

NAFSA: ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS

ADVOCACY HANDBOOK



NAFSA

Association of
International Educators



Connecting
Our World

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GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

AND WHY IT IS NECESSARY



What is Grassroots Advocacy?

MOST PEOPLE ARE SO BUSY IN THEIR DAY-TO-DAY JOBS THAT THEY HAVE LITTLE TIME TO THINK ABOUT HOW FEDERAL LEGISLATION AFFECTS THEIR JOBS OR HOW THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO INFLUENCE FEDERAL POLICY. Yet every day, they encounter situations that relate directly to policies that have been made at the state or federal level. A study abroad adviser may have a student whose parents want to cancel her study abroad experience because the U.S. State Department has issued a travel warning for the country she was planning to visit. A student may desperately want to study abroad but can only do so with the help of financial aid. The adviser must sort through the rules and regulations pertaining to transporting federal financial aid for a study abroad experience. An international student adviser may have a student who is denied a visa to apply to enter the United States because the consular officer interviewing the student doesn't believe the applicant will return home or feels he or she is not qualified for the school he or she plans to attend.

A major misconception of many U.S. citizens is that there is little to nothing they can do to affect laws made by policymakers. They think it's the association lobbyist who has influence over how a member of Congress votes. While lobbyists do play a role, it is you—the constituent—who elect policymakers and who has the most control in influencing and educating elected officials through various forms of grassroots advocacy. In a report published by the Congressional Management Foundation titled *Communicating with Congress: Perceptions of Citizen Advocacy on Capitol Hill (CME, 2011)*, 90 percent of Hill staff surveyed reported that if their boss had not arrived at a firm decision, individu-

alized letters from constituents would have influence on the member's decision while in-person issue visits from constituents was the most influential method of swaying a member. This study shows that members of Congress are particularly convinced by thoughtful, passionate, personal contributions by their constituents. That's where you come in.

Grassroots advocacy is the process by which an organization empowers its members to contact their elected officials to influence their views on an issue of importance. You already know the importance of international education and exchange, now it's your job to commu-

nicate the importance to Congress. There are several things that you can do to be a voice for international education, including communicating with elected officials as a constituent through letter-writing campaigns, telephone calls, and personal visits. This is the essence of grassroots advocacy and why it is such a vital component of an organization's public policy efforts.

Know Your Role in the Political Process

To be a successful grassroots advocate, you must first understand how to get involved. Then, more importantly, you must actually do it! There is one basic principle that all members of Congress agree upon, no matter what their political affiliation: to remain a member of Congress, they must be elected by their constituents at home. As a voter, you provide elected officials with valuable resources: your knowledge and expertise, your connection to the community, and, most importantly, your vote.

Remember, members of Congress are elected by local constituencies; they do things for local constituencies and they interpret national and global issues in terms of local concerns.

The following pages are designed to help you become more familiar with effective practices when communicating with your elected officials.

GETTING STARTED

Identify Your Legislators

Before you can begin communicating with your legislators, you must identify who represents you. To find your members of Congress, please visit the Take Action Center on *Connecting Our World* at www.connectingourworld.org and enter your zip code. When searching for your representative, you may be prompted to add the four-digit extension of your zip code.

Know the Role of Your Members

Though any member of Congress can introduce a bill, few can ensure that the bill gets passed or even gets a hearing. Identify which (if any) of your members sit on major committees that address international issues. For example, if you are interested in funding for international education, you would work with members of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees.



CHIEF OF STAFF OR ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (COS or AA):

The chief of staff or administrative assistant reports directly to the member. This person typically is in charge of the overall operation of the office (assigning work, supervising staff, etc.) and the evaluation of political outcomes of proposed legislation. This is the most senior staff position in a congressional office.

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR (LD): The legislative director monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations to the member on the pros and cons of each issue.

LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT (LA): The legislative assistants are assigned to work on certain issues based on the member's responsibilities and interests. The LAs assist in doing research and accompanying the member to meetings and hearings. LAs play an important policy role.

PRESS SECRETARY: The press secretary works closely with the national and local media to gain positive exposure for the member.

SCHEDULER: The scheduler is charged with maintaining the member's calendar and allocating time for hearings, meetings, staff responsibilities, and

constituent requests. The scheduler is also responsible for travel arrangements, setting speaking engagements, planning trips to the home district, etc. Some members have two schedulers—one to handle the Washington, DC, schedule and another to handle the district schedule.

