

## **Liaison Responsibilities and Tips**

The role of liaison is to develop relationships with a congressional office and to secure meetings.

In getting started, one will want to reach out separately to both the scheduler and the staff member who covers climate issues. The scheduler may ultimately refer you to that same staff member for a meeting but still seek to initially contact both.

### **Working with the Scheduler**

Use the Climate Hope Affiliate google doc spreadsheet to learn the email addresses for the scheduler and the climate aide. With the scheduler, seek a meeting with the member of Congress, but know that this might not be possible at first. Between 75-80% of meetings are staff level. Your goal is to have great meetings with staff and get to the point of building great relationships with the elected officials themselves.

Email the scheduler at the email address listed in the Climate Hope Affiliate spreadsheet. If you don't get a response after a couple of days, call the office and follow up once a week after the first request. When leaving a voice message, give the number twice and call back in 2 to 3 days.

In your email, offer at least four dates and times when you can meet that are at least three weeks later.

When possible, a tentative list of attendees sent with the initial request will help move the process along. Check with your fellow chapter members ahead of time to determine who can attend. Do not promise a constituent will attend if you are not sure.

### **Working with Legislative Staff**

Use the Climate Hope Affiliate spreadsheet to learn who covers climate policy in the office and seek to meet with that staff member.

Keep in mind that legislative staff receive 100s of emails each day. Avoid cc'ing others to minimize generating email clutter. Keep your emails brief, so that you are making it easier for them to respond.

If you have followed up three times and there is still no response, you can call the office to confirm the email address or leave a message suggesting that the request may have gone to spam. Mention you will resend the email and would the staffer please be on the lookout.

With the legislative staff, seek to have a Zoom call between the staff member and your chapter in the next 3 to 4 weeks. Pick a time that is after you have completed the four-part new group training sessions after the chapter has been launched.

## **Communication Tips**

When communicating via email or on the phone, mention:

- that a Climate Hope Affiliate has just been started in your city
- how many people attended the launch workshop or sent a letter/email
- convey that you are representing a number of active constituents
- identify if any of the constituents who will be present have benefited from the programs you will be discussing or work in a field related to those programs—i.e., solar, energy efficiency, etc.

When talking on the phone with a scheduler for the first time, you can mention that your group sent letters/emails and say, “I am wondering if you saw any of those letters...”

In all communications, one can mention the churches involved. If you are clergy person, mention that.

Make the request to meet vague if your ask of them goes against the party’s agenda. No Republican will willingly meet with a group they know disagrees with them, so say something like, “We would like to discuss our shared interests surrounding energy infrastructure funding” rather than “express our concerns surrounding Republican cuts to Department of Energy.”

Emphasize that you will be sharing “constituent stories/experiences.” Staff want to hear these so they can use them in question lines and floor speeches.