

Personal is Political Youth Political Advocacy

By FIRST Robotics Competition Team 1511 Rolling Thunder

Who Are We?

- FIRST Team 1511 Rolling Thunder
- Founded in 2004 and have competed in 13 seasons
- www.penfieldrobotics.com
- 30+ students, 25+ mentors
- Printing hands since 2014
- Founded an e-NABLE chapter in 2017
- Advocates for STEM legislation since 2014









- Focus on lobbying with the federal legislative branch of the U.S. Government
- Elected Members of Congress represent people in a district or state
- Members' job is to listen to constituents and make informed decisions





- Ways to Communicate with your Members:
 - Write Letters
 - Make Phone Calls
 - Use the Media, Letters to the Editor & Op-Eds
 - Utilize Social Media
 - Inviting Members to Local Event
 - Meetings (most effective)





- Members of Congress cannot always meet with everyone
- A 'staffer' will often fill in
- Treat staffer as you would the Member
- Staffers are heavily relied on and have great deal of influence on the Member



Tips for Your Meeting



- Once you have scheduled your meeting, it is time to prepare!
- Tips on how to make your meeting more effective:
- 1. Be punctual
- 2. Never assume that Members know who you are or what you do
- 3. Create an outline of your discussion points





- Select a spokesperson and assign talking points to people attending the meeting with you
- 5. Know your Member of Congress
 - Research your Member's background, committee assignments, and
- voting record
 - congress.gov
 - govtrack.us/congress/votes





- 6. Be passionate about your issue, but be polite
- 7. Directly ask for your Member's support
- If supportive, ask them to support your position to other Members

- If Member disagrees, politely listen to their point of view, express respectful disappointment, try to counter the argument, but only if you have the facts



- Relationship Building Always be courteous as you may need their support on future issues.
- 9. Distribute minimal paperwork
 - Keep it relevant, brief and concise
- 10. Know how to handle a difficult question
 - Convey truthful, accurate information
 - Request business card for follow-up

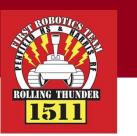




- 11. Thank your Member!
- 12. Invite them to visit you
 - Workshop, events, meetings, etc.
- 13. Write a follow-up letter
 - Thank them for meeting with you
 - Reemphasize your position on issues discussed at your meeting



Common Problems & How to Handle Them



- Final thoughts:
 - Stay on track
 - Recognize the tactics
 - Recognize what your Member is saying
 - React quickly but respectfully
 - Restate your purpose and ask for support again
 - Remember: Their job is to listen to you and do what is best for their constituents





- Remember: you may passionately advocate for your point of view, but you are <u>not</u> representing The e-NABLE Alliance.
- After hearing what is involved with advocacy, only YOU can decide what is right for you and your e-NABLE chapter.





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