CASEWORKER: Caseworkers are assigned to assist constituents in various ways. The caseworker works with the constituents on personal issues such as passport problems and social security issues. Caseworkers are usually based in the district.

OTHER STAFF MEMBERS: Several other staff members, such as legislative correspondents, executive assistants, mail room processors, and receptionists, assist in running a member's office.

Source: *Capitol Advantage*, <http://capwiz.com/nafsa/issues/basics/?style=comm>

DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Getting to Know Your Members

To build a relationship with members of Congress, it's important to first do your homework. Begin by conducting some research on [your representative](#) and [senators](#) to discover the issues on which they are most active, what their positions are on your issues, and which committees and subcommittees they serve on. Each member maintains a personal Web site through the U.S. Congress that contains the information referenced above (and other useful resources). Once you have familiarized yourself with your member's background, it is important to continue to monitor public statements, voting records, and media coverage, as this will prove invaluable information.

There are many opportunities available for you to meet your members of Congress. Members often will hold town hall meetings, appear at local civic and charitable events, and attend local and state political functions. You can also meet with your members by visiting their Washington, DC, or district offices.

Relationships initiated through a casual meeting can grow into partnerships to work toward improving international education and exchange.

The Importance of Working with Staff

The staff in members' offices serve a crucial role in making things happen on Capitol Hill. Many demands often compete for members' time, so they rely heavily on staff to bring issues to their attention and relay their constituents' concerns. It is imperative that you build relationships with staff so that you can raise your concerns with policymakers and have a chance to work on legislation with members of Congress.

If the member isn't available when you visit his or her office, schedule an initial meeting with the appropriate staff aide. After meeting, the staff member will most likely summarize the meeting in a memo to the legislator and pass along any handouts you may have provided.

MEETING WITH YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Meeting with Your Member

Visiting your members of Congress is an effective way to communicate your message on a particular issue. According to the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) report *Communicating with Congress: Perceptions of Citizen Advocacy on Capitol Hill*, most staff said that constituent visits to the Washington office (97%) and District office (94%) have some or a lot of influence on an undecided member. Given a legislator's busy schedule, meetings are sometimes difficult to arrange; however, members will typically do what they can to meet with visiting constituents. When scheduling a meeting, call the scheduler to arrange for a mutually convenient time on the day you will be in Washington, DC, and let him/her know what you would like to discuss. Do not overlook the opportunity to meet with a staff aide, particularly if he or she works closely with the member on an issue of concern to you. You may also want to try to schedule meetings with your members when they are in their district or state visiting constituents. They tend to have more time available and fewer distractions when they are in the district. To arrange a district meeting, contact the member's local office.



DO'S & DON'TS

FOR MEETING WITH YOUR MEMBER AND/OR STAFF

DO:

- If you work at a college or university, it is a good idea to touch base with your federal relations officer on campus before initiating contact with your member of Congress. You are free to act as a private citizen in communicating with your elected officials, but most institutions have policies in place about their employees speaking on behalf of the institution. It is therefore important to touch base with your federal relations officer before communicating with your elected officials in your capacity as an employee of your institution. Your federal relations officer may also have some useful information that will help you in efforts to set up a meeting with your elected officials.
- Research your members of Congress. Familiarize yourself with their voting record, their stand on issues of importance to you, and which committees and subcommittees they serve on. Be cordial. If the member doesn't agree with your position, it's best to continue to foster the relationship. Members have been known to change their minds over time. They may agree with you on another important issue in the future even if they disagree with you on a current issue.
- Be prompt and patient. Arrive at the meeting on time and prepared. Members and their staff have extremely busy schedules. If they are running late or if your meeting is interrupted, try to be flexible.
- Keep the meeting short. Meetings are usually scheduled for 5-10 minutes.
- Be sure to engage the person you're meeting with. Don't just talk at them.
- Focus on only one or two issues during your meeting.
- Relate the issue to the member's district. Let him or her know how this will affect you and other constituents. Use statistics to demonstrate how your community benefits financially and culturally by having international students and scholars on campus or how study abroad helps create a globally competent citizenry.
- Use personal anecdotes when discussing the issue.
- Know the facts. Provide information on your issue that you can distribute to the member and/or staff. One-page handouts are generally best, as members and staff rarely have time to read longer materials. Check out www.nafsa.org and www.connectingourworld.org to see if there are briefing papers available on the issue you wish to discuss with your member.
- Know the position of the other side. Not everyone is going to agree with your thoughts. Be prepared to answer questions to support your opinion.
- Make specific and reasonable requests. For example, rather than asking them to "support international education," ask them to cosponsor a specific piece of legislation.
- When your meeting is finished, thank the member and staff for their time, offer yourself as a resource, and provide them with your contact information.

