

Nuclear Physics Hill Day Preparation

Communicating Science to Congress



The Ten Commandments of Advocacy

1. *Thou shalt know thy Congressman*
2. *Thou shalt know about thy Congressman*
3. *Thou shalt not limit visitations to crisis situations*
4. *Thou shalt know the Congressman's staff people*
5. *Thou shalt have a focused and concise message*
6. *Thou shalt not commit effrontery toward someone else's project*
7. *Thou shalt visit the Congressman in his district*
8. *Thou shalt get to know who the key congressmen are*
9. *Thou shalt accept a turn-down or set-back graciously*
10. *Thou shalt not do thy lobbying like a lobbyist*

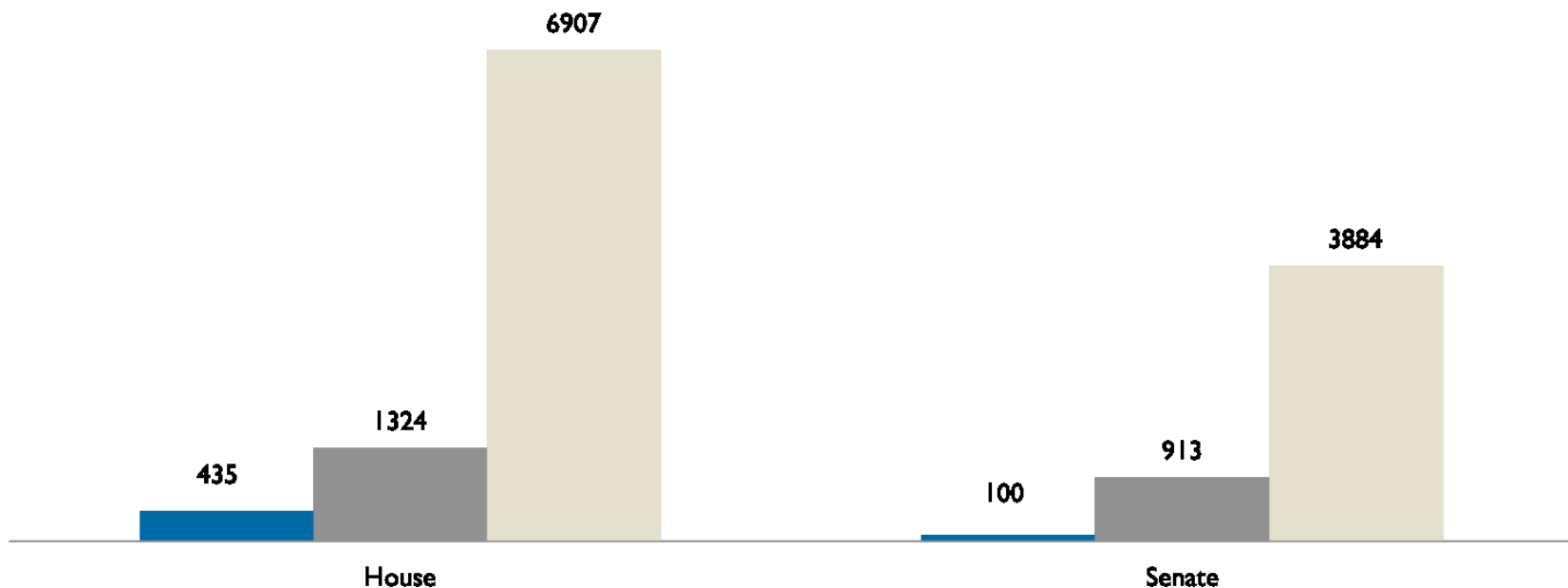
"Influencing Congress: Ten Commandments" by Alvin Trivelpiece, *Science*



Staffers Significantly Outnumber Members of Congress

Members and Staff of Congress

■ Members ■ Congressional Committee Staff ■ Personal Office Staff



Analysis

- The 535 members of Congress are supported by a larger infrastructure of over 13,000 staffers
- While most staffers are far less powerful than any member, the most trusted and effective aides of the most senior members may be extremely influential in their own right, and as a conduit to their member

Source: Norm Ornstein and Thomas Mann, "Vital Statistics on Congress," AEI/Brookings, Chapter 5.

