-read text.** Assure the text of the press release relays the information concisely.
- **Offer additional references.** If applicable, provide references for the reporter to research additional facts about the story. For example, provide additional web sites, other sources and experts.

## How to Write an Op-ed Article

Because healthcare topics are often debated in the printed press, these debates present many opportunities to comment via the “op-ed” (i.e., opinion and editorial) pages of your local newspaper, including:

- **Letters to the Editor.** Generally written in response to a specific news story, to correct biased or inaccurate portrayals of a story, or to praise the activities of the individual or entity discussed. When writing a letter to the editor, make sure that you explain your relation to the subject matter and why what you are saying is important to the debate.
- **Op-ed Opinion Articles.** These articles are written to express a specific point of view on a subject using supporting research and facts. Many individuals and organizations use this method to express solutions to problems discussed in current events or to present new ways to look at an issue that is being reported by the media.

Securing an op-ed article requires the same effort as generating a story based on a press release. Both require time and patience to get them placed in the local paper. Look for instructions on how to submit your article in the op-ed section of your local newspaper. Listed below are tips for writing the op-ed article:

- **Be newsworthy.** Submit articles related only to topics recently discussed in the media.
- **Be brief.** Keep the length of your article to between 500-800 words, double-spaced.
- **Localize the issue.** Provide information and or statistics that will provoke discussion and provide a solution on the issue.

- **Timing is everything.** Connect your op-ed to the release of a new survey, new community event, etc.
- **Secure an expert.** If you are not “the expert,” select one that is and ask them to sign the op-ed on your behalf. Often, the more significant the person is in the community, the more likely it is that your op-ed will be published. Approaching an expert is also a great way to get third parties involved with your issue.
- **Follow-up.** Once you have submitted your article, follow up with a phone call to the op-ed editor a few days later. Ask the editor about the status of the article and if it has been selected for publication.

Constant communication with your newspaper will establish you as a local expert and will often result in a greater chance that your article will be published. Topics worthy of expert commentary include:

- Describing the status of local terrorism preparedness efforts.
- Proposing solutions for the shrinking health care resources in the community.
- Advocating community support of federal funding programs assisting local ambulance providers.
- Highlighting the effectiveness of public health and public safety community partnerships.
- Reporting on the participation of local ambulance providers in national events such as the Stars of Life awards.

**SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE****[AMBULANCE PROVIDER LOGO]****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
[DATE]**CONTACT:** [NAME]  
[TELEPHONE/E-MAIL]**[YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE] JOINS EFFORT TO FAST  
TRACK BIO AND CHEMICAL ATTACK PLAN**

[CITY, STATE] — The American Ambulance Association (AAA) and AAA-member, [YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE], pledged to strengthen local community readiness for biological, chemical, and nuclear terrorism and other disasters by joining a national coalition of first responders that represent firefighters, emergency physicians, ambulance and EMS providers, hospital officials, and other public health officials. The Partnership for Community Safety: *Strengthening America's Readiness* was formed as an outgrowth of the September 11<sup>th</sup> events and the recent anthrax incidents.

“Our ability to meet the emergency medical needs of our community depends greatly on the strength and integrity of the entire first response system,” said ABC’s president, Joe Smith. “The more we can work with other first responders to enhance communication systems and coordinate emergency response plans, the safer our community will be,” continued Mr. Smith.

[YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE], in conjunction with a local partnership, will work with Mayor Wilson to increase capacity for all first responders. The coordinated effort will allow for a systematic response to terrorist threats. It will improve communication infrastructures, enhance coordinated training of frontline personnel, provide better detection and reporting of emerging biological or chemical threats, and streamline efforts to educate the community on how best to prepare and respond to the new challenges of terrorism.

The members of the national coalition include the American Ambulance Association, the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American Hospital Association, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, and other well-known public health organizations. [INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE] will also work with [CITY NAME] Department of Health and other partnership members to incorporate “best practices” in the community’s terrorism response plan and to circulate the plan to others in the community for future planning efforts.

[INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME HERE]

###

## SAMPLE FACT SHEET

### [AMBULANCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND/OR LOGO]

#### FACT SHEET

#### Nation-wide Emergency Medical Services Statistics:

In 1999, there were an estimated 102,765,000 people who were admitted to the emergency room (Source: Centers For Disease Control National Center For Health Statistics)

|                               |         |                                    |            |
|-------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------|------------|
| Ambulance Services *          | 17,000  | Emergency Ambulance Transports     | 17,413,738 |
| Emergency Medical Technicians | 506,000 | Non-Emergency Ambulance Transports | 4,843,563  |

Sources: EMS Census 95, Emergency Care Information Center; 1997, Accident Facts, American College of Emergency Physicians' Emergency Medicine Statistical Profile. \* Includes public, private, hospital-based and volunteer EMS agencies.

#### September 11, 2001:

- During the response to the September 11 attacks, New York City received assistance from 515 ambulance vehicles and over 2,500 emergency medical service personnel from 345 ambulance services (SOURCE: New York State Department of Health Bureau, EMS Operations Unit).

#### Partnership for Community Safety Members:

- American Ambulance Association (AAA)
- American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP)
- American Hospital Association (AHA)
- American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE)
- American Public Health Association (APHA)
- Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)
- National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
- International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)
- National Association of State EMS Directors (NASED)

#### Partnership Goals:

- Improve community's public health and emergency communications systems.
- Improve community-based planning to integrate all first-responders and their disaster response plans to support the community's health care system.
- Increase community capacity to deal with disasters.
- Improve the capacity of local and state public health departments, public health laboratories, and hospitals and other first responders to engage in disease surveillance and disease reporting.
- Ensure the provision of continued services to the community in the event of a terrorist act involving a biologic or chemical agent by protecting responders from the effects of biological, chemical, and nuclear agents by providing priority access to equipment, training vaccines, antibiotics, and other resources.
- Increase and enhance training programs, continuing education, and community drills for mass casualty incidents.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **How to Host a Congressional Ambulance Ride-Along: Complete Ambulance Ride-Along Toolkit**

#### ***STEP 1 SCHEDULE THE APPOINTMENT***

Members of Congress task their schedulers to receive requests for appointments and to help prioritize their commitments. You will begin by requesting the appointment through the scheduler, but expect to follow up each request with phone calls to the member's office to move the process along—in other words, be tactful, but be aggressive! Members' offices often are overwhelmed with requests and a few phone calls help schedulers and other staff who assist lawmakers make your request a priority. Listed below are reminders for scheduling the appointment:

- **Contact Information.** [Look up the contact information for your members of Congress'](#) local office using the "Contact your Member of Congress" area of the AAA.
- **Invitation.** E-mail the ride-along invitation to the member's local office (see sample meeting request on page 11) and mail the original.
- **Phone Follow-up.** Follow-up the request with a phone call to the local office. When calling the scheduler, mention that you have invited the local newspaper and/or television station to attend the site visit portion of the event. The promise of media coverage is also a great incentive for members of Congress to accept your invitation.

#### **Should staff persons attend?**

What should you do if the scheduler offers to have one of the member's staff persons go on the ride-along instead? **THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!** Do **not** be disappointed if your member is unable to go on the ride-along. More often than not, the staff person is better situated to advocate your issue for you as he or she counsels the lawmaker on issues and is often the key negotiator who can fight for ambulance issues.

**Tip:** Offices will often misplace or misfile requests. When you place your follow-up call, offer to send a second e-mail or fax or e-mail request to the scheduler or staff person. This relieves the staff person from the embarrassment of having misplaced or misfiled your information and establishes the urgency of the request. This follow-up might generate just enough interest to move you up the Congressman's list of potential appointments.

**STEP 2**  
**PLAN THE ITINERARY**

Once you've checked the status of the request with the scheduler you may need to provide a more detailed description of what the visit will entail. Offer to send the scheduler an itinerary, such as the following:

**Sample Ride-along Itinerary**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1:00 - 2:00 pm | LUNCH AND MEETING—with [name of representative/host] and [name of a third party supporter like the State EMS Director or other industry expert who is supportive of increasing ambulance Medicare payment rates]<br><br>[NAME OF RESTAURANT, ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER] |
| 2:00 - 2:15 pm | BREAK  |
| 2:15 - 2:45 pm | TOUR OF OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS CENTER—photo op with local newspaper  |
| 2:45 - 3:00 pm | MEET WITH MEDICS, EQUIPMENT & SAFETY OVERVIEW  |
| 3:00 – 5:00 pm | RIDE-ALONG   |

**Creating the Best Ride-along Experience.** Listed below are tips for creating the best experience:

- **Realize it is a working meeting.** Although taking a member of Congress on a ride-along may seem like a stressful experience, do not expect it to be. A member or staff person who has agreed to go on the trip will arrive with the expectation that this is a working meeting—they will not expect to be entertained and they will be respectful of your duties.
- **Select a busy time of day and a busy station or post.** You will want to conduct a ride-along during the busiest time of day for your ambulance service to ensure the member or the staff person gets the most out of the experience.
- **Select and brief field and management personnel.** Before the appointed date, choose EMTs, paramedics and dispatchers that are well-spoken and have a service record that exemplifies your ambulance operation's mission. Brief them on the purpose of the visit and explain the basic local background and federal legislative messages that are the objective of the visit.