DON'T:

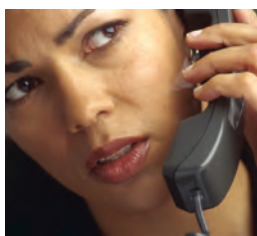
- Inundate the member or staffer with voluminous materials unless they request more follow-up information.
- Assume that your audience understands your specific problem or your jargon.
- Assume meetings with a staff person, rather than the member of Congress, aren't meaningful. The staffer frequently conducts research and prepares materials for the member.
- Be afraid to say you don't know. If you are asked a question about which you are unsure, tell the member and/or staff that you will get back to them with the answer. You are welcome to contact NAFSA's Public Policy Department at grassroots@nafsa.org to help in preparing your response to the question.
- Make vague requests.
- Be intimidated. Remember, members of Congress work on behalf of you and your best interest. They want to meet with you to learn what they can do to help you and their other constituents.

Contact information for local offices can be found on the member's Web page.

COMMUNICATING WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Connecting Our World

Connecting Our World (CoWorld), www.connectingourworld.org, is a community of individuals taking action to support public policies that strengthen and expand international education. It includes an online advocacy component with a letter-writing tool allowing you to personalize and send messages to your members of Congress on issues related to international education and exchange. This user-friendly service will allow you to simply enter your address, personalize your e-mail, and deliver your message to Capitol Hill with a click of the mouse. CoWorld allows you to get your voice heard by educating policymakers on the need to improve policies pertaining to international education and exchange. CoWorld also includes social media tools that make it easy for you to share advocacy campaigns with others who care about the issues.



Writing Your Members

Writing a letter is an easy way to share your views on a particular issue. According to the CMF survey of congressional staff, constituents who make the effort to personally communicate with their senators and representatives are more influential than lobbyists and news editors. Messages that are customized by the individuals are far more effective than identical form letters.

Due to heightened security measures, however, the delivery of postal mail to federal or state legislators has been significantly delayed. E-mail is one of the most effective and efficient ways to communicate your concerns, and

members' offices generally prefer electronic communications for constituent contact. Keep in mind, as a general rule, members of Congress only accept and respond to messages from constituents. Use the following tips to improve the effectiveness of your correspondence:

E-mail/Fax

1. Make the e-mail/letter brief, concise, and neat.

- State the purpose of your message clearly at the beginning of the letter. For example: "I am writing to urge you to cosponsor S. 473, the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Act."
- If your letter refers to a specific piece of legislation, identify it as such. Bills introduced in the House will be H.R. (bill number) and Senate bills will be S. (bill number).
- When using a form letter provided by NAFSA, **always** personalize the letter in the first paragraph. More than half of staff surveyed by the CMF agreed that most advocacy campaigns of identical form messages are sent without constituents' agreement or knowledge, rendering them far less influential. A message personalized with an individual's story, reasons for or against a bill, and the impact the bill may have on the representative's district or state are key to characterizing a message and swaying a member of Congress.
- Cover only one issue per letter.
- Close your letter by restating your issue and indicate the response you would like to receive.
- Include your contact information in case the member's office wants to follow up with you.

2. Address your correspondence appropriately. (Note: if you use the letter-writing tool on connectingourworld.org, this will be done automatically for you.)

- Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:
The Honorable (Member's first and last name)
U.S. House of Representative
Washington, D.C. 20515
Dear Representative (Member's last name):

- Members of the U.S. Senate
The Honorable
(Member's first and last name)
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
Dear Senator (Member's last name):

3. Send a letter when your member does something that deserves a thank you.

- If your member follows your advice and cosponsors a bill or supports your legislation, send him/her a letter of thanks. Elected officials are rarely thanked for their actions, so expressing gratitude can go a long way in building relationships with lawmakers.

