

HOW TO CALL A CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE

PREPARING TO CALL YOUR OFFICE

- Know the policy: Gather the facts about the topic you are calling in about.

TIP: Write notes to have in front of you when you call.

- If you are calling about a specific bill, know the bill number and proper name. It's possible that the bill has been voted on in a past Congress so you should check to see if your member has voted on or co-sponsored the bill before.

TIP: Check how many members of the state delegation are co-sponsors of the bill.

- Check if your member of Congress has issued any public statements about the bill or particular issue you are calling about.
- Be ready to tell your member of Congress if you want them to vote “yes” or “no” on the bill.
- Check the Heritage Action Scorecard to see how conservative your member is and how they've voted on past issues.

PREPARING TO CALL YOUR OFFICE

BE POLITE

Staff assistants and interns have to answer calls all day long. Be polite and considerate, but firm enough to ask the questions and get the answers you need.

EXPLAIN YOUR CONNECTION TO THE DISTRICT

Congressional offices typically are unable to field calls from people who are not in their congressional district so make sure you mention your connection to the district or the state of the member you are calling to ensure your message will be passed along.

LEARN HOW TO REACH A HIGHER RANKED STAFFER IN THE OFFICE

When calling an office, the first person you will speak with is likely an intern or staff assistant. It's important to have your facts and questions ready. If you feel you are not getting the answers you want, you should ask for the LA who handles the issue you are calling about. You can simply ask “Can I talk with your LA who handles tax issues.” If they say no, ask if you can speak with the Legislative Correspondent who handles that issue.

ASK YOUR QUESTIONS UP FRONT

When you are calling to gather intel, make sure to ask your questions at the beginning of the call. Capitol Hill staffers will alter their answers based on what they think you want to hear, so if you want intel, make sure to ask your questions first, and then give your views on a specific issue after.