

Short Toolkit For Scheduling a Congressional Visit for Global Climate Cooperation

Why Global Climate Cooperation Matters:

Justice is Global is building a grassroots movement to make the global economy equitable and sustainable. We're now organizing a new campaign within the US for global climate cooperation. This is sorely needed to address the nationalism and authoritarianism gaining power on the right and the flatfootedness of much of the Democratic party. Outside of the political problems—global problems need global solutions. By defining the progressive vision around progressive internationalism we can ensure effective and smart policy from decision-makers at every level of government. We can shape the future of our country, but we need the grassroots people-power to back it up.

Specifically we are running a campaign for global climate cooperation to ensure that countries around the world work together to address the climate crisis and our global cooperation agenda is [here](#).

Why Congressional Advocacy Matters

You might be asking yourself—why does congressional advocacy matter in a time of nearly unlimited funds for corporate lobbying through Super PACS following the Citizens United Supreme Court Decision, or find congressional or advocacy tactics to be mainstream and not part of a transformational movement for change.

There is some truth to these concerns—we're up against powerful opponents and congressional advocacy is but one tool in the toolkit of a social movement organizer. But it is an important tool

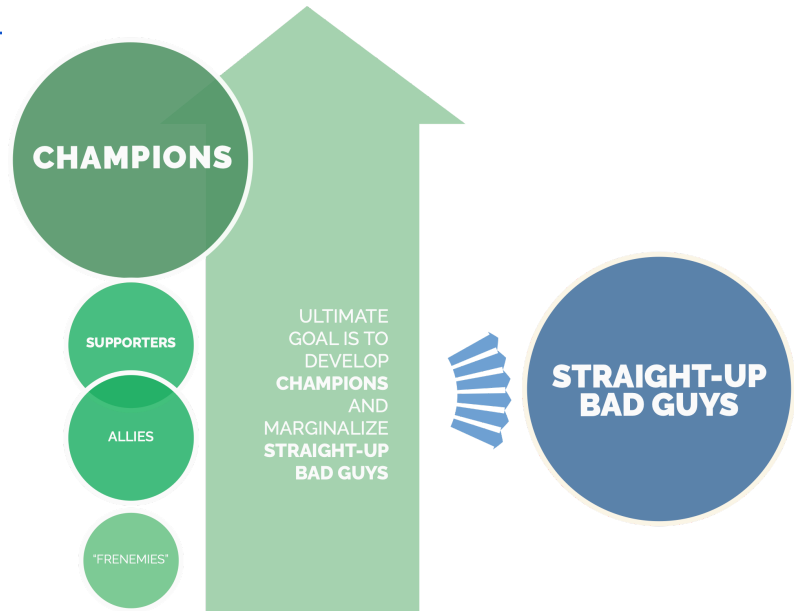
when used effectively as part of a broader theory of change for movement co-governance and inside/outside campaigning. Together these tactics can dramatically shift public opinion, lead to material policy wins, and open up space for further campaigning.

You might remember in [our organizing how to guide](#) that our theory of change rests on an understanding of 3 faces of power – Power to Win Demands, Power to Shape the Agenda, and Power to Win Common Sense. Congressional advocacy can help us do all three of these things.

Our strategy is to build congressional champions—people who can co-conspire with us for climate

cooperation and make this a visible and popular part of the progressive agenda *and* help us advance campaign demands and build more power by engaging with groups across the country and on the ground in key districts.

One tactic in this approach is a congressional lobby visit, a relational meeting with a staffer or a member of congress themselves. This can help us advocate with the member by demonstrating support amongst constituents, it can help share talking points and messaging that will resonate and be effective in the congressional office’s own efforts, and it can help us understand the power map i.e. are they supportive? If not, why not? What got them excited? What committees are they on etc.



Why Congressional Action Matters for Climate Cooperation:

In the US political system, decisions on how much funding is appropriated for which activities and funds fall under the jurisdiction of Congress. Congress, as a result, has the last say on whether we can deliver on any pledges or priorities.

