

## How to Set Up Congressional Meetings

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While state association executives and industry members are in Washington, D.C. attending the June 9-11, 2008 Propane Days events, we strongly encourage you to take advantage of this unique opportunity to schedule meetings with your Congressional delegation. Every opportunity our industry has to build solid relationships with our elected officials should be utilized.

**It is up to each Propane Days attendee to call the Congressional offices to schedule meeting times.** Believe it or not, constituents from a Member's district have better access to a Congressional office than Washington-based lobbyists do. While Washington lobbyists know issues and people, constituents vote for a Member's re-election, giving each Member a large incentive to meet with as many constituents as possible. Additionally, you know your own schedule and can adjust your schedule to that of the Congressional office when making the appointment.

A few things to consider when setting up your meetings:

**Scheduling:** The schedule for Propane Days allows a generous amount of time for industry members to meet with their Representatives and/or Senators. Please allow yourself time to move from the hotel to the Congressional office buildings. Also, when planning your meeting time, please allow for time to move through some fairly tight security to gain access to the office buildings.

**How to Set Up a Meeting: It is much easier than you think to set up meetings on Capitol Hill.**

- 1) First, determine who your Members of Congress are. If you don't know, please contact the NPGA Legislative Affairs office and we will help you in that process.
- 2) Second, call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-225-3121 and ask to be transferred to your Representative's and/or Senator's office.
- 3) Third, ask for the "Scheduler," the staffer in the office that generally sets up the Member's appointment calendar, identify yourself and your company, and ask for a meeting with the Congressman or Senator. *Do not be disappointed if he/she is not available at that time and you have to meet with a staff member. Staff are the eyes and ears of a Congressional office and are an EXTREMELY valuable resource and personal contact! Members rely upon the judgment of their staff every single day for many decisions.*

**Be Prepared:** Come to your meeting armed with information about the propane industry, as well as information about your company (number employees, where it's located, etc.) NPGA will have basic industry information available for you to use. Be prepared to educate the Member of Congress or the staff member about the propane industry and issues of concern to the industry and your business.

**Be Communicative:** Tell the NPGA Legislative Affairs Department how your meeting went. Was it successful? What did you talk about? Will you be doing any additional work with the office or campaign? Who did you meet with? Do you want NPGA legislative staff to follow-up? We can use answers to all these questions as we continually develop our legislative programs.

Any questions? Call the NPGA Legislative Affairs Department at 202-355-1328.