



Organizing & Executing a Meeting with Your Member of Congress or Their Staff

The American Promise National Citizen Leadership Conference (NCLC) Lobby Day is Monday, October 21st, 2019. We will all be organizing meetings with our respective representatives to further our mission of passing a 28th Amendment to get big money out of politics. Below is a step-by-step guide for everything you need to know about organizing an effective meeting. Let's do this!

Date: Monday, October 21st, 2019

Time: 8:00am - 8:30am: Group Photo on the Capitol Steps

8:30am - 9:00am: Group March from Capitol Steps to New Hampshire Congressional Delegation to Celebrate Statewide Victory

9:00am - 12:30pm: Window to Schedule Meetings With Your Members of Congress

12:30pm - 1:30pm: Lunch in 421 Cannon Office Building with Congressman Jim McGovern

1:30pm - 4:30pm: Window to Schedule Meetings With Your Members of Congress

4:30pm - 5:30pm: Closing Session in 421 Cannon Office Building with Ben Cohen from Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream and founder of Stamp Stampede

- I. You have questions? No worries, we have answers! Listen to our pre-Lobby Day training calls to get ready!

What's the point of Lobby Day?

We are meeting with members of Congress (House and Senate) to urge them to support legislation that will reverse a series of Supreme Court decisions which equated money with free speech and gave constitutional rights, meant only for humans, to corporations, unions, and nonprofits. If they are already supporters we want to urge them to advocate for it, and if they already advocate for it, let's turn them into champions.

Who should set up the meeting?

If you are in an APA, be clear about which APA member is setting up each of your meetings. If you are not in an APA, contact Kimberly Clinch (kimberlyc@americanpromise.net) or Rosie Smith



(rosies@americanpromise.net) to see if there is someone already coming to the NCLC from your community and setting up the appointments or if you can be the liaison setting them up.

Are there any challenges I should know about?

Of all current 28th Amendment proposals in Congress, there is currently only one with a Republican co-sponsor—John Katko (R-NY). That is where American Promise can turn things around. Even if your member of Congress is a Democrat, who do you know in a neighboring Congressional district who has a Republican Congressperson? You can either bring them with you to the NCLC or get their help in setting up a meeting for you on Capitol Hill with their member of Congress or a staffer.

How do I find the name of my U.S. Representative?

You can find your U.S. Representative by going to [this link](#).

How do I find the names of my two U.S. Senators?

You can find a list of all U.S. Senators [here](#).

Are there any sources or data I can cite during my meeting?

Yes! Listed below are some powerful facts dealing with the issue of money in politics:

- Bloomberg News (2015): 80% of Republicans and 78% of all Americans support a constitutional amendment overturning the *Citizens United* ruling
- AP (2012): 83% of all Americans, including 81% of Republicans, 78% of independents, and 85% of Democrats believe “there should be limits on the amount of money corporations, unions, and other organizations can contribute to outside organizations trying to influence campaigns for President, Senate, and U.S. House”
- Among self-described liberals, conservatives, and moderates, 80% say the decision should be overturned. (Bloomberg Politics, 9/28/15)
- University of Maryland (2018): 88% of Americans want to reduce the influence that large campaign donors wield over lawmakers at a time when a single congressional election may cost tens of millions of dollars

How do I schedule a meeting?:

Once you know the names of your one U.S. Representative and your two U.S. Senators, go to their website and look up how to schedule a meeting with them. Most elected officials’ websites have a “Request a Meeting” form that you can fill out online. You can also email their aide to schedule an appointment if you do not see a form.

Be sure to reach out to Kimberly Clinch (kimberlyc@americanpromise.net) or Rosie Smith (rosies@americanpromise.net) to make sure there is not already somebody from your district scheduling a meeting. If there is, we’ll connect you to them!



- If you are sending an email, make sure to include the following:
 - Your name & address
 - The issue you'd like to discuss
 - The date & time you are available
 - A thank you!
- If you are only able to meet with an aide, that's a-okay! Make sure to make a commitment with the aide to have a meeting with the representative back in your district after you return from the conference.
- If you don't hear back within a week, call the office in Washington D.C. and ask to speak with the scheduler.

II. Planning Your Meeting

You managed to schedule a meeting - congratulations! Now it's time to do your homework and prepare for a successful meeting. Below are some tips to keep in mind as well as a sample agenda you can follow.