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Hill Staff Come in Two Forms

Overview of Personal and Committee Congressional Staff



	Personal Office Staff	Committee Staff
Line of Reporting	Hired by one member of Congress and only responsible to that member	Hired by chairman or ranking member of committee; nominally work for all Democratic or Republican committee members
Job Overview	Work on combination of policy and constituent-service matters, depending on needs of district	Work exclusively on policy, within area of committee
Issues	Practice over range of issues	Specialize in committee-related issue
Background	More likely to be from district or state of hiring member; tend to have trust of Member	Less likely to be from district or state of chairman or ranking member; tend to be expert in issue area
Number	The average Representative has 14 staffers working for them, average Senator has 30	House committees averaged 68 staff and Senate committees average 46
Sample Titles	Chief of Staff, Legislative Director, Legislative Assistant	Staff Director, Policy Analyst, Committee Counsel

Analysis

The job of a personal staffer is to support the work of one member, while the role of a committee staffer is to assist a committee

Sources: Ida Burdnick, "Congressional Salaries and Allowances," Congressional Research Service, January 4, 2012; Congressional Management Foundation.

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Despite Variable Titles, Most Staffers Have Similar Jobs

Sample Job Titles for Committee and Personal Office Staffers

Title for Personal Office Staffers	Function	Title for Committee Staffers
Chief of Staff, Administrative Assistant	Serve as chief advisor and administrator for member or committee	Staff Director
Legislative Director, Deputy Chief of Staff, Chief Policy Advisor	Act as chief policy advisor, especially in area of committee jurisdiction	Deputy Staff Director, Chief Policy Advisor, Senior Policy Advisor
Counsel, Legislative Counsel	Provide legal advice to member or committee	Counsel, Chief Counsel, General Counsel
Legislative Assistant	Offer guidance on specific policy issue	Legislative Assistant, Policy Advisor, Professional Staff Member
Communications Director, Press Secretary	Speak to media on behalf of member or committee	Communications Director, Press Secretary
Office Manager, Systems Administrator	Oversee management of office and facilities	Office Manager, Systems Administrator
No equivalent	Conduct oversight of government programs within jurisdiction of committee	Investigator, Chief Investigator
Legislative Correspondent	Respond to constituent contacts on behalf of member	No equivalent
Staff Assistant	Answer phones, greet visitors, perform administrative tasks	Staff Assistant

Analysis

While the structure of a committee is different than that of a personal office, most Congressional staffers exist in a relatively similar hierarchy, whether they work for a committee or a single member



Expect to Meet with Staffers During Hill Visits



Member of Congress

Visitors may not realize how highly overscheduled Members are; they average 70-hour weeks when in D.C., often achieved by double-booking meetings

It is not uncommon for Members to show up halfway through a meeting or leave part of the way through



Chief of Staff

Visitors may not expect how often chiefs are in communication with a Member; the tight bond means that chiefs are often delegated to speak for Member to constituents



Legislative Director

Visitors may not expect that LDs tend to be specialists in the policies of the committees on which Member serves; they may focus less on other areas

Meetings are most often scheduled with and run through one or more of these staffers



Legislative Assistant

Visitors may not expect that LAs are very young; their average age is under 29



Legislative Correspondent/Staff Assistant

Visitors may not expect that LCs and SAs tend to be even younger than LAs, often recent college grads

LCs and SAs may join in meetings as a junior staffer or note-taker

Analysis

Because members of Congress are often running from meeting to meeting to vote, staffers will often have more time to devote to a meeting, and be more capable of affecting any takeaway



The Challenge:

- How would you explain the value of Nuclear Physics in 15 minutes to a 24-year-old with a political science degree and a phone that won't stop buzzing?



Knowing Your Audience

Defining the Cultural Divide

Scientists

Numbers
 Objective/Facts
 Hate to make promises
 Quantitative
 Technical
 Problem seekers
 Ask why
 Money = research
 Think long term
 Publicity avoiders
 Science page
 Specialists

Politicians/Polymakers

Words
 Subjective/Public Opinion
 Love to make promises
 Qualitative
 Political
 Issue seekers
 Ask why they should care
 Money = getting re-elected (& deficits)
 Think short term
 Publicity hounds
 Front page
 Generalists

Tobin Smith, Association of American Universities, *Working with Congress and a New Administration*, February 2009

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Tips for Talking with Staff:

- The majority of members and staff are not scientists or engineers. Even at the risk of some oversimplification, be concise.
- Keep messages simple, don't be too detailed, and don't overwhelm your listeners with technical jargon.
- Don't assume they will know the acronyms you use.



Messaging: Nuclear Physics

- Explain who you are, where you are from, and the institution with which you are affiliated
- You're in Washington, DC with other scientists to talk about Nuclear Physics, its value to the nation, and the DOE's role in supporting this field of research.
- What is Nuclear Physics? Describe the field and the research you are doing.
- Why should you care about advancements in Nuclear Physics?
 - Among other things, federal investment in Nuclear Physics has saved lives thanks to modern medical imaging, more precise cancer treatments, radioisotopes for medical procedures.
 - Use other examples.
- The DOE Office of Science supports important Nuclear Physics research and facilities.
 - Major research facilities exist at BNL in NY, Jefferson Lab in VA, and MSU in MI, including the last operating collider in the U.S. (explain what a collider is).
 - Explain how user facilities are available to researchers from universities, industry, and government, and projects are selected based on merit.



