

Frequently Asked Questions

WHY THIS MATTERS	1
BEFORE THE EVENT: PREPARATION & TRAINING.....	2
ABOUT THE CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS.....	3
LOGISTICS & TRAVEL	4
POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS.....	6

Why This Matters

Should I really do this – will it make a difference?

- Yes! Members of Congress are elected to represent their constituents—they need to hear directly from you to understand your views and priorities.
- When one constituent speaks up, offices recognize that others likely share those concerns. Your voice strengthens your community’s voice.
- Additionally, offices look to constituents to understand the impacts- good or bad- of federal laws and policies. They need constituents’ personal stories to inform their decisions and policymaking.
- One meeting may not change everything immediately, but it begins or builds on a long-term relationship with your legislators—and that can make a real impact over time.

I’m a federal or state government employee, can I participate? What if I receive federal funding?

- Yes! If you are a federal employee, you can participate in this event. However, you may not be able to make certain congressional requests, specifically related to federal funding for the agency you work for. The AGU team will work with you to make sure you’re not violating any ethical or legal guidelines.
- If you are a state government employee there are no ethical or legal issues with your participation.
- There are also no issues with your participating if you’re currently receiving federal funding.
- **In all meetings, all participants will be participating in their personal capacity as constituents.**

My members of Congress don't support science, is it still worth attending?

- Meeting with your members of Congress who are unsupportive or apathetic about science is as important as meeting with supporters. The only way to sway your legislators about the importance of science is to engage them.
- By meeting with these legislators you can personalize science, educate your members of Congress about the value it brings to your community and fellow constituents, and illustrate its connection to the things they already care about. We'll discuss all of this during the training.
- One meeting may not change everything immediately, but it begins or builds on a long-term relationship with your legislators—and that can make a real impact over time.

My members of Congress are very supportive of AGU sciences, is it still worth attending?

- Yes! Even if your members of Congress are strong supporters of science it's still important for you to thank them for their support and encourage them to keep standing up for science.
- During training, AGU will discuss how you can challenge your supportive legislators to be even more impactful science policy champions.

Before the Event: Preparation & Training

I've never met with my legislators before. How can I prepare?

- Join one of our informational webinars where we'll review the event, your role, and how to prepare:
 - [Tuesday, 20 May | 12:00-1:00 PM ET](#)
 - [Monday, 28 May | 7:00-8:00 PM ET](#)
 - Can't make it? Register anyway and we'll email you a recording.
- Research your members of Congress—AGU's [toolkit](#) is a great place to start. Follow them on social media and subscribe to their newsletters to stay informed.
- Watch this [short video](#) to refresh your knowledge of the legislative process.
- Learn about the appropriations process in this [brief video](#), which will be central to congressional discussions in June.

Will there be training on how to talk to congressional offices?

- Yes! The webinars and pre-meeting materials will guide you through how to structure your message, what to expect in meetings, and how to respond to questions. We'll also have a short prep session in D.C.

What if I get nervous or don't know the answer to a question during the meeting?

- That's perfectly okay! You are not expected to have all the answers. If a question comes up that you can't answer, say so and offer to follow up. AGU staff will help with any follow-up communication after your meetings.

Can I share my personal story or research during the meeting?

- Absolutely. Your personal experiences and scientific expertise are powerful tools to connect with lawmakers and highlight the importance of science policy. We encourage participants to personalize their message while still sticking to the shared asks.

Should I create a one-pager?

- A one-pager is a helpful, high-level overview of who you are, your work, and your key message for policymakers. AGU will provide one-pagers for all official policy asks.
- If you'd like to create your own, we have a [brief video](#) or [webinar](#) and [toolkit](#) to guide you.

Will I receive materials or a packet before the event?

- Yes. AGU will send you a participant packet the week before the event, including your meeting schedule, talking points, and other logistical details. Printed copies will also be available on site.