Going into your meeting, it's important to keep the following words in mind:

1. **Purpose.** What is your purpose for requesting this meeting? You should be able to share why this issue is important to you & what motivates you to fight this fight. Some sample questions you can reflect on include:
 - a. What moves you to work for a government run by people, not money?
 - b. What are some values that push you to do this work? What's important to you?
 - c. Was there an experience that moved you to learn more & fight for this issue?
2. **Informed.** Knowledge is power. Make sure to research your U.S. Representative & Senators to find out where they stand on this issue. You also want to know what some key issues on their platform is, so you can tie that back to the issue of money in politics.
3. **Grateful.** In addition to researching what issues your representatives care about, you should also genuinely thank them for something they've worked on or championed in your community. While it can be difficult to agree with our representatives on everything, we can always find one positive thing they have done that you can express your appreciation of. We cannot drive out darkness with darkness, only light. People are also more willing to listen & work with you if they feel appreciated! You can at least thank them for taking the time to meet with you.

When it comes to the actual execution of the meeting, be clear about who will lead or moderate the meeting. This person will be the first to thank the representative and will be responsible for introducing the other members of your group.



- We also encourage you to be as clear as possible, when both talking about the issue of money in politics as well as the legislation you are asking them to co-sponsor.
 - We will provide a more in-depth action sheet in the future, but for now just be aware that we are working toward HJR 2 and HJR 48 in the House.

III. Sample Meeting Outline

The overarching goal of these meetings, particularly for Lobby Day, is to advocate for our elected officials to champion the issue of money in politics, sign onto HJR 2 or HJR 48, and help win the 28th Amendment!

Approximate Meeting Agenda:

1. **Introduction** – Likely from the point-person who has set up the meeting. You know what every member is planning to say, and will continue to keep the meeting organized and focused.
 - State your name, city, and what values/experiences motivate you to work for a government run by people, not money.
 - Ask how much time they have to meet with you and stick to that (unless they extend the meeting themselves.)
2. **Thank You** – You can genuinely thank your member of Congress for something they have done.
3. **Personal Story** – You'd like to share why you're in this room today. Why is getting money out of politics important to you?
4. **Ask a Question** – Think of a leading question that will shed light on where your member of Congress currently stands on the issue. As mentioned above, here are some examples:
 - What are your thoughts on the notion that money is speech?
 - If money is speech does that mean that someone with lots of money has a much bigger voice than someone with very little money?
 - If you could do anything to lessen the influence of money in politics, what would you do?
 - What does the statement "Draining the swamp," mean to you? Could you say more about that?
5. **Clarify the Issue** – Try to contextualize this issue within your member of Congress's answers. This person should have a strong understanding of the issue, and be comfortable communicating about it using conservative sticking points (ex: personal sovereignty, individual liberties, states rights).
 - Welcome feedback, questions, or comments from the representative regarding the bill/issue.



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- If you are meeting with a Republican and they seem resistant to the issue, ask some open-ended questions like this.
 - What are your thoughts on the current campaign finance system?
 - Do you like dialing for dollars?
 - What if any changes would you make to improve campaign finance?
- 6. **Request** – Clearly lay out request.
 - **House Democrats: Primary Asks:** Co-sponsor HJR 2 and/or HJR 48.
 - **Secondary Asks**
 - a) If a co-sponsor, write LTE or op-ed to educate constituents. b) If a co-sponsor, participate in briefing/town hall in the district. c) If a co-sponsor, work to bring a Republican colleague on board. d) If meeting with an aide, ask for help securing a meeting with member of Congress.
 - **Senate Democrats: Primary Ask:** Connect a Republican colleague with Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) to introduce a cross-partisan Senate version of HJR2.
 - **Secondary Asks:**
 - a) Write LTE or op-ed to educate constituents on getting money out of politics
 - b) Participate in briefing/town hall in the district
 - c) If meeting with an aide, ask for help securing a meeting with Senator
 - **House Republicans: Primary ask:** Co-sponsor HJR2
 - **Secondary asks:**
 - a) If meeting with an aide, ask for help securing a meeting with member of Congress
 - **Senate Republicans: Primary ask:** Co-introduce a version of HJR2 with Senator Tom Udall (D-NM)
 - **Secondary asks:**
 - a) If meeting with an aide, ask for help securing a meeting with member of Congress back home
- 7. **Follow Up** – Ask when and how we can follow up. Thank your member of Congress again for taking the time to begin this dialogue.
- 8. **Celebrate!!** – Congratulations! You just took a huge step in the fight to create a democracy that works for all of us, not just the rich. You should feel exceptionally proud of the work you're doing.