

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 PAGE 2
- Immigration and DACA PAGE 3
- Climate change and the environment PAGE 4
- Health care and reproductive rights PAGE 5
- Gun violence prevention and criminal justice reform PAGE 7
- Net neutrality PAGE 8
- Voting rights PAGE 9

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.

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 of your vote on the American Health Care Act.

[[IF THEY VOTED YES ON TRUMPCARE]]

Do you agree with the basic premise that people shouldn't be made vulnerable to being charged discriminatory premiums for having a child or having depression? To be clear, despite what your Republican colleagues are touting in the media, the notion that the House version of the AHCA protects people with pre-existing conditions, is false.

States still have the option to pull out of these protections all-together. What will you do if our governor applies for a waiver to exempt the insurers of our state from providing essential healthcare benefits like maternity care, mental health services, and preventative care?

Aside from the waiver, the bill's undoing of the Medicaid expansion will come back to haunt you. Robust funding of this program is what keeps children with special needs in school and the poorest members of our community afloat and healthy.

I plan on holding you accountable for your vote from now until your next election day - you have one opportunity to reverse course when the changed Senate bill comes back to the House for a vote. I will continue keep tabs on your votes and organize my community should you turn your back on us again.

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.

[[IF THEY VOTED NO ON TRUMPCARE]]

Thank you for standing up for our young, old, poor, and sick community members. I'm still concerned that the all-male Senate health care working group will work to strip women, the poor, and the sick of their right to equal care - namely how we will we finance equal access to care if states are effectively allowed to opt-out of providing essential health benefits?

Will you stand up to your Senate colleagues if they try to remove these protections and dump discriminatory premiums on women, the sick, and the elderly?

I hope I can count on you to stand with the constituents of your district again when the changed Senate bill comes back to the House for vote.

BE PREPARED:

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

- [How Every Member Voted on the Health Care Bill](#)
- [The 10 Worst Things About Trumpcare](#)
- [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, **can you tell me what you're going to do if and when the Governor of our state waives the responsibility of insurers to provide equal access to equal care for women and those with pre-existing conditions under Trumpcare? There are [[XXX - [look up the figure here](#)]] constituents in your district with pre-existing conditions - do you agree with the morality behind not allowing insurance companies to hike up premiums for those with asthma, depression, diabetes, or other pre-existing conditions? How will you protect us against discrimination in access to care?**

Q2. Congressman/woman, students with special needs and the poorest among our district depend on the Medicaid program to keep students in school and on a path to reaching their fullest potential while helping our poorest community members stay afloat, healthy and hopefully out of the emergency room. **Can you speak to how the AHCA's unwinding of the Medicaid program will impact our district?**

Q3. Congressman/woman, I know you are aware of community health benefits associated with access to contraceptives and the need for women's health centers like Planned Parenthood. I also know 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 when the changed Senate bill comes back to the House for another vote?**

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 about my work and hear from you about your plans to prevent gun violence and make our community more equitable.

Tell your story about how your life has been impacted by gun violence and/or the criminal justice system. Tell them about the impact violence has had on your life and the steps you and your community have taken to prevent violence.

BE PREPARED:

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

- [Young Guns: How Gun Violence is Devastating the Millennial Generation](#)
- [Hate and Guns: A Terrifying Combination](#)
- [America Under Fire: An Analysis of Gun Violence in the United States and the Link to Weak Gun Laws](#)
- [Gun Violence Across America](#)
- [The Intersection of Policing and Race](#)

ASK THIS:

Q1: Congressman/women, I am concerned about the rate of gun violence in our community and across the country. As a Millennial, my generation is disproportionately affected by gun violence and I am concerned for my safety and safety of my friends and family. We also need to ensure that people who pose a heightened risk to community safety, such as domestic abusers and people convicted of violent crimes, do not have easy access to guns. **What are you doing to reduce the rate of gun violence in our community and ensure that young people have the opportunity to grow up with a sense of genuine security?**

Q2: Congressman/women, I am concerned about the numerous instances of police violence seen in communities across the country. It is clear that our criminal justice system does not deliver justice for all — instead, people of color are disproportionately subject to police violence and incarceration. **What are you doing to ensure that ALL members of our community are able to feel genuine security? How can our community better support each other and root out bias and racism in our institutions?**