Telephone Calls

- Telephone calls are generally taken by a staff member.
 - When you call, ask the receptionist to speak with the legislative aide who handles the issues you are calling about. For example: "I'm calling to speak to the person who handles immigration issues for the senator."
 - When connected with the aide, let him or her know that you are a constituent and what you are calling in reference to.
 - If you don't already know, you may want to ask the staff member for the member's position on the bill.
 - Be prepared to answer questions as to why this is important to you, your students, and/or your institution.
 - You can also request a written response/follow up to your call.

ADVOCACY AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL

Meeting your state representatives is an important part of international education advocacy. Many critical education policy issues are decided at the state level, making it vital that the voice of international education is heard by your local and state representatives. The principles of federal level advocacy outlined above also apply to building a strong working relationship with your state representatives.

Getting to Know Your Local State Representative

Please visit <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/dbg/dbg/officials/> to identify your representatives at both the local and state level of government. Once you have identified your representatives you can follow the same fundamental principles used at the federal level to build strong working relationships with your locally elected officials.



Connecting Our World Grassroots Leadership Program

In response to the growing demand at the local level for training and resources to help address public policy challenges faced by members, NAFSA has launched the *Connecting Our World* Grassroots Leadership Program.

This program enables NAFSA to train members on the principles of grassroots advocacy leadership while offering the tools to inspire and engage others to become involved in advocating for international education.

Connecting Our World Grassroots Leadership Program Goals:

- Empower individual NAFSA members to make a difference in their community on issues that impact international education at the local or state level;
- Engage activists for international education in the creation of resources and toolkits that other activists can use in their own communities; and

3. Build grassroots support for NAFSA's efforts to advance international education.

Visit www.connectingourworld.org for more information on the Grassroots Leadership Program.

BE A PART OF CONNECTING OUR WORLD (COWORLD)

What is CoWorld?

As mentioned earlier, CoWorld is a community of individuals taking action to support public policies that strengthen and expand international education. The community seeks to:

- Educate the government and the public about the importance of international education in fostering peace, security, and well-being around the world.
- Connect individuals worldwide in conversation about the power and potential of international education.
- Mobilize a grassroots community of individuals to take action to support international education, especially by communicating with their elected officials



Do you want to make a difference for international education, but need resources and support in your advocacy efforts? Join the CoWorld community! As a member, you will get the inside scoop on how international education changes lives, impacts your community, and shapes our global future. Additionally, you'll stay informed on the issues and join us in taking action by sending messages to Congress and the White House to support opportunities for living and learning across borders.

Why You Should Join CoWorld

You will:

- Be part of a growing community of international education advocates.
- Receive action alerts on legislation and policies that impact international educational exchange for your students, scholars, and institution.
- Be able to quickly and easily send personalized letters to members of Congress and the administration on these issues.
- Help promote the best legislation possible to further advance international education and exchange.
- Receive updates on advocacy campaigns.
- Motivate your colleagues to become involved in the political process.
- Have access to advocacy tools and tips to better understand and influence the legislative process.

Joining CoWorld will link you into a community of international education advocates around the world and provide you with useful information and sample letters to personalize and send to your elected officials. You don't have to be a member of NAFSA to join CoWorld. To register, please visit <http://www.connectingourworld.org/>.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

ACT – Legislation (a bill or joint resolution) that has passed both chambers of Congress in identical form, has been signed into law by the president, or has passed over his veto, thus becoming a law.

ACTION ALERT – A call to action—through a letter, phone call, fax, e-mail or other form of communication—from an organization or interest group intended to encourage supporters to contact their members of Congress on a particular issue.

ADJOURN – A motion to adjourn in the Congress will end that day’s session.

ADJOURN SINE DIE – The end of a legislative session “without day.” These adjournments are used to indicate the final adjournment of an annual or the two-year session of a Congress.

ADVOCACY – The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; active support.

AMENDMENT – An alteration of or addition to a pending bill or other measure. The Congress must agree to the amendment before it becomes part of the measure.

APPROPRIATIONS – A legislative act authorizing the expenditure of a designated amount of public funds for a specific purpose—for example, to fund the Commerce, State, and Justice Departments. In the federal government, appropriations are provided in annual appropriations bills and in permanent provisions of law.