This puts US contributions to international climate finance squarely in the realm of domestic politics around climate change as well as around U.S. foreign assistance. Congress is not where we want them to be on this, despite levels of support for climate action and U.S. foreign assistance among the American public. We must push for Congressional action to reflect what the majority of Americans support: swift climate action and global cooperation on the shared

challenge of climate change.



How to request

a

meeting with your member(s) of Congress or congressional staff

Meetings can be scheduled virtually, or in-person at your member's Washington, DC or District office. Phone numbers for your member's DC and District Offices are listed on your Member's website.

To request a meeting with a staffer

- Call the office, and ask the individual who answers the phone (likely a staff assistant or receptionist) for the full name and email address for the staffer who covers the issue area you want to discuss (e.g. health, education, housing, climate change, immigration, etc.)
- After you receive the staffer’s contact information, send a short email to them directly requesting a meeting. A sample email is provided below for you to use as a template. Please remember to personalize your message.

To: Staffer@email.gov

Subject: Meeting Request

Hi [staffer],

I’m a constituent from [city/state]. I and a group of ___ # constituents from Justice is Global and other organizations, would like to schedule a meeting with you to discuss global climate cooperation and several pieces of legislation–The Climate Displaced Persons Act, the End the Monroe Doctrine Resolution, and the Green Climate Fund Authorization.. Are you available for a conference call or virtual meeting in the next month?

Sincerely,

[your name]

To request a meeting with a member of Congress

1. Determine a list of potential dates you would like to suggest for your meeting.

- Typically, meetings with members of Congress should be requested 2-3 months in advance.
- When selecting potential dates for your meeting, refer to [the congressional calendar](#).
 - If requesting a meeting with your member of Congress in Washington, DC, select potential dates labeled “[House/Senate] in Session.”

- If requesting a meeting with your member of Congress in your State/District, select potential dates labeled “District Work Week.”

2. Call the office, and ask the individual who answers the phone (likely a staff assistant or receptionist) for the full name and email address for the member’s DC or District Scheduler (depending on where you want to have the meeting). Members of Congress usually have two schedulers—one for when they are in Washington, DC, and one for when they are back in the State/District.

3. After you receive the staffer’s contact information, send a short email to them directly requesting a meeting. You can use the following sample email as a template, but please remember to personalize your message:

To: Staffer@email.gov

Subject: Meeting Request

Hi [staffer],

I’m a constituent from [city/state]. I and a group of ___ # constituents from Justice is Global and other organization, would like to schedule a virtual meeting with [senator/representative] [last name] to discuss global climate cooperation and several pieces of legislation–The Climate Displaced Persons Act, the End the Monroe Doctrine Resolution, Green Climate Fund Authorization, and US-China Climate cooperation.. Are you available for a conference call or virtual meeting in the next month?

Sincerely,

[your name]

Tips and Tricks to Make this Effective

1. If you plan to do a congressional meeting, JIG staff is happy to help coordinate, coach, or even attend the meeting to support! Reach out to us at team@justiceisglobal.org
2. Call to reconfirm with the staff the day before.
3. Provide staff with a list of participants if there are others with you.
4. Arrive early.
5. Always have a prep meeting! Discuss talking points, roles, and goals!
6. Ask how much time you have at the beginning and set an agenda—be clear about legislation and asks that you have for congress members.
7. It is still valuable to have a meeting even if the congressperson has signed the legislation—this meeting can be a thank you meeting and a way to move the congress person to be more vocal or active on the issue. You can move them from passive to active support! Ask the questions and listen to their concerns.
8. If the legislator or staff person asks a question you don't know the answer to, offer to look into it and report back.
9. Don't underestimate the importance of staff.
10. Thank the legislator and/or staff at the end of the meeting.
11. Follow up with a thank you letter or email and reiterate your key points.