Q3: Congressman/women, the US is 5% of the World population, yet has 25% of world prisoners. Additionally, African Americans are incarcerated at nearly six times the rate of whites. **What are you doing to push for badly need reforms to our criminal justice system? What programs do you support to help formerly incarcerated individuals reenter our community and become productive members of our society?**

SAY THIS:

Hi there, I'm a constituent from the YOUR CITY area in your district. I wanted to speak with you about my concerns related to the FCC's recent actions to roll back net neutrality protections. I wanted to speak with you specifically about your role in protecting a free and open internet.

In February 2015, the FCC passed a rule that prevents companies that bring internet into our homes from controlling the content we receive; they can't block it or slow it down. Some in Congress want to roll back these rules through compromise—but we need not pass weak legislation that could let internet providers charge more for the services we already use. If these rules are changed, ISPs may be able to charge fees for website delivery that would make it harder for blogs, nonprofits, artists, and others who can't pay up to have their voices heard.

Ending net neutrality will make it harder for new companies to succeed online and could silence new voices. It will only line the pockets of giant internet providers, help them form monopolies, and make them the gatekeepers to what we see, do, and say on the internet.

Tell your story about how net neutrality has helped you — whether that be through accessing information at school, starting a new campaign or business, or just streaming a great show on Netflix!

I want to ask the Senator to stand strong against corporate interests and support the current net neutrality protections we already have in place.

ASK THIS:

Q1: Net neutrality is the basic principle that internet provider should treat all information the same. Strong net neutrality rules ensure everyone has equal opportunity to carry out essential functions such as furthering education, enrolling in health care, and applying for a job. Net neutrality is particularly crucial to historically disadvantaged communities like communities of color, or those in rural areas, because it allows people to bypass traditional media gatekeepers and tell their own stories online. **Do you support a free and open internet?**

Q2: Without net neutrality, large internet service providers and Big Cable gain control of and dominate the market, edging smaller providers that serve rural communities out. Without access to affordable internet access, rural communities will fall further behind. The Trump administration's FCC wants to roll back net neutrality, which means internet providers, such as Comcast, Verizon, or AT&T, would be able to control what websites or applications we are able to access, or charge more to visit specific sites. **Will you stand up against Big Cable and oppose any legislation or speak out against any rule that would weaken current net neutrality protections?**

SAY THIS:

Hi there, I'm a constituent from the YOUR CITY area in your district. I wanted to speak with you about automatic voter registration, and why it's especially important to young people. I wanted to hear your positions on voting rights, and whether you think automatic voter registration policies would be beneficial for our state.

As America's largest, most diverse generation, Millennials face a unique set of socioeconomic barriers keeping them from realizing their full political voice. While Millennials make up over a third of the eligible voter population, only half cast ballots in 2016. At the same time, voting rights are being suppressed and manipulated here at home, compounding the many structural hurdles already keeping young people from voting. Automatic voter registration, however, is proven to increase voter turnout—especially among young people—and the more you vote, the more power you have.

Explain why voting is important to you, and why it's difficult for young people to reach the polls. Don't be afraid to expand on personal circumstances that may have kept you—or friends, family, acquaintances—from voting. Can you recall your first time voting? Why is voting important to you?

I want to ask you to consider supporting the adoption of automatic voter registration and other policies that ensure all Americans the right to vote in our state.

BE PREPARED:

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

- [Millennial Voters Win With Automatic Voter Registration](#)
- [Passing Automatic Voter Registration in Your Community: Activist Guidelines & Toolkit](#)
- [Who Votes With Automatic Voter Registration?](#)

ASK THIS:

Q1: Data from the 2016 election show us that Millennials didn't turn out in the numbers we'd hoped. **What do you think is the key to engaging the youth vote, and why do you think Millennial turnout has been so depressed over the past couple election cycles? What are you doing to reach young people in our community?**

Q2: America's electoral system is being undermined by foreign interference and threatened by President Donald Trump's sham commission, led by Vice President Mike Pence and Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach, investigating American voters. The integrity of our elections depends on every eligible American having their voice heard. **What are you doing to protect the right to vote for all Americans?**