AUTHORIZATION – A legal provision that authorizes appropriations for a program or agency. The authorization could be available for one year, a set number of years, or for an indefinite amount of time. An authorization can be for a fixed amount of money or for “such sums as necessary.”

BILL – The main vehicle used by lawmakers to introduce their proposals to Congress. Bills of general interest are referred to as “public bills,” while those with a narrow interest are “private bills.”

BUDGET RESOLUTION – Legislation in the form of a concurrent resolution setting forth the congressional budget. The budget resolution establishes various budget totals, divides spending totals into functional categories (i.e., transportation), and may include reconciliation instructions to designated House or Senate committees.

CAUCUS – An informal group of members of the House, Senate, or some combination of the two that discusses issues of mutual concern, conducts legislative research, and performs policy planning for its members. There are caucuses representing political party, ethnicity, regions, etc.

CHAMBER – Location where the House and Senate conduct business. Also refers to the House of Representatives or Senate itself.

CLOTURE – Procedure where the Congress votes to place a time limit on consideration of a bill to prevent a filibuster.

COALITIONS – A group of people with common interests who come together, either in a formal or informal arrangement, to support specific issues through joint efforts such as sharing of information, costs, coordinating lobbying efforts, etc.

COMMITTEE – Subsidiary of the Congress that considers legislation, conducts hearings and investigations, or carries out other assignments as instructed by the full chamber. Members are assigned to different committees based on their party affiliation, seniority, etc.

COMPANION BILL – Similar or identical bills introduced in both chambers.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION – A resolution that passes through both chambers that lacks the force of law and does not require the president’s signature.

CONFEREES – Members of a conference committee (made up of members of both chambers) appointed to reconcile the Senate and House versions of the same bill.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE – A temporary committee made up of both Senate and House conferees that work to reconcile differences in the bills that have gone through both chambers.

CONFERENCE REPORT – The compromise product negotiated by the conference committee. The “conference report,” which is printed and available to members, is submitted to each chamber for its consideration, such as approval or disapproval.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION – Legislation that provides fiscal authority for agencies to continue to operate at the current funding level until their appropriations are enacted. This action is used at the end of a fiscal year when the following year’s appropriations have not yet been completed.

COSPONSOR – A member who has joined other members in sponsoring a bill.

DIRECT SPENDING – Mandatory spending arranged through authorization or entitlement.

DISCRETIONARY SPENDING – Spending for programs whose funding levels are determined by the appropriations process.

ENTITLEMENT – A program that is guaranteed certain benefits and funding levels controlled by authorizing legislation. The funding can come from either an authorization or appropriations act.

FILIBUSTER – The use of obstructive tactics—for example, prolonged speechmaking—for the purpose of delaying legislative action.

FISCAL YEAR – The 12-month period for using federal funds, beginning October 1 of the previous year and ending on September 30 of the current year.

FLOOR AMENDMENT – An amendment offered on the chamber floor by an individual member while considering the bill.

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY – The process by which an organization or interest group activates its members or citizens who share an interest to contact their elected officials on behalf of their shared public policy views.

HEARING – Committee meetings, generally open to the public, held to hear testimony by expert witnesses on a subject related to current or upcoming legislation, to conduct an investigation, or to review the operation or other aspects of a federal agency or program.

ITEM VETO – Ability to veto a part rather than the entire appropriations act. The Congress has the ability to exercise an item (sometimes referred to as a line-item veto); however, the president must sign or veto the entire act.

JOINT COMMITTEE – Committees made up of membership from both chambers of Congress.

JOINT RESOLUTION – A legislative measure that requires the approval of both chambers and is submitted to the president for possible signature into law. A joint resolution will be designated as S. or H. J. Resolution (number).

JOINT SESSION – When the House and Senate meet together to conduct formal business.

LAME DUCK SESSION – When Congress reconvenes in an even-numbered year following November elections to consider various items of business. Some members who return for the session will not be in Congress next year due to loss in a reelection or leaving their seat in Congress—hence the terms “lame duck” members participating in a “lame duck” session.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION – The part of the chambers’ daily session dedicated to consideration of legislative business (bills, resolutions, etc)

MAJORITY LEADER – Spokesperson and strategist for the majority party, elected by members of the majority party.

MARKUP – The process by which committee and subcommittee members debate, amend, and rewrite proposed legislation.