**Tip:** If possible, invite past, present or future Stars of Life to participate in the ambulance ride-along. This is a perfect opportunity to showcase your stellar employees.

**STEP 3**  
**IMPLEMENT PATIENT PRIVACY SAFEGUARDS**

The ambulance ride-along segment of the congressional visit will be affected by the requirements of the HIPAA Privacy Rule. Therefore, you should take steps to ensure that safeguards are in place to prevent incidental disclosures of individually identifiable health information to reporters or Congressional personnel who are participating on the visit. Even the name of a patient who is being transported is considered protected health information.

**Ride-along Guidelines for Members of Congress and their Staff Members.** To minimize incidental disclosures during the ride-along, consider implementing the following safeguards:

- Once the member of Congress or staff member has accepted your invitation, mail each Congressional guest a letter with information about the HIPAA privacy rule (see sample letter on page 13). The letter should explain the purpose of the ride-along program, emphasize the importance of protecting the confidentiality of patient information and request that each guest sign a Confidentiality Acknowledgement (see attached acknowledgement). Copies of signed acknowledgments should be obtained prior to the ride-along and retained for six years after the date of the ride-along.
- Assure that each crew member knows that patient information (including patient names) should not be disclosed directly to a Congressional guest unless the guest states that such information is necessary for health oversight purposes. While Congressional guests may overhear conversations and radio transmissions about patients, crew members should not engage guests directly on patient-related issues.
- Remind crew members to apply the minimum necessary standard when requesting, using and disclosing patient information. Advise crews that this standard does not apply when requesting and disclosing patient information for treatment purposes and the standard should never interfere with the provision of high quality patient care.
- As part of your overview on what to expect during the ride-along as will be discussed in “Step 4—Fine-tune Your Message,” provide your Congressional guests with an overview of the requirement for confidentiality of patient information and remind them not to request from crew members, or subsequently disclose, any patient information (including that which they inadvertently learn) to any party, except as necessary in the performance of the guest’s legally authorized Congressional health oversight function or as otherwise required by law.
- Requests that Congressional guests ride up front during patient transport to minimize the overhearing of private conversations.
- Assure that your notice of privacy practices permits disclosures for health oversight purposes. If it does not, you will need to amend your notice or not make any disclosures of patient information to Congressional guests who request patient information for this purpose.
- Maintain a record of any disclosures of patient information that a guest requests that you make for health oversight purposes, including the date of the disclosure, the patient information disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the guest’s name and address. Much of this work can be done prior to the ride-along. For example, you could prepare an accounting form which states the date of the disclosure (which will be the date of the ride-along), the guest’s name and address, and that the



purpose of the disclosure is “Congressional health oversight” prior to the ride-along. During the ride-along, crew members need only record the information disclosed.

These suggested measures will ensure that you have a successful ride-along program while maintaining the confidentiality of patient information. These guidelines will also help inform ride-along participants of the steps that ambulance companies are taking to implement this important law that Congress enacted in 1996.

**Ride-along Guidelines for Reporters.** Legal counsel has advised that the provisions of the HIPAA Privacy Rule do not permit press ride-alongs unless the patients involved sign written authorizations prior to the time reporters are in a position to observe the delivery of patient care to those individuals. Since there is obviously no way to know in advance which individuals will be transported, it will be extremely difficult to satisfy this authorization requirement. Therefore, the rule precludes press ride-alongs as of April 14, 2003.

**STEP 4**  
**FINE-TUNE YOUR MESSAGE**

Your key objective during the ride-along is to educate your member of Congress or staff person about how federal legislation impacts your service. Your member or staff person is also interested in learning about the issues that are important to you.

**Developing Your Message.** The first step is to develop your message regarding how federal legislation and regulations affect local ambulance services. Be prepared to tell your unique story:

- **Profile your service.** Develop a one-page overview of your operation, including the types of services offered, area served, number of employees, years of service, local innovations, and partnerships with local public safety, public health and health care organizations (see local operations profile worksheet on page 16).
- **Emphasize contributions to community.** Explain how your service benefits local constituents. Also provide an overview of the contributions you make to charitable organizations.
- **Research local statistics.** Become familiar with basic statistics about your community, including population, number of uninsured, local economic status, etc.
- **Describe the impact of federal policies.** Carefully articulate the impact of federal policies on your service and the member's constituents. For example, accurately describe how federal reimbursement is below the cost of providing services in your community.

Second, be prepared to explain the national solution:

- **Review national solution and leave-behind materials.** Utilize the 2015 Legislative Overview provided by the American Ambulance Association for detailed information.
- **Relate the national solution to local community.** Explain the benefit of the national solution to your operation and your community.
- **Determine the position of your member of Congress.** Research the position of your member of Congress on your issue or similar issues. Determine the member's voting record, public comments and previous advocacy on similar issues.

**Delivering Your Message.** Assertively direct the conversation during the visit to make your points about your issues:

- **Start the visit with introductions.** Introduce all of the individuals that the member and staff person will be meeting, including a description about what their duties include.
- **Thank the member or staff person.** It is also important in the opening stages of the visit to offer thanks for his/her attendance at the ride-along and for supporting the ambulance industry—leaving these out of your introduction may create confusion about why the member or staff person is attending the ride-along in the first place.
- **Provide an overview of what to expect during the ride-along:**
  - Sign appropriate release forms

- Overview of itinerary
  - Overview of field and management personnel duties
  - Instructions on safety procedures (i.e., seatbelt use), the best place to sit in the vehicle and what to do on a call, on the scene and during patient transport
  - Overview of the requirement for confidentiality of patient information including a reminder to not request from crew members, or subsequently disclose, any patient information (including that which they inadvertently learn) to any party, except as necessary in the performance of the guest's legally authorized Congressional health oversight function or as otherwise required by law
- **Provide a tour and overview of your operations:**
- Explanation of equipment, technologies and innovations employed to assure quality and efficient patient care
- **Tell the member or staff person of your role in the community's emergency response system:**
- Ambulance service providers respond to individual medical emergencies and routine ambulance transportation needs in the communities they serve.
  - Ambulance service providers are a critical component of each community's disaster response system.
  - If there was a terrorist attack, natural disaster or other public health emergency, all ambulance service providers, both emergency and non-emergency, would be available to respond to the call for help.
- **Ask the member or staff person to support federal legislation that assists ambulance providers:**

**Tip:** Provide detailed information to the lawmaker or staff person to build support for your issues. Also explain operational details, such as your vehicle, its equipment, the patients for which you provide services and your duties as an emergency medical services professional. These explanations will prompt questions from the member or staff person. If a question arises that you do not know the answer to, jot the question down and then tell the lawmaker or staffer that you will get back to them with the answer. Then, forward the question onto the appropriate person (such as local ambulance managers, other local officials, state EMS office or the AAA office in Washington DC) and assure that a timely follow-up is provided.

**STEP 5****GENERATE MEDIA COVERAGE**

Newspaper and television reporters love to cover stories about members of Congress riding in ambulances. In the process of organizing your ride-along, you may even be asked by the member's press secretary whether the media are allowed to attend. *If you are not asked this question*, then you should ask the question yourself: "Have you made arrangements with the [NAME OF LOCAL NEWSPAPER OR TV STATION] to interview the Congressman while he is here?"

When the media attends a portion of the ride-along, free publicity is generated for your operation and the member of Congress. In addition, greater visibility for ambulance issues is created. News stories about the local impact of federal legislation affecting ambulance services elevate the status and urgency of the issues, making them more "real" to the lawmakers.

**1) Create a Media List and Press Release**

- **Media List.** Compile a list of local media outlets in your area. Your list of media sources should include local newspaper, television and radio.
- **Press Release.** Each press release tells a story and tells the media when the event will happen. Each press release should answer the following five questions: who, what, why, where and when (see Sample Press Release on page 15).

