

Make sure your member of Congress knows you!

Congress begins its 116th session in January 2019. Whether your members of Congress have been in office for years or are just beginning in their roles as elected officials, now is the perfect time to introduce yourself, welcome them into the work that your community is active around, and build a lasting relationship with them and their staff.

Establishing and nurturing relationships with your senators and representatives is crucial to enacting policies that are rooted in shared faith values and also to stopping proposals that would negatively impact our communities. You should make sure that your senators and representatives are aware of your priorities.

Three ways to build a relationship

1) Invite your senators and representative to your place of worship

When your member of Congress is home, make sure they know the door is open for them to come worship with you! Regardless of whether your member of Congress shares a faith with you or not, let them know that they are always welcome at your place of worship. You can even build a service around a special welcome for congressional leaders by including a special prayer to foster the important work they do for your community.

2) Schedule an in-district meeting - January 19-January 27 OR February 16-24

Every senator and representative has an office – often multiple offices – in their home state. They work from these local offices during "congressional recesses," making it convenient for your voice to be heard. You can schedule visits in these offices by following directions on each members' website for requesting visits or calling the D.C. office and asking to be connected to the scheduler. Before the visit, get a strong team together that represents various sectors within your community. Do some research on your representative and put together a plan for what you want to share. Have this be one of many opportunities for you to start building a relationship and working together on issues that are important for your community.

3) Hold a community event

Members of Congress look for opportunities to learn more about their state or district, and you can create an opportunity for them to visit a place of significance by holding a special event for them. Think about places that illustrate how your community is already putting faith into action, and how federal legislation can bolster these efforts. Does your community care about ending hunger? Consider holding an event at a local food pantry. Does your community welcome refugees? Work with a local resettlement office to host a meet and greet with recently resettled refugees. Does your community practice environmental stewardship? Invite your member of Congress to see your community center's solar panels or rain garden. Each event can help inform the conversations your legislator will have with their colleagues.

Tell us how it went!

Let us know what you are planning, or if you want more guidance in how to set up a meet and greet with your member of Congress. Contact us at mccwash@mcc.org for more questions or updates.