



**AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ADDICTION MEDICINE
LEGISLATIVE DAY**

OCTOBER 5, 2015

CONGRESSIONAL MEETING PREPARATION AND PROTOCOL

TIPS FOR MEETING WITH YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS AND THEIR STAFF

- Be on time and be patient. Your Member of Congress' schedule is likely to be very hectic.
- For each meeting, the general format should include brief introductions, statement of key issues, give the staff person the packet (after, not before the meeting) and let them know ASAM government relations staff and consultants will be following up.
- Bring plenty of business cards and make them available to all Congressional staff and Members of Congress attending your meetings. Ask for their business cards as well. This will assist with thank you notes.
- This goes without saying, but bears repeating: never mention political contributions at a meeting with a Member of Congress or staff person.
- To create the most effective sense of ASAM's grassroots strength and presence, stick to the talking points and deliver a common message in your meeting.
- Always invite the Member or staff to come see your facility or a facility of interest in your state or district.
- Always come to the meeting with an "ask" for your Member of Congress. Your "ask" is included in your talking points. This is not just for your benefit. Members of Congress rely on their constituents for reelection. They want to *do* something for you so you will want to re-elect them. Make it easy for your Member to help you by asking for clear concise ways they can support addiction medicine concerns.
- Our key issues may not be primary concerns for the office you are visiting. Be as responsive as possible to any issues and concerns the Congressional office raises. "I don't know, but I will be glad to get back to you" is always a fine answer.