



## HOW TO SET-UP AND PREPARE FOR A LOBBY MEETING (1 of 3)

### Set up your Appointment

- Go to <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/directory/congdir.tt>, enter in the name of your member of Congress, click on his/her profile, and scroll down to find the phone number for the in-district offices (you may have to click on the "More district offices" link to find the one closest to you).
- Call the in-district office that's closest to you and ask if the Foreign Policy Legislative Assistant will be in the office anytime over the next few weeks. If so, request an appointment with him/her. If not, ask for the legislative director. If this is not possible, explain what you're asking for and ask who the appropriate person for you to meet with would be.
- You can start off with something like,

"Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm one of Rep./Sen. \_\_\_\_\_'s constituents from (city/town). I'm calling on behalf of (your STAND chapter, and/or other group you're representing). I'd like to schedule an appointment with the Senator/Congressman/woman's Foreign Policy Legislative Assistant to talk about the genocide in Darfur and the [piece of legislation you're advocating for]"

- A few things might happen:
  - ✕ You will be immediately connected with the person you want to meet with or a scheduler who can set up the appointment.
  - ✕ You are put through to a voicemail. You can leave a brief, clear message with your name, your meeting request, your preferred day and time, and your contact information — but keep calling back, at least every other day.
  - ✕ You are instructed to fax or e-mail the request. Follow the procedure, but expect that you'll have to call again — you may not receive a timely response.
- Keep calling back — you will have to be persistent. It will likely take a few tries before you get your meeting set up.
- Make careful note of the date and time of your appointment and the name and position of the person you're meeting with.
  - Be sure to tell the person you set up the meeting with how many people will be attending. If you don't know yet, that's fine, but tell them you will be bringing several people, and be sure to get back to them beforehand with that info. You won't want to bring more than four or five people — more than that, and the office can get crowded.



## HOW TO SET-UP AND PREPARE FOR A LOBBY MEETING (2 of 3)

### Reach out to your community

- The more diverse a group of people attend the meeting, the more evidence you have that this is an issue that is important amongst a broad cross-section of the Senator/Representative's constituents. So, an important part of preparing for your meeting is making sure all the relevant groups in your community – student groups, religious or civic groups, professors, etc. – are represented at the meeting.
- Ask your outreach coordinator to send you contact info for other STAND chapters in your district/state, and for community groups in your area who work on Darfur. Contact these chapters and ask them if they'd like to send a representative to your meeting.
- Ask any other personal contacts you have: professors or members of your school administration, members of religious or civic groups, members of local government, etc.
- Ask your outreach coordinator to send you contact info for community groups in your area. STAND has a database of this info.
- If any of the groups you speak with are interested but cannot attend, ask them to write letters that you will bring to your meeting and deliver to the elected official.
- Once you have a total number of people to bring to the meeting, let the office know how many people will be attending, and their names and groups they're from.

### Prepare for your visit

- Thoroughly read over the info that STAND has given you about the legislation and the document "How to Make Your Lobby Meeting Successful."
- Ask your outreach coordinator to connect you with STAND's Advocacy Team, who will do a training call with you.
- Meet or do a phone call with everyone who will attend the meeting to go over what you will say. You don't have to have everything planned out perfectly – remember, your meeting will be a conversation – but it's a good idea to decide who will cover which topics, so that you ensure that you get to all your points across and aren't interrupting each other.



### HOW TO SET-UP AND PREPARE FOR A LOBBY MEETING (3 of 3)

- Prepare what you will bring to the meeting to give to the staffer:
- A one pager on the current legislative ask/s –STAND will provide you with this
- A copy of the bill/s, as appropriate – STAND will provide this
- A one-pager on the genocide – STAND will provide this
- Copies of any articles from local media about your chapter or other-Darfur-related events. Local media is a great indicator of constituent opinion. Also bring photos of any events held by your chapter or other groups in your community.
- Letters and that you've collected from your chapter, your campus, and your community.
- Your contact info
- If you're meeting other constituents at the office, make sure everyone knows where you're meeting and is able to arrive a few minutes early.
- Make any necessary transportation arrangements. Your school might be able to pay for transportation if needed. If you're getting directions, check them with the office or someone who knows the area, if possible.
- You don't have to be very formal, but dress nicely – business casual. You want to look professional.