Messaging: Nuclear Physics

- Speak to why you took time away from your research to visit Washington to talk about Nuclear Physics, your research, and the DOE Office of Science.
 - I am one of x-thousands of scientists from universities across the U.S. and around the world who rely on RHIC and CEBAF, and eventually FRIB.
 - I could not do my research without these facilities (make the link to other scientists or research at your home institution or institutions in the State or District of the office you are visiting).
 - Without RHIC, CEBAF or FRIB, the other place I could do this research is...(speak to the globally competitive nature of the field)
 - The research, and the facilities that enable it, are used to train the next generation of scientists
- THE ASK: Make funding for the DOE Office of Science and its Nuclear Physics program a priority in FY18



Capitol Hill Is A (Relatively) Small Neighborhood

Getting To The Hill

By Car

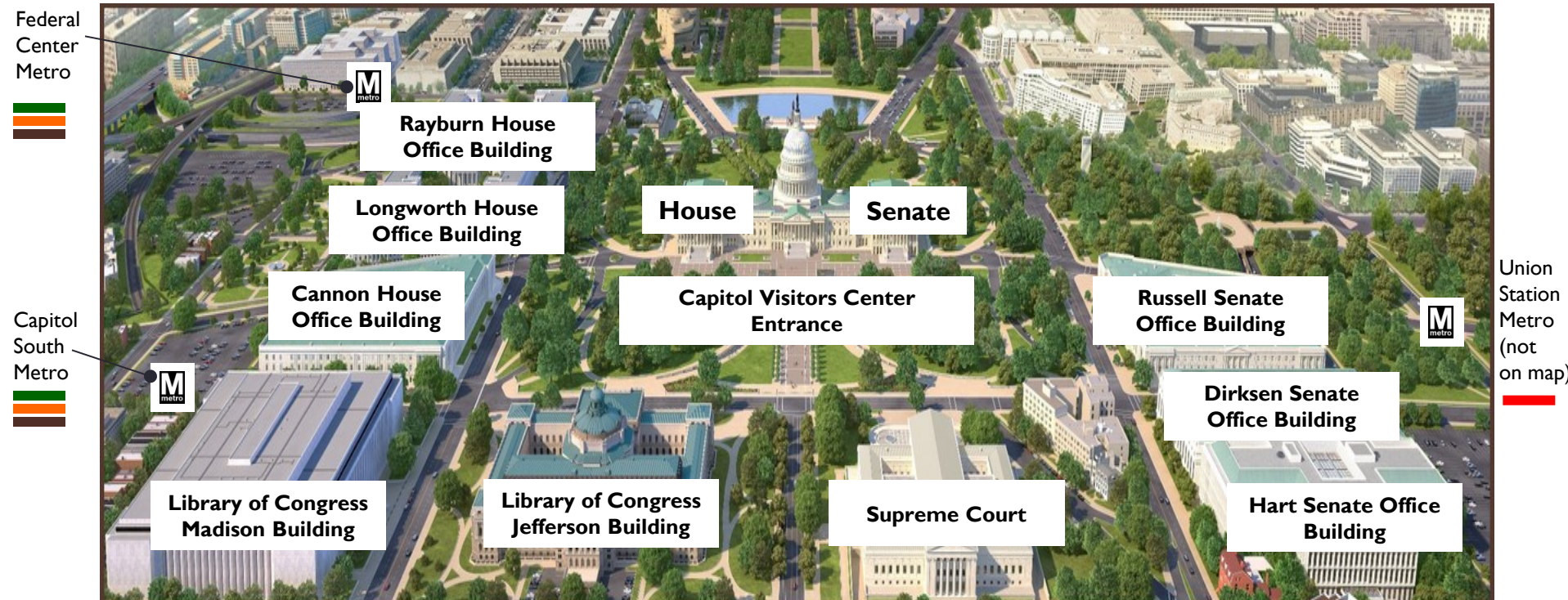
- Capitol Hill offers few public parking options; street parking is difficult.
- The nearest garage is north of the Capitol, by Union Station
- Many visitors prefer to arrive by taxi, available throughout the city.

By Public Transportation

- For most visitors, the Metro system will prove the best transportation bet.
- The Red Line (subway) serves the north side of the Capitol, while the Blue, Orange, and Silver lines offer two stations to the south
- The Metrobus serves various points around the Hill; visit WMATA.com to see detailed maps

By Foot

- D.C. is a relatively walkable city.
- However, hot and humid weather may make long walks inadvisable during summer months



Questions?

