



Congressional Visit Guidelines

We want to encourage all members hosting Congressional visits to talk about the work of NSBA, present a copy of NSBA's priority issues, and ask the Member of Congress or candidate to sign the Small Business Pledge. However, most of the visit should focus on your business: its history, growth, and challenges.

Setting up the Visit

Before issuing an invitation, consider the number of employees, customers, and other constituents the visit will allow the Member of Congress or candidate to meet. You can connect with other NSBA leaders through our [LinkedIn page](#).

- ✓ Are there other local businesses (vendors, neighboring businesses, etc.) you would like to invite to your event?
- ✓ Are there other local businesses with which it makes sense to host a joint event?
- ✓ Are there other NSBA businesses you can connect with for the event? or perhaps coordinate joint events.
- ✓ At least two weeks prior to target visit date, contact the district office for your [Member of Congress](#) or [candidate](#) to issue the invitation and coordinate possible times.
- ✓ Consider whether you'd be willing to attend an already-established town hall, or join-in with another meeting.

Before the Visit

- ✓ Have in mind a well-developed issue or concern that you want to discuss or explain.
- ✓ Be prepared to generally educate your Member of Congress or candidate on your business and industry.
- ✓ Focus on personal stories, but be prepared with [data](#) that underscores how the issue impacts a broad number of small businesses.

- ✓ [Brief employees](#) on key issues facing your business in advance of the meeting. Encourage employees to talk candidly, but with a clear understanding about the impact of issues on the business.
- ✓ Forward the Member of Congress or candidate a copy of the [Small Business Pledge](#), and mention that you'll ask him/her to sign it during the visit.

During the Visit

The Congressional office will generally have a format they would like to follow for the visit, usually to include some brief remarks, a tour of the site/facility, ample opportunity to meet employees and customers, and a short meeting with the owner/manager.

- ✓ Assign a staff member to take plenty of pictures, especially of you and the Member of Congress and/or candidate.
- ✓ If the Member of Congress or candidate signs the Small Business Pledge, take a picture of the signing.
- ✓ Please [forward](#) your best photos to NSBA so we can post.
- ✓ Keep the tone of the meeting educational and positive, even if there are disagreements on some issues.
- ✓ Help the Member of Congress/candidate understand the realities of your business and WHY your particular concerns are of greater importance than winning a particular debate.

After the Visit

- ✓ Make sure to follow-up on issues that arose during the visit. If you need additional information or input from NSBA, be sure to [let us know](#).
- ✓ [Send](#) photos and a brief synopsis of the visit to NSBA, so that we can coordinate with our other efforts.
- ✓ Publicize the visit on social media employee/customer newsletters and other potential outlets, including sharing with NSBA social media platforms: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).
- ✓ Personalize and send out the pre-drafted [press release](#) announcing your visit.
- ✓ Maintain a relationship with both the Member of Congress AND the staff you worked with to set-up and execute the visit.