**2) E-mail the Press Release**

- **Explain Why the Ride-along is Important.** Your ride-along press release should tell reporters not only the basic facts of the event (i.e., who, what, where and when), but also why they need to attend your event (i.e., local ambulance provider seeking to assure community funding needs are met).
- **Five Days Before Event.** E-mail the press release at least five days before the event.
- **One Day Before the Event.** E-mail the press release again on the day before the event.

**3) Call the Reporter**

- **Before calling.** Review the press release and fact sheet and determine what three points about your story might interest the reporter—jot them down.
- **On the call.** State clearly who you are and why you are calling:
  - “I’m calling to let you know how my [organization] is going to help the community prepare for terrorism attacks.”
  - “Did you receive the press release and fact sheet about the ambulance ride-along with Congressman Smith?”

- ☒ **NO**—Explain that you will resend the information and ask their permission to follow-up at a later time to answer questions about the materials.
  - ☒ **YES**—Ask if they will attend the event.
- **Before Hanging Up.** Thank the reporter for their time.

**Tip:** If you get the voice mail of a reporter, it is best to not leave a message with the hope that they will call you back (they most likely won't call you back). Instead, FOLLOW-UP WITH ANOTHER CALL. If you decide to leave a message, sell your story as succinctly as possible, speak slowly and clearly when leaving your name and phone number.

**STEP 6**  
**ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL EVENT**

At the end of the ride-along, there are a few key things you should say and do to ensure a successful meeting and to urge support of your issues:

- **Provide Leave-Behind Materials.** Provide the lawmaker or staff person with the leave-behind materials provided by the AAA as part of this tool kit. The most recent material can be found on the [AAA website](#).
  - [AAA Legislative Overview](#)
  - [Permanent Medicare Relief Congressional Leave Behind](#)
  - [Permanent Medicare Relief Talking Points](#)
- **Urge Support of Ambulance Issues.** Ask the member of Congress or staff person to support efforts in Congress that will increase Medicare and homeland security funding for ambulance services.
- **Write a Thank You Note.** Thank the member and staff for his or her time, provide a reminder of your issues and urge their support.
- **Assure Timely Follow-up.** It is absolutely critical to follow-up on any requests for additional information and other commitments that may have been made during the visit.

**Tip:** Send the member of Congress' office pictures of their visit. They will appreciate your thoughtfulness and the note you enclose gives you another opportunity to reinforce your key messages.

**SAMPLE MEETING REQUEST**

**[PLACE ON COMPANY LETTERHEAD]**

**[DATE]**

Dear **[INSERT NAME OF SCHEDULER]:**

I respectfully request to meet with **[CONGRESSMAN X; SENATOR X]** during the month of August. As you know, policies that Congress establishes regarding Medicare and homeland security issues affect every citizen in **[INSERT NAME OF TOWN]**.

Our company provides ambulance services to **[X NUMBER OF CITIZENS, PATIENTS OR SENIORS]** in **[Name Of Town Or District]**. We are also actively involved in the community's efforts to plan and respond to terrorism attacks and natural disasters.

As a provider of essential healthcare and first responder services, we would like to discuss Medicare ambulance relief with Congressman **[or Senator]** **[INSERT LAST NAME OF MEMBER]**. We would be happy to host the meeting at our facility at **[INSERT LOCATION]** so that we can also provide a tour to demonstrate the latest patient care treatments and state-of-the-art equipment. The Congressman **[or Senator]** will also see first-hand the range of duties we perform throughout a shift, such as **[GIVE EXAMPLES OF DUTIES PERFORMED DURING A SHIFT]**.

We are happy to accommodate the Congressman's **[or Senator's]** schedule. Feel free to contact me at **(XXX) XXX-XXXX** with the dates that the Congressman might be available.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**[NAME]**

**[TITLE]**

**[PROVIDER NAME]**

**SAMPLE RIDE-ALONG INVITATION**

**[PLACE ON COMPANY LETTERHEAD]**

**[DATE]**

Dear **[INSERT NAME OF SCHEDULER]:**

My company and I would like to invite **[CONGRESSMAN X; SENATOR X]** for a tour of our operations headquarters and an ambulance ride-along during the month of August. As you know, policies that Congress establishes regarding Medicare and homeland security issues affect every citizen in **[INSERT NAME OF TOWN]**.

Our company provides ambulance services to **[X NUMBER OF CITIZENS, PATIENTS OR SENIORS]** in **[Name Of Town Or District]**. We are also actively involved in the community's efforts to plan and respond to terrorism attacks and natural disasters.

As a provider of essential healthcare and first responder services, we hope the ambulance ride-along will serve as a source of valuable information to Congressman **[or Senator]** **[INSERT LAST NAME OF MEMBER]** to assist in **[HIS/HER]** efforts to ensure that our community has the resources needed to provide a timely and quality response to each request for ambulance services. During the ride-along, we will demonstrate the latest patient care treatments and state-of-the-art equipment. The Congressman **[or Senator]** will also see first-hand the range of duties we perform throughout a shift, such as **[GIVE EXAMPLES OF DUTIES PERFORMED DURING A SHIFT]**.

We are happy to accommodate the Congressman's **[or Senator's]** schedule. Feel free to contact me at **(XXX) XXX-XXXX** with the dates that the Congressman might be available.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**[NAME]**

**[TITLE]**

**[PROVIDER NAME]**



**SAMPLE HIPAA PRIVACY RULE LETTER**

**[PLACE ON COMPANY LETTERHEAD]**

**[DATE]**

Dear **[INSERT NAME OF MEMBER OF CONGRESS]**:

We are pleased that you have **[YOUR STAFF HAS]** accepted our invitation to ride along with one of our crews as they provide vital medical services to your constituents. We believe this experience will assist you in performing your Congressional oversight role over the emergency medical services system that serves beneficiaries of federal health care programs and other citizens in the **[COMMUNITY/COMMUNITIES]** you represent and nationwide.

As you know, HIPAA privacy regulations require health care providers to be more vigilant than ever in protecting the confidentiality of patient information. While HIPAA does permit disclosures of information to federal agencies and authorities for purposes of performing their oversight functions with respect to the health care system and federal programs, HIPAA obligates us to limit the amount of patient information disclosed to the minimum amount necessary for any particular purpose. Consequently, our crews have been trained to treat all patient information, including, but not limited to, patient names and information about patient conditions and treatment, with the utmost discretion. We request that **[YOU/YOUR STAFF]** not seek information about our patients beyond what **[YOU/THEY]** incidentally observe in the course of the ride along.

Finally, prior to the ride along, we respectfully ask that **[YOU/YOUR STAFF]** sign and return the attached Confidentiality Acknowledgment at the **[FAX OR ADDRESS]** listed above to help us discharge our ethical obligations to our patients to respect and protect their privacy and our legal obligations under HIPAA by documenting our efforts to safeguard patient information. This form is similar to the confidentiality statement we require our own employees to sign.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

**[NAME]**

**[TITLE]**

**[PROVIDER NAME]**

**CONFIDENTIALITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The undersigned is a representative of a federal agency or authority which is authorized by law to oversee the health care system and federal programs. In the course of performing that function while participating in a ride-along with [COMPANY NAME] Ambulance Company (“[COMPANY NAME]”), the undersigned will unavoidably come into contact with protected health information regarding patients of [COMPANY NAME]. “Protected health information” includes patient names and other demographic information and all information about a patient’s condition, treatment, or payment for medical services.

The undersigned acknowledges that this information is private and confidential, and agrees not to request from [COMPANY NAME] crews, or subsequently disclose any protected health information, including that which I may incidentally observe or hear, to any party, except as necessary in the performance of my legally authorized Congressional health oversight functions or as otherwise required by law.

---

Signature of Ride-along Participant

---

Date

**SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
PERSON]  
[INSERT DATE]  
NUMBER]

CONTACT: [INSERT CONTACT  
[INSERT PHONE

**[INSERT CONGRESSMAN or SENATOR and LAST NAME] TO PARTICIPATE IN  
AMBULANCE RIDE-ALONG WITH [INSERT AMBULANCE SERVICE NAME  
HERE]  
TO SEE MEDICS IN ACTION**

**[Local town, State, Date] -- On [insert date here], [insert Congressman or Senator and last name] will participate on an ambulance ride-along with [insert Ambulance Service name here] to see local medics in action.**

As a member of the American Ambulance Association (AAA), which represents ambulance service providers across the United States, **[insert Ambulance Service name]** invited **[insert Congressmen or Senator and last name here]** to experience, first hand, the efforts of **[insert town's name here]** local heroes.

