Instructions for Scheduling Congressional Appointments
2019 Pediatric Oral Health Advocacy Conference

1. We asked you to provide the name of the Congressional district (s) where you practice and reside. In some cases we also verified this via your zip code. However, if for any reason you are not sure or notice any mistake, you can verify using the search feature on the top right of the home page of the U.S. House of Representatives: http://www.house.gov/

Remember, Senators represent the entire state, so everyone visiting from that state is a constituent. As for House Districts, it is easiest to obtain a visit if you practice or reside in the district, or (for faculty and residents) if your pediatric dentistry residency program is in the district. Other connections may be if patients you treat in practice or a residency program clinic are from that district.

2. Most Congressional offices require that you make your request in writing when asking for a meeting with a Member. Please use the sample letter below as a guide. You will likely get a quicker response if you e-mail the scheduler directly. Please e-mail your visit request ASAP after receiving these instructions; we highly recommend e-mail versus telephone or fax or regular mail (the latter being completely uncertain and slow on Capitol Hill given security concerns).

3. Within two weeks after e-mailing your request, call the particular office and ask to speak with the scheduler (the name that appears on the listing for in the online Congressional Yellow Book that is accessible by your team leader).

4. Identify yourself by name, then identify your location in order to be recognized as a constituent.

5. Indicate that you will be in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday February 26, 2019 and Wednesday February 27, 2019 and wish to discuss issues affecting children’s oral health care. Ask to meet directly with the Senator or Congressman/Congresswoman. However, do not be discouraged if this is not possible, as the Members’ schedules are very busy. Therefore, please indicate that you are willing to meet with the health staff person; these individuals are listed in the online Congressional Yellow Book available to your team leader. Congressional staff are critical in the legislative process, doing much of the daily work such as drafting legislation, report language, letters to federal agencies, and memos to their boss suggesting positions on legislative matters.
6. Please schedule your appointments between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday February 26, 2019 and Wednesday February 27, 2019. If you are from a state with a small Congressional delegation or there are only one or two pediatric dentists from your state making visits, you may be able to complete all your visits on Tuesday. Please note that the House and Senate office buildings are located on opposite sides of the Capitol building. Therefore, due to walking time, allow 30 minutes between appointments that occur on the same side of Capitol Hill, and 45 minutes between appointments that are on the opposite side. Appointments usually last no longer than 15-20 minutes. If possible, try to schedule meetings with your two Senate offices in one block of time, and meetings with House offices in another block of time, rather than having to go back and forth multiple times between opposite sides of Capitol Hill. If you have any down time between visits, there is a nice historical museum of the Capitol on display in the Capitol Visitors’ Center, located in front of the Capitol building on the East Lawn.

7. If you are in a large group with a large state delegation, it is advisable to split up visits among your team. Aim to have the pediatric dentist who practices or resides in the House member’s district to be the lead person on the visit, or the director of the residency program that is in the member’s district. Also note that Senate offices are better able to handle larger groups than House offices.

8. Be persistent. Do not get frustrated with un-returned phone calls or e-mails. The schedulers and legislative assistants get so many requests for meetings that they often do not return phone calls or e-mails immediately. Also note that much Capitol Hill business is conducted via e-mail and smart phones.

9. Generally, the scheduler will take down all your information and call or e-mail you back once he/she has spoken to the Member and/or health staff about your request. If you have spoken directly with the scheduler and have not heard back in a few days, call or e-mail to check on the progress of your request. Once you have made an appointment, please be sure to confirm the location of the Congressional Office.

10. Please bring your business cards to distribute on Capitol Hill, plan on wearing comfortable shoes for walking, and bring a collapsible umbrella.

11. Remember that because of heightened security concerns, don’t plan to carry items that would delay your entry into these buildings: pocket knives or sharp objects of any kind, etc. etc. (the same list you see at airports). There is an underground route on both the Senate and House sides of Capitol Hill, so you can walk between the buildings without going outside and re-entering security. There is also an underground route connecting the House and Senate sides that passes through the Capitol building. Please note however that the trolley between the Senate and Capitol can ONLY be ridden by the general public when they are accompanied by a staff person from one of the offices in either the Senate Russell, Dirksen, or Hart buildings.

If you need assistance locating a room or building, feel free to ask a Capitol Hill police officer. There are also large cafeterias in the House Longworth and Rayburn buildings, and in the Senate Dirksen building.
12. **When your full visit list is confirmed, please send to Margaret Bjerklie (mbjerklie@aapd.org) in the AAPD HQ.** Margaret maintains the master list of visits which is helpful in determining which visits you will be joined by Congressional Liaison Heber Simmons Jr., Mike Gilliland or Kate McAuliffe of Hogan Lovells, or Scott Litch of the AAPD HQ staff.

13. **This year a new step in our process is that after your visit is confirmed but prior to your arrival in D.C., we ask that your team leader e-mail the AAPD fact sheets to the Congressional offices.** This will ensure a smoother visit and also that the right Congressional staff are at your meeting. AAPD will alert you when these fact sheets are available.

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**Sample E-mail Request for a Congressional Visit**

Date

For a meeting with a Senator or his/her staff member:

To: Name of the Scheduler  
Office of Senator ______________________

For a meeting with a Congressional staff member:

To: Name of the Scheduler  
Office of Congressman/Congresswoman ______________________

Dear Mr. or Ms. (last name):

I am a pediatric dentist practicing in ___________________________. I will be visiting Capitol Hill on Tuesday, February 26, 2019 and Wednesday, February 27, 2019 (if applicable - along with a group of pediatric dentists and pediatric dental residents in training from [insert state].)

I would like to request a visit with Senator/Congressman/Congresswoman __________ [last name] and the applicable legislative staff person (s) to discuss key issues impacting children’s access to oral health care and the pediatric dentist workforce: appropriations for HRSA Title VII pediatric dentistry and support of legislation to exempt Dental Faculty Loan Repayment awards from taxation; Medicaid dental reforms focused on fair auditing practices; and halting of student loan interest accrual during periods of forbearance or deferment during residency training.

I can be reached at [your telephone number] or by e-mail [your e-mail address]. I look forward to talking with your office.

Cordially,

Your name

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