

KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL MEETING IN SPRINGFIELD NEIU LOBBY DAY

- **BE ON TIME FOR ALL MEETINGS:** Take into consideration the increased security around Springfield and allow additional time to gain entry to buildings and find meeting rooms.
- **EXPECT MEMBER MIGHT BE DELAYED:** This is normal due to Floor votes, committee meetings, and last minute schedule changes. While waiting, meet with staff or review your priorities and presentation.
- **DESIGNATE A SPOKESPERSON TO LEAD THE MEETING:** The team leader needs to clearly state your priorities quickly and efficiently.
- **TEAMS OF LARGE NUMBERS NEED TO MEET BEFORE MEETINGS:** This is to be sure everyone knows their role and your message is delivered clearly and concisely.
- **KEEP YOUR MESSAGE BRIEF:** Identify key points and explain why the issue is important your college and therefore, to the Member. Illustrate positive impacts to his/her district.
- **KEEP INTRODUCTIONS BRIEF AND LIMIT SMALL TALK:** Expect to spend no more than 15 minutes with the Member - use your time wisely. Keep the focus on your message.
- **KNOW YOUR FACTS:** If you do not know the answer to a question, say so, and assure them you will get them the information requested. Then be sure to follow-up with an answer in a timely manner.
- **USE SHORT ANECDOTAL STORIES (SUCCESS STORIES, LOCAL HARDSHIPS, ETC.):** Particularly effective role for students - illustrate why/how your college is important to you, or family, and your community.
- **BE RESPECTFULLY ASSERTIVE:** Do not get into argument with Member/staff- This serves no purpose- The real goal is to build a long-term relationship.
- **CHECK YOUR PERSONAL POLITICS AT THE DOOR:** Whether you have defined party affiliation or you like or dislike your particular Members of the General Assembly, this is not the appropriate place to display it. **Politics is not the issue - Policy is.**
- **UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERSONAL STAFF AND COMMITTEE STAFF:**
Personal staff: Direct concern for district impact issues; politically driven; you are voting constituent.
Committee staff: Policy and fact oriented; less political; less sociable – pretty much all business.
- **CLOSE THE DEAL: Tell Member what you want him or her to do and get a commitment for action** (i.e. to send a letter, co-sign a letter, cosponsor legislation, contact appropriation committee with specific request, etc.) Then follow-up with staff that attended the meeting.
- **THANK MEMBER AND STAFF AT THE END OF THE MEETING AND E-MAIL OR FAX A THANK YOU LETTER WHEN YOU RETURN HOME:** In your letter mention all staff in attendance by name. Also, maintain regular communication with your Members and their staff (i.e. put Member on your distribution list for electronic delivery of your newsletters).
- **INVITE MEMBER & STAFF TO VISIT YOUR COLLEGE:** Schedule follow-up meetings with the Member in district office during an upcoming General Assembly recess.
- **RELAX – BE YOURSELF**

* Taken from the 12th Annual HACU Capital Forum, Washington DC, March 2007.