Our goal is to provide **[insert Congressmen or Senator and last name here]** with first-hand knowledge about the local impact of efforts in Congress to increase Medicare and homeland security funding for ambulance services. "It is essential that the safety net provided by America's ambulance service providers is strong and has the capacity to respond to not only public health and safety threats, such as the tragic events of September 11, but also to individual medical emergencies and the routine ambulance transportation needs of the communities we serve," said **[ambulance service spokesperson's name here]**. "That is the main reason we have invited **[insert Congressmen or Senator and last name here]** to visit with us."

During the ambulance ride-along, **[insert Congressmen or Senator and last name here]** will see the latest patient care treatments and state-of-the-art equipment. **[Insert Congressmen or Senator and last name here]** will also see the range of duties performed by **[name of company]** medics **[include examples of duties performed during shift]** and will learn about the emergency preparedness and response needs of the community.

###

**LOCAL OPERATIONS PROFILE WORKSHEET**

As you prepare for the ride-along visit with your member of Congress, complete the following checklist to assure you are prepared to answer questions about your operations, your community and your issues.

**Profile your service:**

- ☒ Types of services offered and years of service
- ☒ Area served
- ☒ Number of ambulances and employees
- ☒ Number of ambulance calls and transports per month, per year
- ☒ Service benchmarks such as response time performance, quality assurance, public education
- ☒ Local innovations or awards
- ☒ Partnerships with local public safety, public health and health care organizations
- ☒ Disaster and terrorism preparedness activities

**Contributions to community:**

- ☒ Examples of how ambulance services serve local constituents and Medicare beneficiaries
- ☒ Examples of ambulance service contributions to local charitable organizations

**Local statistics:**

- ☒ Population of area served
- ☒ XX% of population uninsured
- ☒ Describe economic status of local city, county and state government

**Impact of federal policies:**

- ☒ Medicare is xx% of your total revenue; Medicaid is xx% of your total revenue
- ☒ Medicare rates are xx% below your cost of service; Medicaid rates are xx% below cost of service
- ☒ Describe lost revenue as a result of below-cost Medicare rates
- ☒ Explain why local and state taxpayers cannot subsidize below-cost Medicare rates
- ☒ Charity care is xx% of your total revenue because uninsured patients can't pay

- ☒ Without a Medicare increase, describe how you will have to cut services (longer response times, fewer ambulances, cuts in salary or benefits for employees, less investment in quality equipment and vehicles)
- ☒ Describe the types of equipment, training, exercises and planning for which homeland security funding is needed.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **Political Primer: How to Host a Fundraiser**

Hosting a fundraiser is one of the best ways to quickly establish or improve your relationship with your member of Congress and their staff. This event will provide a forum for you to present your issues directly to your member of Congress, improve your standing with the lawmaker and enhance your visibility within your community. An individual, a company, a group of companies, or a group of advocates that have similar interests can host fundraisers.

#### **Planning a Fundraiser**

Listed below are basic guidelines for planning a fundraiser:

- **Work with the member's campaign staff.** Indicate your interest to host a fundraiser. Because most lawmakers informally request that a minimum amount of money be raised at each fundraiser, it is critical that you agree upon the financial goals of the fundraiser to ensure that there is no confusion. It is important that you know the amount in advance so that you can determine whether you will host the event individually or with a group.
- **Assure careful planning of event details.** Get suggestions and guidance from campaign staff on all aspects of the event including the date, location (i.e., private residence, restaurant, etc.) and other arrangements preferred by the lawmaker. Request a sample invitation from the campaign committee to ensure the invitation includes the proper disclaimers. Ask for any special requests the candidate might have with respect to invitations (for instance, some members may request to use certain political party logos).
  - The invitation must list the candidate, location, date, time, and ticket price. Establish the ticket price in consultation with the campaign staff. Pricing varies widely depending on the candidate and type of event. In-district events can be priced as low \$50 per ticket, although \$100 to \$250 is more typical. Minimum proceeds are generally \$7,500.
  - Invitations must include a reply card and a stamped return envelope. Return envelopes should be marked to the attention of the event host and addressed to the campaign office.
- **Assemble a Finance Committee.** As host, one of your primary responsibilities is to raise contributions for the lawmaker's campaign. It is very important that you recruit individuals to assist with this task and participate on a Finance

Committee. Committee members will share responsibility for raising money for the event. Set specific financial goals for each member of the committee. The larger the committee, the more effective the fundraising efforts. During the fundraising process reach out to business associates, other related community groups, and, of course, your state ambulance association. Maintain frequent (daily) contact with campaign staff and Finance Committee members starting one month before the event.

- **Assemble invitation list.** In addition to selecting individuals to invite to the event, identify local “very important persons” (i.e., VIPs) to be provided complementary tickets. VIPs may include elected officials, party leaders, and members of the candidate’s family, etc. Seek advice from the campaign staff on “comps.”
- **Most importantly—rigorously complete fundraising calls!** The only way to raise the targeted amount of money is to consistently make personal telephone calls to every individual invited to the event.

| <b>Hosting a Fundraiser<br/>Planning Steps and Timeline</b> |   |
|---|---|
| <b>8 weeks</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call campaign staff to offer event</li> <li>• Recruit Finance Committee members</li> <li>• Set location and date</li> </ul>  |
| <b>7 weeks</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assemble invitation list</li> <li>• Print invitations</li> </ul>   |
| <b>6 weeks</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send invitations</li> </ul>  |
| <b>4 weeks</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin follow-up calls, each invited guest should receive at least two calls</li> <li>• Call Finance Committee members at least 4 times per week</li> <li>• Call campaign staff at least twice per week</li> <li>• Finalize food and beverage arrangements with the caterer</li> <li>• Hire photographer</li> </ul> |
| <b>2 weeks</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold Finance Committee meeting to evaluate and adjust plans</li> <li>• Call Finance Committee daily</li> <li>• Call campaign staff daily</li> <li>• Confirm VIP guests</li> </ul>  |
| <b>1 week</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce name tags</li> <li>• Conduct “walk thru” and finalize event timeline</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Event</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HOLD EVENT</b></li> </ul>   |
| <b>1 week after</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assure follow-up calls to those whose contributions have not arrived</li> <li>• Send thank you notes to those who have contributed</li> <li>• Provide full accounting of expenses, attendees, other relevant information to campaign staff</li> </ul>  |

## Understanding the Legal Requirements

There are legal requirements that govern handling of political contributions. *The most important fundraising rule is that you may not accept a check from a corporation or business of any kind.* Eligible campaign contributions include those from political action committees (PAC) or individuals. There are limits on the amount of money those individuals and PACs can give to lawmakers and state and federal party organizations. Below are the limits per individual allowed under campaign finance laws:

- A maximum of \$2,700 per person per election for a total of \$5,400 may be contributed to a federal candidate or the candidate's campaign committee. This limit applies separately to each election. Primaries, runoffs and general elections are considered separate elections.
- A maximum of \$5,000 per person per calendar year may be contributed to a PAC or state or local party committee that supports federal candidates.
- A maximum of \$33,400 per person per calendar year may be contributed to the main account of a national party committee. This limit applies separately to a party's national committee, House campaign committee and Senate campaign committee.
- There is no longer a limit on the total amount a person can contribute in a year to campaign committees as a whole. But a person is still subject to the per election and annual limits for each campaign committee.
- Federal law allows individuals to spend up to \$1,000 per host (\$2,000 for husband and wife) on the food, beverage and invitations for home events. The expense of an event held at a private residence does not count against the \$2,000 per person per election limit on individual contributions to candidates. These amounts are outside the contribution limits and do not have to be reported by the campaign.
- Expenses for an event outside the home are considered “in-kind” contributions and must be reported by the campaign. Make sure you provide this information in detail to the campaign staff.
- House and Senate members may accept gifts as long as they are worth less than \$50 (excluding tax and gratuities) and the total value of all gifts received in a year is less than \$100.

### **Etiquette for Discussing Donations**

- Never give a member of Congress or their staff a political contribution while in a House or Senate building. They are precluded from accepting political contributions while at work.



- Never discuss political contributions while in a meeting with a member of Congress. At best, it is bad form and at worst, it is illegal and can be viewed as bribery.

To learn more about current fundraising limits, visit the Federal Election Commission web site at <http://www.fec.gov/>.

### **Guidelines Regarding the Political Activities of Government Employees**

In general, the activities of government employees are governed by the Federal Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. chapter 73 subchapter III). Many states and localities have enacted what is commonly called “little Hatch Acts.” While most state and local laws mirror the federal law, some states and localities have enacted more stringent prohibitions.

While some states or localities may have additional restrictions, government employees may not:

- Be candidates for government office.
- Use official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination.
- Directly or indirectly coerce contributions from subordinates in support of a political party or candidate.
- Allow his or her name to appear on a fundraising solicitation or explicitly solicit contributions.

