

VISIT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS



Every member of congress has one or more district offices in your state. An underrated but effective way to reach your representative directly is simply by requesting a meeting with them. We know this can sound intimidating, that's why we've come up with sample scripts and talking points on a couple of big issues to arm you with the tools you need for your next meeting with your representative. Whether you're concerned about reproductive health care access or the environment, check-out the mockups we've put together to get you started on how you can engage your representative on issues that matter to you.

Even if you can't get on your representative's calendar, it's usually pretty easy to meet with one of their staff members - a direct connection with your congress member's staff can be just as valuable as meeting with your representative.

You can start your meeting off like this:

Hi [[NAME]], thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm a constituent of yours from the XXX area in your district. I wanted to meet with you in-person to tell you a little bit about my concerns regarding XXX and to hear from you on policy fixes you are working on to address this issue.

From there, launch into your talking points. This guide contains sample scripts for visiting lawmaker offices to discuss:

- Student debt and college affordability
- Immigration and DACA
- Climate change and the environment
- Health care and reproductive rights
- Civil rights and justice

At the conclusion of the meeting, allow the staff member or representative to ask questions and respond to your concerns. Capture any follow-ups or commitments they make to stay on top of the issue and reiterate them at the end of the meeting. Thank them for hearing you out and be sure to get their contact information to touch base with them periodically on your issue. If the staff member or representative cannot offer you any assurance that they will be taking action on the issue, be sure to let me them know that you will continue to be vocal by notifying your friends, neighbors and local media about your representative's lack of commitment to the issue.

SAY THIS:

Hi *[[NAME]]*, thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm a constituent of yours from the XXX area in your district. I wanted to meet with you in-person to tell you a little bit about the trouble I've been having with my student debt and to hear from you on policy fixes you are working on to address this issue.

Tell your story. Do not be afraid to be open about the lifestyle choices or quality of living implications your student debt has forced on you.

CONSIDER THIS:

Were you able to come out of your higher-education experience with a program certificate or degree? Were you able to find a full-time job in your desired field of study? Are you able to reasonably repay your student loans? Are your loan servicers making repayment harder or easier to do? How is your student debt burden affecting personal decisions in starting a family or buying a home?

BE PREPARED:

Connect your story with the student debt crisis at-large by pulling talking points from our [Vote Higher messaging toolkit](#).

You can complement this information by finding out what the [student debt crisis numbers in your state look like](#) to show your representative exactly how damaging it could be to your state's local economy for constituents in your district to be carrying around large sums of student debt.

ASK THIS:

Q1. Congressman/woman, I'm a student borrower with XXX in student loan debt. I'm working to repay my student loan/s but **I need you to guarantee that you will fight to protect successful repayment programs like Income-Driven Repayment and Public Service Loan Forgiveness.** Shouldering tons of debt at a time when I'm trying to begin my life/ put down roots / buy a home/ get a higher degree/ am experiencing short-term unemployment is difficult by itself. But if I don't have the support to pay what I afford in monthly payments it may be near impossible for me to start taking important steps in saving for my future. **What will you do if and when these programs come to the chopping block?**

Q2. Congressman/woman, I intend to go to college and apply for federal loans and grants that will help me afford college - **can you commit to protecting funding for Pell Grants and federal student loan lending?** The Obama administration took private banks out of the business of profiting on student loans and the outcomes in money saved are enormous. I don't want to be on the hook to predatory lenders and private banks. **Will you stand up for these important programs that help people like me afford college?**

SAY THIS:

Hi [[NAME]], thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm a constituent of yours from the XXX area in your district. I wanted to meet with you in-person to discuss my concerns related to protecting DACA and DAPA as well as the unlawful ICE immigration raids taking place in our community. I wanted to speak with you specifically about your role in opposing Trump's criminalization of immigrant communities by declaring XXX a sanctuary jurisdiction or county.

BE PREPARED:

Print out these sources to reference or leave with your representative's office:

- [The Negative Consequences of Entangling Local Policing and Immigration Enforcement](#)
- [The Effects of Sanctuary Policies on Crime and the Economy](#)
- [Ending DACA Will Cost States Billions of Dollars](#)
- [The High Cost of Ending Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals](#)
- [Industry & State-Level Analysis: Economic Impacts of Removing Unauthorized Immigrant Workers](#)

ASK THIS:

Q1. Congressman/woman, I do not support the unlawful ICE immigration raids that are taking place in our community. You know very well that these, often illegal, actions are tearing apart the pillars of our community and local economy. **What will you do to protect our community's immigrant community? Will you commit to declaring XXX a sanctuary county/city?**

Q2. Congressman/woman, I am a DACA recipient/ I know members of our community that are enrolled and protected from deportation by DACA. The Trump Administration is looking for ways to circumvent this important protection in their mass deportation round-ups. **What will you do to protect immigrants and DACA recipients in our community?**

SAY THIS:

Hi [[NAME]], thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm a constituent of yours from the XXX area in your district. I wanted to meet with you in-person to discuss my concerns related to the regulatory rollbacks on environmental protections that Congress is invoking through the Congressional Review Act. I've taken a look at your voting record on past bills that were introduced under the CRA and I'm really concerned about your stance on some of these issues // I've taken a look at some of Obama-era regulations on the chopping block under the CRA and I wanted to let you know I'm paying attention to these issues and hoping you could tell me a little bit more about how you plan to safeguard some of these priceless protections for our environment.