MEMBER OF CONGRESS – Person who is elected in his or her congressional district to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives or the U.S. Senate.

MINORITY LEADER – Spokesperson and strategist for the minority party, elected by the members of the minority party.

MOBILIZATION – The process of individuals or groups organizing to provide strength to a public official on a particular issue as a part of grassroots advocacy.

MOTION – Formal proposal for procedural action such as to amend, adjourn, consider, reconsider, etc.

OMNIBUS – A “catch-all” bill that combines various bills of the same general category. For example, an omnibus appropriations bill would combine all appropriations bills that have not passed through the Congress as stand-alone bills.

ORIGINAL BILL – A bill that is drafted by a committee. The bill is introduced by the committee chairman after the committee votes to report it, and it is put directly on the Chamber’s Calendar of Business.

OVERRIDE OF A VETO – When each chamber votes on a bill vetoed by the president. To pass a bill vetoed by the president, a two-thirds vote in each chamber is required.

OVERSIGHT – Committee review of the activities of a federal agency or program.

POCKET VETO – The president has 10 days after a measure is passed through the Congress to either sign it into law or veto the measure. If the president has not signed the bill after 10 days, it becomes law without his signature. If Congress adjourns during the 10-day period, the bill dies.

POINT OF ORDER – When a member claims that a rule of the chamber is being violated on the floor. If the chair finds the point of order in violation of a rule, the action is not permitted.

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE – Officer of the Senate who presides over the chamber when the vice president is absent. The president pro tempore is elected by the Senate and typically is the senator of the majority party with the longest record of continuous service.

PRESIDING OFFICER – The member of the majority party who presides over the chamber and is in charge of maintaining order, recognizing members to speak, and interpreting the chamber’s rules, practices, and precedents.

PRIVATE LAW – A private bill enacted into law. Private laws have restricted applicability and often are addressing immigration and naturalization issues affecting individuals.

PRO FORMA SESSION – A brief meeting of the chamber in which no business is conducted. Typically, a pro forma session is conducted to satisfy the constitutional obligation that neither chamber can adjourn for more than three days without the consent of the other.

PROXY VOTING – The process by which members can cast a vote in committee for a member who is absent.

PUBLIC LAW – A public bill that has been passed through both chambers and enacted into law. Public laws have general applicability.

QUORUM – The number of members that must be present for the chamber to do business. The U.S. Constitution requires a majority of members (51 in the Senate and 218 in the House) for a quorum. Often, fewer members are actually present on the floor, but the chamber presumes that a quorum is present unless the contrary is shown by a roll call vote or quorum call.

QUORUM CALL – A roll call to determine if a quorum is present. If any member “suggests the absence of a quorum,” the presiding officer must direct the roll to be called. Often, a quorum call is terminated by unanimous consent before completion, which permits the chamber to use the quorum call to obtain a brief delay to work out some difficulty or await a member’s arrival.

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER – The highest ranking (and typically the longest serving) minority member of a committee. Members can not serve as a ranking minority member on more than one committee.

RECESS – A break in the chambers’ (or committees’) business. Typically, a chamber will recess rather than adjourn at the end of each day.

REFERRAL – When a bill or resolution is introduced it is typically referred to the committee with jurisdiction over the subject of that bill.

REPORT – A committee’s written record of its actions and views on a bill which is then submitted to its respective chamber.

RESOLUTION – A nonlegislative measure effective only in the house in which it was introduced that does not require concurrence by the other chamber or approval by the president.

ROLL CALL VOTE – A vote where each member’s name is called by the clerk and his or her vote is recorded.

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE – The secretary affirms the accuracy of bill text by signing all measures that pass the Senate. The secretary also supervises the preparation and printing of bills and reports and the publication of the Congressional Record and Senate journals. The secretary is nominated by the majority party and elected by the full Senate.

SESSION – The time frame during which Congress meets and carries out business. Each Congress has two regular sessions—a first session and a second session.

SPONSOR – The primary person who introduces a measure.

SUBCOMMITTEE – Subset of a committee for the purpose of dividing the workload. All recommendations of a subcommittee must be approved by the full committee before being reported to the chamber.

TABLE A BILL – A motion to put a bill aside and remove it from consideration.

VETO – The procedure by which the president refuses to sign a bill or resolution and thus prevents it from being made into law. A veto can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both the Senate and the House.