However, government employees may:

- Campaign for candidates for public office in partisan elections.
- Contribute money to political organizations and attend political fundraising functions.
- Organize a political fundraiser as long as he or she does not personally accept funds.
- Attend political rallies and meetings.

Listed below is additional information about the political activities of government employees:

- Government employees may make contributions to partisan political campaigns and to political action committees (PACs), purchase raffle tickets, and attend fundraisers.

- Government employees may help organize fundraisers but may not solicit contributions. Hosting home fundraisers is a questionable activity. While hosting a home fundraiser may not be explicitly prohibited, it gives the appearance of impropriety.
- Government employees may not solicit contributions, as such, writing letters on either employer or personal stationery is prohibited. Unfortunately, this is not a black or white issue. For example, a government employee can be shown on a solicitation to a political fundraiser as a “guest speaker,” as long as he or she does not explicitly solicit or encourage contributions and the solicitation does not use the employee’s official title. However, an employee ordinarily addressed with a general term such as “Honorable” may use or permit the use of that title on the invitation.
- Government employees may meet with elected officials and in many instances advocate for funding and for other positions. Government employees may not use federal funds to advocate for more federal funds or for other positions. However, most public and private organizations have multiple sources of funds, and this prohibition is rarely enforceable. Lobbying is a “loose term.” Most states and many large cities have offices in Washington and lobby under the guise of providing “technical assistance.” Many municipalities and localities routinely lobby for appropriation funds.
- Some government employees are explicitly prohibited from engaging in partisan political activity. In general, this prohibition is limited to law enforcement (e.g., the FBI) and security agencies (e.g., the CIA).
- In general, government officials should avoid any political activity while “on duty” or in a manner suggesting that they are acting in their official capacity. Recognizing the difficulty of defining when an official is acting in their official capacity, a number of prohibitions, such as the prohibition against solicitation, extend to “personal activities.”
- It is not always easy to define the types of employees covered by these acts. Federal law applies to federal employees and state and local employees financed in whole or part by federal loans or grants. State and local laws vary with regard to covered employees.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **FEDERAL RESOURCES**

#### **Important Federal Telephone Numbers**

##### **Legislative**

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| House Switchboard  | 202-225-3121 |
| Senate Switchboard | 202-224-3121 |

##### **Agencies**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)           | 202-646-2500 |
| Department of Homeland Security (DHS)                | 202-282-8000 |
| Department of Justice (DOJ)                          | 202-514-2001 |
| National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)          | 202-314-6000 |
| Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)      | 202-690-6726 |
| Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)        | 202-690-7000 |
| Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) | 202-693-2000 |
| Department of Transportation (DOT)                   | 202-366-1111 |

##### **Executive**

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| The White House | 202-456-1414 |
|-----------------|--------------|

##### **Other**

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| General Accounting Office (GAO)   | 202-512-3000 |
| Government Printing Office (GPO)  | 202-512-0000 |
| Congressional Budget Office (CBO) | 202-226-2600 |

#### **Formats for emailing staff and Members of Congress**

Members of Congress: Email addresses for Members of Congress are usually available on the Member's Web site.

Staff: The majority of staff email addresses follow the formats below. If you get an email error, call the Member's office and request the correct address.

Senate staffers: First\_Last@Senator'slastname.senate.gov  
Example: Jane\_Doe@Smith.Senate.gov

House staffers: First.Last@mail.house.gov  
Example: Jane.Doe@mail.house.gov

**Key Websites**

## Research campaign finance data:

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Federal Election Commission (FEC)  | <a href="http://www.fec.gov">http://www.fec.gov</a>                 |
| The Center for Responsive Politics | <a href="http://www.opensecrets.org">http://www.opensecrets.org</a> |

## Research Bills in Congress:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Thomas Legislative Information on the Internet       | <a href="http://Thomas.loc.gov">http://Thomas.loc.gov</a>                             |
| General Accounting Office (GAO)                      | <a href="http://www.gao.gov">http://www.gao.gov</a>                                   |
| House of Representatives                             | <a href="http://www.house.gov">http://www.house.gov</a>                               |
| United States Senate                                 | <a href="http://www.senate.gov">http://www.senate.gov</a>                             |
| White House  | <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov">http://www.whitehouse.gov</a>                     |
| Department of Homeland Security (DHS)                | <a href="http://www.dhs.gov">http://www.dhs.gov</a>                                   |
| Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)           | <a href="http://www.fema.gov">http://www.fema.gov</a>                                 |
| Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)        | <a href="http://www.hhs.gov">http://www.hhs.gov</a>                                   |
| Department of Justice (DOJ)                          | <a href="http://www.doj.gov">http://www.doj.gov</a>                                   |
| Department of Transportation (DOT)                   | <a href="http://www.dot.gov">http://www.dot.gov</a>                                   |
| Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)     | <a href="http://cms.hhs.gov">http://cms.hhs.gov</a>                                   |
| Senate Finance Committee                             | <a href="http://finance.senate.gov">http://finance.senate.gov</a>                     |
| Senate Appropriations Committee                      | <a href="http://appropriations.senate.gov">http://appropriations.senate.gov</a>       |
| Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee | <a href="http://health.senate.gov">http://health.senate.gov</a>                       |
| House Ways and Means Committee                       | <a href="http://waysandmeans.house.gov">http://waysandmeans.house.gov</a>             |
| House Energy and Commerce Committee                  | <a href="http://energycommerce.house.gov">http://energycommerce.house.gov</a>         |
| House Appropriations Committee                       | <a href="http://www.house.gov/appropriations">http://www.house.gov/appropriations</a> |

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **Glossary**

**Act:** (1) As used by Congress, a bill that has been passed by one House and engrossed. (2) As commonly used, a bill that has been passed by both Houses of Congress, enrolled, and either signed by the President or passed over his veto.

**Adjournment sine die:** Adjournment without definitely fixing a day for reconvening; literally "adjournment without a day." Usually used to denote the final adjournment of a session of Congress.

**Administrative records:** Records of a committee or an officer of Congress that relate to the administrative budget of Congress, including accounting, personnel, supply, and similar administrative or facilitative operations normally common to most organizations, as distinguished from program or substantive records that relate to the organization's primary functions. Also called Housekeeping Records.

**Amendment:** (1) A change made in proposed legislation after it has been formally introduced. The committee to which the bill was referred may propose an amendment, or it may be proposed by a member from the floor of either House when it is brought up for consideration. All amendments must be agreed to by a majority of the members voting in the House where the amendment is proposed. (2) A change in the Constitution. Such an amendment is usually proposed in the form of a **joint resolution** of Congress, which may originate in either House. If passed, it does not go to the President for his approval but is submitted directly to the States for ratification.

**Appropriation:** A formal approval to draw funds from the Treasury for specific purposes.

**Architect of the Capitol:** The official who acts as the agent of Congress and is responsible for the maintenance of the Capitol and its grounds, House and Senate office buildings, Capitol Power Plant, Senate garage, R. A. Taft Memorial, buildings and grounds of the Supreme Court and Library of Congress, and operation of the Botanic Gardens and the Senate and House restaurants. The architect is responsible for the acquisition of property and the planning and construction of congressional buildings. He or she assists in deciding which works of art, historical objects, and exhibits are to be accepted for display in the Capitol and the House and Senate office buildings. The flag office that flies American flags over the Capitol is under the Architect's direction.

**Bicameral:** A lawmaking system based on two legislative chambers.

**Bill:** A written presentation to a legislative body proposing certain legislation for enactment into law. Bills may originate in either House, except as noted below, and must be passed by both Houses and approved by the President before they become law or, if disapproved by the President, must be passed over his veto by a two-thirds vote of each House. If a bill is passed within the 10-day period preceding the adjournment of Congress, the President may withhold approval and the bill will die (pocket veto). Bills for raising revenue, according to the Constitution, must originate in the House of Representatives, and bills for appropriating money customarily originate in the House. A bill is referred to in the following manner: H.R. 120, 70th Cong. 1st session.

**Original bill:** A bill in the form in which it was introduced, handwritten or typewritten or a printed copy of a like bill that had been introduced in an earlier Congress. A bill, after introduction, is assigned a number and is printed.

**Reported copy of a bill:** The copy of a bill that has been discharged by a committee for consideration on the floor of the House. Such a bill is usually placed on one of the House calendars but may be brought up for immediate consideration without being placed on a calendar.