BE PREPARED:

Print out these sources to reference or leave with your representative's office:

- [For Polluters, Congress Will Overturn An Environmental Rule for \\$2.3 Million](#)
- [State-by-State Map on Pollution and Public Health Costs](#)
- [Battling Climate Change in the Time of Trump](#)

ASK THIS:

Q1. Congressman/woman, our town's clean drinking water, lands and air depend on having rules and regulations in place for industries that use our public natural resources for their economic gain. **Do you agree with this basic premise? If you do, why are you supporting the gutting of environmental regulations and protections bills being voted on under CRA?**

Q2. Congressman/woman, we know what happens when politicians make environmental decisions with their pockets and gut important protections for keeping our water, air and soil safe - it's called Flint. **Do you want to be on the hook for a Flint-like crisis after letting big oil, coal and gas get away with polluting our state's natural resources?** Your voting record on recent environmental deregulation bills tells me that you wouldn't mind inviting a Flint-like crisis to our town.

Health Care &

Reproductive Rights

Sample Script

SAY THIS:

Hi [[NAME]], thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm a constituent of yours from the XXX area in your district. I wanted to meet with you in-person because I'm really concerned that while the Affordable Care Act temporarily withstood repeal, Republican House members will be quick to find more and different ways of denying the poorest among us and those with pre-existing conditions the right to health care. I'm also concerned about the many ways women's access to reproductive healthcare is being attacked through defunding mechanisms and as a part of a potential future ACA repeal. I wanted to know where you stand on these issues.

Tell your ACA story. If you're under 26 and have been able to stay on your parent's health insurance plan, be sure to emphasize how this support has helped you get on your feet and save you money in an economy and job market that has been particularly harsh for Millennials. If you have a particular health condition that requires you to be aggressive in seeking care, describe how the ACA has been invaluable to your own health and livelihood. Describe the very real losses you will face if congressional Republicans are successful in repealing the ACA without coming up with a workable replacement that would insure just as many (if not more) Americans at the same (or lower) costs to healthy and sick consumers alike.

BE PREPARED:

Print out these sources to reference or leave with your representative's office:

- [Trump's New Plan to Penalize the Sick](#)
- [Number of Americans with Pre-Existing Conditions by Congressional District](#)
- [Reproductive Justice Beyond Biology](#)
- [Stop Playing Politics with People's Lives](#)

ASK THIS:

Q1. Congressman/woman, I get my health care under the Affordable Care Act. [If you have a special health need being affordably treated under an ACA insurance plan / have pre-existing conditions / are on your parent's health insurance plan, tell your story]. **Can you tell me what I'm supposed to do if Congressional Republicans eventually repeal the Affordable Care Act without a replacement that will be affordable for the healthy and those with pre-existing conditions while at the same time covering all those currently insured like myself?**

Q2. Congressman/woman, I hope you've been educated on the community health benefits of access to contraceptives and the need for women's health centers like Planned Parenthood. I also hope you're educated on the fact that no tax dollars are currently used to perform abortion procedures, no matter what your view on that is. **Based on this information, I wanted to ask you if you will protect the rights of women in our community to make their own reproductive health decisions and more importantly, access the care they need. Will you commit to standing for women during budget deliberations over the next few weeks?**

SAY THIS:

Hi [[NAME]], thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I'm a constituent of yours from the XXX area in your district. I wanted to meet with you in-person because I'm really concerned about the current administration's hostility towards protecting the civil rights of some of our state's most vulnerable groups.

As an immigrant / LGBT person / Muslim-American // as an ally of immigrants, LGBT persons, and Muslim-Americans I wanted to be clear about the damaging consequences this administration's recent actions are having on major pillars of our community. We cannot turn our backs on XXX, it is not smart economically, it does not make us safer and it surely does not make our country "great again." Now more than ever your constituents are looking for leaders that will stand up to Donald Trump and oppose actions to curtail the hard-won civil rights of minority groups.

BE PREPARED:

Print out these sources to reference or leave with your representative's office:

- [Comprehensive Nondiscrimination Protections Would Provide LGBTQ Millennials a Fair Shot at Economic Stability](#)
- [Our Courts Matter For The Muslim Community](#)
- [LGBT Refugees' Lives Depend on U.S. Resettlement Program](#)
- [The Intersections of Policing and Race](#)

ASK THIS:

Q1. Congressman/woman, I stand by Muslims, LGBTQ individuals and immigrants in denouncing recent executive orders that are targeted to attack these communities. Our communities suffer concrete harm when we turn our backs on these groups that have been victimized. I'm doing my part in standing up for them, what are you doing? What message would you like to send to XXX [your district/county/town's] Muslim community, and LGBTQ community and our immigrant community?

Q2. Congressman/woman, our community has seen an uptick in recent hate crimes towards minority groups and Muslims. As a proud resident of this district, I find this unacceptable. What are you doing to protect vulnerable communities against hate-motivated targeting and attacks?