VICE PRESIDENT – The vice president also serves as the president of the Senate. He or she may vote in the Senate in case of a tie, but is not required to. In the absence of the vice president, the president pro tempore usually performs these duties.

VOICE VOTE – A vote in which the presiding officer states the question and asks for those in favor and against to speak their vote. The presiding officer then announces the result according to his or her judgment.

WHIPS – Assistants to the floor leaders who are elected by the party. The whips are responsible for mobilizing votes within their party on major issues.

YIELD – When a member who is recognized to speak permits another member to speak while the first member retains the floor.

YIELD THE FLOOR – When a member who is recognized to speak completes his/her remarks, he/she yields the floor, terminating his/her recognition.

Yield Time – When the chamber reaches a unanimous consent agreement limiting the time for debate, a member may be recognized to speak only when a floor manager yields the member a specified amount of time to speak.

Source: U.S. Senate Web site

APPENDIX B: THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

Introduction

Anyone can draft a bill, but only members of Congress can introduce legislation. By introducing a bill, the member becomes the sponsor of that bill. The official process begins when the bill is numbered, referred to a committee, and printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office. House bills are designated as H.R. (bill number) and Senate bills are S. (bill number). For example, S. 455.

There are many stages before a bill can become law. In some cases, these stages follow an orderly process and can take a considerable amount of time. In some instances, however, certain steps are skipped and a bill can move quickly.

Referral to Committee/Subcommittee and Action

Bills are most always referred to a standing committee in either the House or the Senate to begin action on the legislation. When the bill gets to committee, it is put on the committee calendar. The committee can either consider the bill or designate it to the appropriate subcommittee for further research. The bill is evaluated at this point for chances of passage; the committee or subcommittee can either proceed with hearings or decide not to act, which is the same as killing the bill. If the bill is sent to subcommittee, it will conduct hearings to gather the views of the executive branch, experts in the field, public officials, and supporters and opponents of the bill. Each person invited to testify can submit his or her comments in person and/or in a written statement.

Mark Up

Once the hearings are complete, the subcommittee holds a mark up to amend the bill prior to sending the bill back to the full committee. Once the full committee receives the bill, it can choose to conduct further research and hearings or it can vote on the recommendations from the subcommittee and propose any fur-

ther amendments. The committee then votes on its final recommendations being sent to the full House or Senate.

Writing a Report

After the committee votes to report the bill, the chairman instructs the committee staff to prepare a written report. The report outlines the intent and scope of the bill, impact on existing laws and programs, position of the executive branch, and the views of the committee members.

Scheduling Floor Action

Once the bill has been reported back to its respective chamber, it is placed in chronological order on the calendar. The House has several legislative calendars and the speaker and majority leader together determine if, when, and in what order the bills will come up. In the Senate, there is just one legislative calendar.

Debate

When the bill gets to the floor of the House or Senate, there are procedures governing the debate of the bill. The rules determine the conditions and time allotment for general debate.

Voting

After the debate and addition of any amendments, the members vote to either pass or defeat the bill.

Referral to Other Chamber

Once the bill is passed through either the House or Senate, it is referred to the other chamber where it typically will follow the same route. This chamber can approve, reject, ignore, or change the bill as it is received.

Conference Committee

If there are minor changes to the bill by the other chamber, the modified version is usually sent back to the first chamber for agreement. If the bill looks significantly different, a conference committee is formed to reconcile the differences in the two versions. If the

conferees are unable to reach a consensus, the legislation dies. If they reach an agreement, a conference report is prepared outlining the conference committee's recommendations. Both chambers must then approve the report.

Final Action

Once the bill has been approved by both chambers, it is sent to the president. If the president approves of the

legislation, he signs it into law. If the president takes no action and the Congress is in session, it automatically becomes a law. If the president opposes the bill, he can veto the legislation. When the president vetoes a bill, the Congress can attempt to override the veto. This requires a two-thirds roll call vote of members present with the required number for a quorum.