**Engrossed bill:** The final printed copy of a bill as it passed the House of origin and is sent to the other House for further action, or having passed the other House also, is sent back to the House of origin for enrollment. The engrossed copy of a bill that has passed both Houses together with its engrossed amendments is the official working copy from which an enrolled bill is prepared.

**Enrolled bill:** The final copy of an engrossed bill that has passed both Houses, embodying all amendments. Such a bill is printed on paper (formerly copied by a clerk in a fair, round hand on parchment) and is signed first by the Speaker of the House and second by the President of the Senate. On the back is an attestation by the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate, as the case may be, indicating the House of origin. The enrolled bill is presented to the President for his approval or disapproval. Some enrolled bills that were vetoed are among the records of the House of Representatives or Senate. Approved bills are in the General Records of the U.S. Government in the National Archives; those approved before May 24, 1950, having been received from the Secretary of State. Those after that date were received from the Office of the Federal Register. See also **Veto**.

**Calendar:** A record of the order in which bills are to be taken up for consideration.

**Committee calendar:** A chronological listing that is used by a committee to record bills and resolutions referred to the committee and to indicate the

status of matters the committee is considering. Committees sometimes include additional information in their published calendar.

**Consent calendar:** A calendar that is used by members to speed consideration of measures that are considered non-controversial. Bills are called up for consideration regularly twice a month.

**Discharge calendar:** The calendar to which motions to discharge are referred when the discharge motion has the required 218 members' signatures. A motion to discharge a committee is an action to relieve a committee from jurisdiction over a measure before it. This is attempted more often in the House than in the Senate, and is rarely successful. Any member may file a discharge motion 30 days after a bill is referred to committee. Such a motion requires 218 signatures in the House and is delayed seven days after the signatures have been obtained. On the second and fourth Mondays of each month a signing member may be recognized to move that the committee be discharged. This seldom-used calendar forces debate on discharge motions on the House floor because a bill or resolution has been bottled up in committee for more than 30 days, and a majority of the House wants to consider that measure.

**House Calendar:** A calendar or scheduling for action by the House on which are placed all public bills or joint resolutions not raising revenue or directly or indirectly appropriating money or property.

**Private Calendar:** A calendar of the Committee of the Whole House on which all bills or joint resolutions of a private character are placed. See also Private law.

**Union Calendar:** A calendar of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, on which are placed revenue bills, general appropriation bills, and bills of a public character directly or indirectly appropriating money or property.

**Chronological file:** A folder containing copies of documents, frequently letters sent, arranged in chronological order, sometimes known as a chronological or "chron" file or a day file. The author for his or her reference usually retains chronological files, whereas a reading file might be circulated to other people for their reference.

**Clerk of the House:** The chief administrative officer of the House. The Clerk acts as presiding officer pending the election of the Speaker; makes up the roll of House members from certificates of election; makes up and publishes a list of reports that are, by law, to be submitted to Congress; prepares and prints the *Journal*; certifies the passage of bills and resolutions; attests and seals warrants and subpoenas; keeps contingent and stationery accounts; acts as custodian of property; pays the salaries of all House personnel except those

of members and delegates; is custodian of all noncurrent records; and supervises the House Library.

**Committee:** A body of members, usually limited in number, appointed under House rules or by resolution, to consider some matter of business (e.g., investigations or legislation) and to report thereon to the House for further action. Only a full committee can report legislation for action by the House or Senate.

**Committee of the Whole House:** A committee that is formed by the House resolving itself into a committee. The Committee of the Whole House can act with a quorum of only 100 members instead of the 218 required for action by the House itself. It does not originate resolutions or bills but receives those devised by standing or select committees and referred to it. Any legislation favorably acted on by the Committee of the Whole House must be reported to the House for further action. Such measures, however, must first have passed through the regular legislative or appropriation committees and be placed on the appropriate **calendar**. When the Committee of the Whole House reports, the House usually acts at once on the report without referring the matter again to select or other committees.

**Conference committee:** A committee appointed by the Speaker and the President of the Senate to resolve disagreements on a bill passed in different versions in each House. It is composed usually of the ranking members of the committees of each House that originally considered the legislation.

**Select or special committee:** A committee appointed to perform a special function that is beyond the authority or capacity of a standing committee. A select committee is usually created by a simple resolution, which outlines its duties and powers, and its members are appointed under the rules of their respective Houses. A select committee expires on completion of its assigned duties. Most special committees are investigative in nature rather than legislative.

**Joint committee:** A committee consisting of members of both Houses and having jurisdiction over matters of joint interest. Most joint committees are standing committees, but special joint committees are created at times.

**Standing committee:** A committee permanently authorized by House and Senate rules. The **Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946** greatly reduced the number of committees. The powers and duties of each committee are set forth in the rules of the House and Senate, and the membership is elected on motion or resolution from the floor at the beginning of each Congress.

**Subcommittee:** A subdivision of a standing committee that considers specified matters and reports back to the full committee.



**Committee jurisdiction:** Subjects each committee is expected to cover as specified in rules published in House and Senate manuals. Jurisdictions can never be drawn to cover all contingencies and intercommittee cooperation is essential.

**Committee print:** A general term used for a variety of publications issued by congressional committees on subjects related to their legislative or research activities. These publications are generally viewed as internal background information publications, and some are not announced for public distribution. Committee prints are of two kinds: (1) reports related to legislative activities such as investigative and oversight hearings, and (2) reports of results of research activities. Some committees have their own research staffs; others use outside consultants, and most use the staff of the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress to produce situation studies, statistical or historical information reports, or legislative analyses.

**Conference:** A meeting of representatives of the two Houses for the purpose of reaching agreement on conflicting versions of a bill or joint resolution or parts thereof passed in each House in order to have an agreed-upon version to send to the President. Both Houses must pass the conference version of the bill approved by a majority of the members appointed by each chamber to this ad hoc committee before being sent to the President.

**Congress:** (1) The national legislature as a whole, including both the House and the Senate. (2) The united body of senators and representatives for any term of two years for which the whole body is chosen. A Congress lasts for a period of two years and usually has two sessions, but it may consist of three or more sessions. Before the adoption of the 20th amendment to the Constitution in 1933, a session of Congress began on the first Monday in December of each year, each odd-numbered year marking the beginning of a new Congress. Now a regular session of Congress begins on January 3 of each year and a new Congress begins January 3 of every odd-numbered year.

**Congressional Record:** The daily, printed account of the proceedings in both the House and Senate Chambers, recording floor debates, statements, and floor actions. Highlights of legislative and committee action are embodied in a "Daily Digest" section of the **Record**, and members are entitled to have their extraneous remarks printed in an appendix known as "Extension of Remarks." Members may edit and revise remarks made on the floor during debate, and quotations from debate reported by the press are not always found in the **Record**. The **Congressional Record** is printed for the convenience of the members. The only official record kept of the proceedings of the Senate or House is the **Journal** of each body.

**Delegate:** A nonvoting representative of one of the territories or of a district organized by law who receives the compensation, allowances, and benefits of a member of the House and is entitled to the privileges and immunities of members. Delegates have a right to vote in committee and otherwise participate in House floor activities. A Resident Commissioner who has the same rights as a Delegate represents the citizens of Puerto Rico. At the

organization of the House during the opening of the first session, Delegates and the Resident Commissioner are sworn but the Clerk of the House does not put them on the roll for voting.

**Discharge a committee:** A motion to discharge a committee is an action to relieve a committee from jurisdiction over a measure before it. This is attempted more often in the House than in the Senate, and is rarely successful. Any member may file a discharge motion 30 days after a bill is referred to committee. Such a motion requires 218 signatures in the House and is delayed seven days after the signatures have been obtained. On the second and fourth Mondays of each month, a signing member may be recognized to move that the committee be discharged. This seldom-used calendar forces debate on discharge motions on the House floor because a bill or resolution has been bottled up in committee for more than 30 days, and a majority of the House wants to consider that measure.

**Electoral vote:** (1) The vote cast by an elector for the President of the United States. (2) The aggregation of the votes of all electors in a Presidential election.

**Electors:** Those chosen by vote of the people to the Electoral College, the function of which is to elect the President of the United States. Each state has as many electors as it has members of the House of Representatives plus its two members of the Senate.

**Endorsement:** The writing on the outside or cover of a bill, report, petition or memorial, or other document, giving a brief description of the document, by whom submitted or presented, date of referral, and either the name of the committee to which it was referred or other disposition that might have been made.

**Executive communications:** Texts of various communications to the Congress which are recorded as House Documents. They include Presidential messages proposing new legislation for consideration by the Congress or vetoing legislation passed by the Congress. Also included for a signed bill is the statement by the President that describes the benefits to be derived from the new law and acknowledges the lawmakers and other interested parties who were closely associated with promoting the legislation. In addition, annual and special reports to Congress from various executive agencies are published as House and, occasionally, Senate Documents. Often these agency reports are transmitted by Presidential message. However, they may come directly from the reporting agency.

