

2017 DEMOCRATS ABROAD CONGRESSIONAL DOOR KNOCK

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Meetings are generally scheduled starting at 10:00 a.m. Each meeting is blocked for ½ hour. Generally ¼ hour is allowed between meetings to provide time to go from one to another.

For efficiency in travel, it is best to schedule meetings on the House side in the morning and on the Senate side in the afternoon as it is a good 20-minute walk from the House side to the Senate side of the mall.

Everyone will work in teams. Each team has a captain. Captains lead the team and drive the discussion. They will guide their teams with signals to keep the discussion flowing and on track.

Our 2017 Door Knock issues are as follows:

1. **Elections Assistance Commission**
2. **Overseas Voting Rights**
3. **State Department and Embassy Funding**
4. **Residence Based Taxation**
5. **FATCA Reform**

Team members will introduce themselves, with voting state and country of residence. Teams may decide to divide up the DA issues, with persons assigned to one or two topics. Please remember that we represent Democrats Abroad and are on the Hill to give the DA position on issues.

We encourage all team members to speak up: share your expertise, opinions and experiences, but be on message and succinct. Please be sensitive to signals from the captains if it seems your “time is up.” As you know, some/most of these Congressional offices will only have limited time to meet with us.

Each team should bring with them:

1. Leave-Behind Pack: Folders that will contain the DA issue briefing papers to leave at Congressional offices. A copy of these will be printed for each team member and visit scheduled.
2. Talking points on the issues.
3. Some DA swag, including bookmarks, postcards, brochures, buttons to leave, cannot be items of significant value (more than a few dollars).

Every Team Member should bring:

1. Every team member should bring a passport or US driver’s license. Please bring at least one form of photo ID with you (such as a driver’s license but preferably a US passport) to all meetings. Different offices and government agencies have different security requirements so a passport is usually the best way to go to be certain you will be granted entry to the building.
2. A copy of the schedule to keep track of your meetings. Your initials will indicate where you are to go.

****Don’t forget that there are cafeterias in both Dirksen SOB and Longworth HOB depending on which side of the hill you are located, you may stop in for lunch, or a break.**

Dos and Don'ts for Door Knocks

- Show up on time or 5 minutes early. More often than not, your meeting will start late because the person with whom you are meeting is running late, but do not let that affect your presentation. Just accept the delay and stick to your talking points.
- Your meeting may be in the office or, if you are meeting with a member, in the hallway to another meeting, in the cafeteria, or in a committee room. Just roll with it!
- Your meeting will likely be no more than 15 minutes; so do not get sidetracked with chit-chat. Small talk is fine, but do not let it dominate the meeting.
- **Do not, under any circumstances, bring up a campaign contribution or threaten a member or staffer to not vote for them. It destroys your credibility and may even be illegal.**
- It is, however, ok for you to thank a member for supporting a position in the past that is related to your meeting ("I am here to discuss H.R. 4348 and wanted to thank the Congressman for signing on as a cosponsor").
- Mix facts with anecdotes. Hill offices love facts they can use themselves (especially from constituents) but it is often the personal story that sells the importance of an issue.
- **Never, ever lie in your meeting. If you do not know something, be honest and say so but promise to send more information in the near future.**
- Make your ask. Always end your meeting asking the member or staff whether they will support your position. Often you will get an ambiguous answer, but politely press them on when you can get an answer.
- If visiting a Congressional Representative, be sure to talk about the Americans Abroad Caucus, and in Senate forming a special interest group for Americans Abroad.
- Social media: #DAinDC and #DA17Doorknock are the hashtags we're using for photos, tweets, etc.