About the Congressional Meetings

What do we talk about in the congressional meetings?

- AGU will provide a primary, strategic request for all participants to discuss, as well as optional secondary requests.
- Meetings are typically brief, so plan to cover 1–2 asks.
- Have another issue you'd like to raise? Email us at sciencepolicy@agu.org and we'll help you integrate it into your visit.

Do I need to schedule my congressional meetings?

- No—AGU will handle all scheduling.
- If your member of Congress is unavailable, you will meet with their staff.
- You'll receive your meeting schedule the week before the event. Expect 3–6 meetings total.

Which congressional offices will I meet with?

- You will meet with your Representative and both Senators.
- You may also join a team meeting with another state's legislators, depending on scheduling and group assignments.

Will I be meeting with my legislators or their staff?

- Most meetings will be with congressional staff, especially science staffers.
- Staff are trusted advisors and play an important role—these meetings are still very impactful.
- If you see your legislator in passing, don't hesitate to introduce yourself and give a brief elevator pitch.

Will I be attending meetings by myself?

- Participants from the same state will be grouped into teams.
- If you're the only participant from your state, we'll match you with another team.
- While it's rare, scheduling issues could result in solo meetings.
- AGU staff will be present on Capitol Hill and available for support, but they won't be attending meetings unless needed.

Logistics & Travel

Where should I stay?

- Participants should plan to stay within the metro D.C. area; close to AGU HQ in Dupont Circle or close to the Capitol would be most convenient.
- However, anywhere close to a metro stop will make attending all events easy.

What should I bring for my congressional meetings?

- Business cards
- A notebook and pen

- Any one-pagers you've created
- Optional: Department brochures or research summaries

What should I wear?

- **Tuesday (workshop):** Business casual.
- **Wednesday (Hill meetings):** Business attire, with comfortable walking shoes.
- Capitol Hill requires lots of walking—plan accordingly.

Will meals be provided?

- Snacks and drinks will be available at happy hours on Tuesday evening and Wednesday afternoon.
- **Wednesday:** Breakfast is provided; lunch is on your own with your meeting team. Dining options are available on both the [House](#) and [Senate](#) sides of the Capitol.

How can I get around Washington, D.C.?

- **Metro (WMATA):**
 - Closest to AGU: Dupont Circle (Red Line, North exit)
 - Closest to Senate side: Union Station (Red Line)
 - Closest to House side: Capitol South (Blue, Orange, Silver Lines)
- **Rideshare:** Uber, Lyft, and taxis operate throughout the city.
- **Other options:** E-scooters and bikes are available for rent across D.C.

What's the security process for entering congressional buildings?

- You'll pass through airport-style security with a metal detector and bag screening.
- Remove items like belts, watches, or jackets that could trigger alarms.
- You can bring food and drinks (excluding the Capitol building itself).
- A government-issued ID is not required to enter congressional buildings.

Can I bring luggage during my congressional visits?

- Avoid bringing luggage unless absolutely necessary.
- Check with your hotel to hold your bags for the day.
- Consider storage services like [Luggage Hero](#) at Union Station (Red Line/Amtrak/MARC).

How long does it take to get to the airport from Capitol Hill?

- **DCA (Reagan National):** ~30 minutes by car or Metro (Capitol South station, Blue Line).
- **IAD (Dulles):** ~1 hour 15 minutes by car or Metro (Capitol South station, Silver Line).
- **BWI (Baltimore-Washington):** ~1.5 hours by car or MARC/Amtrak train from Union Station, plus a free 10-min shuttle to the terminal.

Policies & Expectations

Is there a code of conduct or expectations for behavior?

- Yes. We strive to create a respectful, inclusive, and professional environment. All participants are expected to follow [AGU's Code of Conduct](#) during both the training and Hill meetings.

What if I need to cancel or can't make it at the last minute?

- Please notify us as soon as possible by contacting sciencepolicy@agu.org so we can adjust accordingly.