**Executive department:** One of the major functional subdivisions of the executive branch of the Government, the head of which is a member of the President's Cabinet.

**Federal Register:** (1) The daily publication, *Federal Register*. (2) The office in the National Archives and Records Administration that compiles and publishes the daily *Federal Register* of rules, regulations, and notices from government agencies; the *Code of Federal Regulations*; the *United States Government Manual*; *Compilation of Presidential Documents*; *Public Papers of the Presidents*; *United States Statutes at Large*; and **slip laws**.

**Filibuster:** A time-delaying tactic associated with the Senate and used by a minority in an effort to prevent a vote on a bill or amendment that probably would pass if voted on directly. The most common method is to take advantage of the Senate's rules permitting unlimited debate, but other forms of parliamentary maneuvering may be used. The stricter rules used by the House make filibusters more difficult, but delaying tactics are employed occasionally through various procedural devices allowed by House rules.

**Fiscal year:** The 12-month period used in accounting for the receipt and expenditure of funds from the U.S. Treasury. The Government operated on a calendar fiscal year basis from 1789 through 1842. A separate report was issued for the first six months of 1843. Thereafter, the fiscal year was defined as July 1 to the following June 30 for the years from 1843 through 1975. The 1976 fiscal year began July 1, 1975, but did not end until September 30, 1976. The 1977 fiscal year and all succeeding fiscal years began on October 1 and continued through the following September 30.

**Government Printing Office:** The agency in the legislative branch that prints and binds, either in-house or on a commercial contract, all congressional publications as well as publications of departments and agencies of the Federal Government. Responsibilities include furnishing inks, paper, and printing supplies to governmental agencies on request; distributing and selling Government publications; cataloging and maintaining a library collection of its publications; and operating an exchange account for publications allotted to members.

**Hearing:** (1) A meeting of a House committee at which interested parties give testimony during the consideration of proposed legislation or during an investigation. (2) The recorded testimony presented at such a hearing. At hearings on legislation, witnesses usually include experts in the matter under consideration, governmental officials, and representatives of persons affected by the bill or bills under study. Hearings related to special investigations bring forth a variety of witnesses. Committees sometimes use their subpoena power to summon reluctant witnesses.

**Executive hearing:** (1) Closed hearings that bar the public and the press. (2) Recorded testimony presented at such a hearing and rarely printed. If not a separate series, the recorded testimony is typically found among **committee papers**.

**Public hearing:** (1) A hearing that is open to the public and press. (2) The recorded testimony presented at such a hearing usually printed and distributed by the committee conducting the hearing.

**Impeachment:** The bringing of charges against an official of the Government that questions his or her right or qualifications to hold office. Maladministration or misconduct while in office is usually the basis of the charges. The House of Representatives make impeachment charges. The trial of an impeached officer is conducted before the Senate. The Chief Justice of the United States presides when the President of the United States is being tried.

**Independent agency:** An agency of the executive branch of the government that operates independently of any **executive department**. The head of an independent agency is not a member of the President's Cabinet.

**Joint resolution:** (1) A form of proposed legislation similar to a bill, which in former usage served a limited purpose or was temporary in its effect. In present usage, however, a joint resolution is almost identical to a bill. A joint resolution (except a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution) requires the signature of the President or passage over his veto before it becomes law. It is designated in the following manner: H.J. Res. 25, 70th Cong., 1st sess. There may also be original joint resolutions; reported, calendar, and desk copies of joint resolutions; engrossed joint resolutions, and enrolled joint resolutions. (2) The approved measure which is treated as an act and which, since 1941, has been numbered in the same series as acts that originated as bills. Joint resolutions are generally used in dealing with limited matters, such as a single appropriation for a special purpose.

**Journal:** The official record (required by the Constitution in Article 1, section 5) of the proceedings on the floor of the House, which is read each day and approved. The *Journal* records the actions taken, but, unlike the *Congressional Record*, it does not include the substantially verbatim report of speeches, debates, etc. The *Journal* is printed, but the manuscript may be available in two forms, rough and finished. The rough journal consists of the first draft of the proceedings that is drafted from **minute books**. The finished journal is generally prepared from the rough journal after it has been revised and corrected. The finished journal is used as copy for the printer. The manuscript journal, after being edited and proofread by the Public Printer, is bound and returned to the Clerk of the House.

**Jurisdiction:** The sphere or limits of authority of a House standing committee. A House rule defines each committee's jurisdiction. The Speaker must refer public bills and members' private bills to the appropriate committee, but the House itself may refer a bill to any committee without regard to jurisdiction. A committee may not report a bill if the subject matter has not been referred to the committee by the House establishing jurisdiction by precedent.

**Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946:** An act (60 Stat. 812), under which the 44 House committees of the 79th Congress were consolidated into 19, effective January 2, 1947. The jurisdiction of each new committee was specified, and committees were required to exercise continuous oversight over the agencies under their jurisdiction. All official committee records were to be kept separate from the congressional office records of the member serving as chairperson.

**Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970:** The act (84 Stat. 1140) that removed much of the secrecy surrounding members' actions and positions on issues and legislation. All roll-call votes taken in committees were required to be made public. House members' positions on floor amendments were individually recorded and printed in the *Congressional Record*.

**Majority Leader:** The officer who is elected by his party colleagues as the majority party's legislative strategist and second ranking leader after the Speaker.

**Majority Whip:** In effect, the assistant majority leader, in either House. His job is to help marshal majority forces in support of party strategy and legislation.

**Manual:** The official handbook in each House that prescribes in detail its organization, procedures, and operations.

**Mark Up:** The meeting of a Committee to review the text of a bill before reporting it out. Committee members offer and vote on proposed changes to the bill's language, known as amendments. Most mark-ups end with a vote to send the new version of the bill to the floor for final approval.

**Minority Leader:** Floor leader for the minority party in each Chamber.

**Minority Whip:** The assistant leader for the minority party.

**Motion:** A proposal made to a deliberative body for its approval or disapproval. A motion may be made orally. However, in the House, the Speaker may require a motion to be put in writing. The precedence of motions, and whether they are debatable, is set forth in the House and Senate manuals.

**Nonrecord:** Material not usually included within the definition of records, such as unofficial copies of documents kept only for convenience or reference, stocks of publications and processed documents, and library or museum material intended solely for reference or exhibition.

**Office of record:** An office designated as the official custodian of records for specified programs, activities, or transactions of the House or Senate. For example, the House Administration Committee maintains permanent records of the hiring of consultants by committees and the Senate Disbursing Office keeps official Senate personnel records.

**Order:** A direction to carry out an action that has already been agreed to by the House. Orders can be addressed to committees, or individual members, or officials of the House. When the House commands, it is by an "order," but fact, principles, and the members' own opinions and purposes are expressed in the form of **resolutions**.

**Overriding of a Veto:** Enacting a bill without the President's signature after the President has disapproved it and returned it to Congress with his objections. To override a veto the Constitution (Article 1, section 7) requires a two-thirds majority recorded vote in each chamber. The question put to each House is: "Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?"

**Parliamentarian:** The officer who is responsible for advising presiding officers and members on parliamentary procedures; for preparing and maintaining compilations of the precedents of the House; and for referral of bills, resolutions, and other communications to the appropriate committees at the direction of the Speaker.

**Petition:** A type of document, similar to a **memorial**, submitted to the Congress asking that some action be taken by the Government or taking a positive stand on an issue. Generally speaking, in the late 18th and 19th centuries a petition, unlike a **memorial**, included a prayer (e.g., petition of John Smith praying that his claim be granted). **Memorials** also express opposition to ("remonstrate against") some pending action. In modern usage, there is no apparent difference between a **memorial** and a petition, and petition has become the commonly accepted generic term. A similar document transmitted to Congress by a legislative body such as a State legislature takes the form of a **resolution** and is sometimes termed a memorial.

**Presidential messages:** Communications to Congress delivered by the President in person or in writing as provided for under the Constitution (Article 2, section 3). Those in writing are usually communicated on the same day to both Houses. Only messages of great importance are delivered in person.

**Private law:** An act granting a pension, authorizing payment of a claim, or affording another form of relief to a private individual or legal entity.

**Public law:** A act that is of universal application, that is clothed with any public interest, or that applies to a class of persons as opposed to a private law that applies only to a specified individual or legal entity.

**Quorum:** The number of members whose presence is necessary for the transaction of business. In the Senate and House, it is a majority of the membership. When there are no vacancies, this is 51 in the Senate and 218 in the House. A quorum is 100 in the **Committee of the Whole House**. If a point of order is made that a quorum is not present, the only business that is in order is a motion to adjourn or a motion to direct the Sergeant at Arms to request the attendance of absentees.

**Reconciliation:** Process by which the authorizing committees in the House and Senate change the various programs they administer in order to meet the federal budget target figures.

**Refer:** To assign a bill, communication, or other document to a committee for its consideration. The House or Senate **Journal** indicates the committee to which any bill or document was referred. The Speaker or presiding officer of the Senate may refer measures to several committees because of the jurisdictional complexities of modern legislation. There are three types of multiple referral: joint referral of a bill concurrently to two or more committees; sequential referral of a bill successively to one committee, then a second, and so on; and split referral of various parts of a bill to different committees for consideration.

**Report:** (1) To bring back to the House or Senate, with recommendations, a bill or other matter that was referred to a committee or that originated in the committee. (2) A document presenting a committee's findings, or the findings of a conference committee or an executive agency that is required by law to submit them. Beginning with the 16th Congress (1819-21), committee reports were printed in a separate series. They are usually numbered and indicate the bills or other matters to which they refer; they are identified in the following manner: H. Rept. 240, 70th Cong., 2d sess. Reports from executive agencies or other sources frequently are printed as House Documents.

**Committee report:** A document explaining a committee's position on legislation when a bill is discharged from a committee. When expressed, minority views will also be included in such a report.

**Conference committee report:** A two-part presentation that includes: (1) a bill, called the conference version, which has been approved by a majority of the managers appointed by each chamber to an ad hoc committee, the **conference committee**, and which reconciles the differences in form and provisions of bills passed on the same subject by the two Houses. The conference version of the bill sent to both Chambers for approval contains the language agreed to and recommended by the managers. Approval of the conference version will ensure passage of legislation in identical language by both Chambers as required to complete legislative action on a bill; and (2) a descriptive statement of the provisions of the conference version. A conference committee report is numbered and designated in the same way as a regular committee report.

**Resolution:** A formal expression of position by one or both Houses not having the force of law, a means of providing procedural arrangements between the two Houses, or, if a joint resolution, an enactment having the authority of legislation. There are three types of resolutions:

**Simple resolution:** A measure that deals with matters entirely within the prerogatives of one House or the other. It does not contain legislation and does not require concurrence of the other House or Presidential approval. Its authority extends only to the House in which it originates. It is designated H. Res. if it originates in the House of Representatives and S. Res. if it originates in the Senate. Such a resolution is used to amend the rules or procedures of one chamber; to express the will or sentiments of the House originating it; to create select or special committees; to authorize the printing of special reports or additional copies of reports or hearings; to give advice on foreign policy or other executive business; to authorize funds to conduct investigations, either select or special, or to fund an investigative subcommittee; and to request information from administrative agencies.

**Concurrent resolution:** A measure that is used as a vehicle for expressing the sense of Congress on various foreign policy and domestic issues. It is similar to a simple resolution except that it indicates joint action and requires the concurrence of both Houses. It contains no legislation and its authority does not extend beyond Congress. Also, it is used, for example, to set the time for an **adjournment sine die**, to correct enrolled bills, to express the will of Congress, and to create special joint committees. It does not require Presidential approval. Concurrent resolutions are usually printed and are assigned numbers by the House of origin. They are referred to in the following manner: H. Con. Res. 25, 70th Cong., 1st sess.

**Joint resolution:** (1) A form of proposed legislation similar to a bill, which in former usage served a limited purpose or was temporary in its effect. In present usage, however, a joint resolution is almost identical to a bill. A joint resolution (except a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution) requires the signature of the President or passage over his veto before it becomes law. It is designated in the following manner: H.J. Res. 25, 70th Cong., 1st sess. There may also be original joint resolutions; reported, calendar, and desk copies of joint resolutions; engrossed joint resolutions, and enrolled joint resolutions. (2) The approved measure which is treated as an act and which, since 1941, has been numbered in the same series as acts that originated as bills. Joint resolutions are generally used in dealing with limited matters, such as a single appropriation for a special purpose.

**Roll call:** (1) The calling of the roll for the purpose of determining the presence of a quorum or for recording the yeas and nays on a specific measure. (2) The record of roll calls taken. Records of roll calls are numbered in sequence and are retained in the files.

**Rule:** (1) A standing order governing the conduct of House or Senate business. The permanent rules of either Chamber deal with duties of officers, the order of business, admission to the floor, parliamentary procedures on handling amendments and voting, jurisdictions of committees, and other procedures. (2) In the House, a resolution reported by the Rules Committee to govern the handling of a particular bill on the floor. The committee may report a "rule," also called a "special order," in the form of a simple resolution. If the resolution is adopted by the House, the temporary rule becomes as valid as any standing rule and lapses only after action has been completed on the measure to which it pertains. A rule may set the time limit on general debate. It also may waive points of order against provisions, such as non-germane language of the bill in question or against certain amendments intended to be proposed to the bill from the floor. A rule may even forbid all amendments or all amendments except those proposed by the legislative committee that handled the bill. In this instance, the rule is known as a "closed" or "gag" rule as opposed to an "open" rule, which puts no limitation on floor amendments, thus leaving the bill completely open to alteration by the adoption of germane amendments.



**Sergeant at Arms:** A House officer whose duties include enforcing attendance at sessions of the House; enforcing House Rules and maintaining decorum; keeping the Mace, the symbol of legislative power and authority; operating the House bank for members; maintaining a check cashing facility for House employees; providing for the security of the building, visitors, and all foreign delegations visiting the House; and serving on a rotational basis as chairman of the Capitol Police Board and Capitol Guide Board.

**Session:** A meeting of the Congress that continues from day to day until **adjournment sine die**. Two or more sessions may occur within the 2-year period covered by a Congress.

**Slip law:** The first official publication of a bill that has been enacted and signed into law. Each is published separately in unbound single-sheet or pamphlet form.

**Speaker:** The permanent presiding officer of the House, selected by the caucus of the majority party and formally elected by the whole House. The Speaker can vote on all matters, but normally does not do so except in case of a tie vote.

**Speaker pro tempore:** Member appointed by the Speaker to perform the duties of the chair in the Speaker's absence. Such appointments do not extend beyond three legislative days. In case of illness, the Speaker may, with the approval of the House, appoint a Speaker pro tempore for a period of 10 days. Under certain circumstances, the House may elect a Speaker pro tempore for the period of the Speaker's absence.

**Special session:** A session of Congress held after it has adjourned sine die, completing its regular session. The President of the United States under his constitutional powers convenes special sessions.

**Statute:** A law enacted by a legislative body. The laws enacted by Congress are published in a series of volumes entitled *Statutes at Large*.

**Table:** To dispose of a matter finally and adversely without debate. A motion to "lay on the table" is not debatable in either House. In the Senate different language is sometimes used, and a motion may be worded to let a bill "lie on the table," perhaps for subsequent "picking up." This motion is more flexible, merely keeping the bill pending for later action, if desired. Tabling motions on amendments are effective debate-ending devices in the Senate.

**Unanimous Consent:** Almost any rule in the House or Senate can be overlooked by unanimous consent. The Senate relies on unanimous consent agreements to define legislative ground rules for particular measures, which protects the rights of the minority party and forces members to work with one another. The House uses unanimous consent agreements relatively sparingly--usually to adopt a noncontroversial measure—and legislative ground rules are set by majority, often party line, vote.

**United States Code:** An official Government publication that consolidates and codifies the general and permanent laws of the United States arranged by subject under 50 titles, the first

six dealing with general or political subjects, and the other 44 alphabetically arranged from "agriculture" to "war and national defense." The code is revised every 6 years, and the Office of the Law Revision Counsel of the House of Representatives publishes a supplement after each session of Congress. This office is conducting a project to codify all laws of the United States and eventually at the project's completion it will be unnecessary for researchers to refer to *Statutes at Large* for any current law text.

**Veto:** (1) Presidential disapproval of a bill by returning it without signing it within 10 days (excluding Sundays) after it is presented to the President. Such a bill is usually accompanied by a veto message stating the President's reasons for disapproval. It is returned to the House of origin and becomes a question of high privilege in the relative priority of motions and actions to be made in the chamber. (2) Presidential disapproval of a bill by failing to sign it (pocket veto) less than 10 days before the adjournment of Congress. Joint resolutions may be vetoed in the same ways.

**Yeas and nays:** The record of the vote on a matter by the members of the House.