Source: Capitol Advantage, <http://capwiz.com/nafsa/issues/basics/?style=comm> (accessed January 26, 2006)

APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE 112TH CONGRESS (2011-2013)

MEMBERSHIP

Senate:

Republicans – 47

Democrats – 51

Independent – 2

House:

Republicans – 242

Democrats – 193

Independent – 0

Vacancy - 1

REELECTION 2012

Senate

Republicans – 10

Democrats – 21

Independent – 2

House

Republicans – 242

Democrats – 193

SENATE LEADERSHIP

Democrats

Majority Leader: Harry Reid (NV)

Conference Secretary, Patty Murray (WA)

President Pro Tem: Daniel Inouye (Hawaii)

Majority Whip: Dick Durbin (IL)

Conference Chairman: Harry Reid (NV)

Republicans

Minority Leader: Mitch McConnell (KY)

Conference Secretary: Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX)

Minority Whip: Jon Kyl (AZ)

Conference Chairman: Lamar Alexander (TN)

HOUSE LEADERSHIP

Democrats

Minority Leader: Nancy Pelosi (CA)

Minority Whip: Steny Hoyer (MD)

Caucus Chair: John B. Larson (CT)

Republicans

Majority Leader: Eric Cantor (VA)

Majority Whip: Kevin McCarthy

Conference Chair: Jeb Hensarling (TX)

Speaker: John Boehner (OH)

Source: U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate Web sites

APPENDIX D: WEB RESOURCES

NAFSA ON THE ISSUES:

<http://www.nafsa.org/publicpolicy>

NAFSA's Public Policy Department provides the latest information on legislative and regulatory activities affecting international education.

CONNECTING OUR WORLD (COWORLD):

<http://www.connectingourworld.org>

Connecting Our World is about creating a better world through international education. This is a community of individuals taking action to support public policies that strengthen and expand international education.

TAKE ACTION CENTER:

<http://capwiz.com/nafsa/home/>

Part of Coworld, this is NAFSA's letter-writing tool for contacting members of Congress.

NAFSA BLOG:

<http://blog.nafsa.org/>

Spotlights the importance of International education issues and the ongoing work of NAFSA.

NAFSA ON TWITTER:

<http://twitter.com/nafsa>

Provides instantly updated information on International education issues.

NAFSA ON FACEBOOK:

<http://www.facebook.com/nafsa>

A vibrant community of International Education supporters.

NAFSA ON FLICKR:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/nafsa/>

Share international education photos.

NAFSA ON LINKEDIN:

<http://www.linkedin.com/company/217277>

Professional networking site.

NAFSA ON YOU TUBE:

<http://www.youtube.com/nafsatube>

Video's on international education and from NAFSA conferences.

THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

<http://www.house.gov>

This site provides information about your representatives, the committees they serve on, and current legislation under consideration by the House.

THE U.S. SENATE:

<http://www.senate.gov>

This site provides information about your two Senators, the committees they serve on, and current legislation under consideration by the Senate.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS:

<http://thomas.loc.gov>

This site provides information on current and past legislation in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. It also provides the text of the Congressional Record, the published account of the debates on the House and Senate floor.

THE CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS:

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html>

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is the codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the federal government.

THE FEDERAL REGISTER:

http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fedreg/frcont06.html

The Federal Register is the official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents. It is updated daily by 6 a.m. and is published Monday through Friday, except federal holidays.

THE U.S. CODE:

<http://uscode.house.gov/>

The U.S. House of Representatives' Office of Law Revision Counsel prepares and publishes the U.S. Code, which is a consolidation and codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States.

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE LETTERS

Requesting Support on an Issue:

The Honorable (Representative's First and Last Name)
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Representative (Last name):

As a constituent, I am writing to ask you to cosponsor The Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act (S.473). This legislation establishes a program to dramatically increase participation in study abroad and make sure such experiences are universally available to U.S. students from all backgrounds.

I've worked with incoming and out-going reciprocal exchange students, study abroad students, and sponsored students for more than 20 years and have seen countless times how one-on-one interaction between international and U.S. students breaks through the layers of preconceptions each has about the other. It opens them up to new avenues of learning, new ways of thinking about another country and its citizens, and to a new understanding of their own country and culture. Students gain confidence in their ability to deal with new environments whether it is a new country or a new workplace, and greatly broaden their network of contacts and resources.

It's not enough to provide programs to bring students from other countries to the U.S. to study. If our future political, business and social leaders are going to adequately lead this country, they are going to have to have the skills necessary to interact with people around the globe. For them to be credible global citizens, they must have first-hand experience with working, living and/or studying in another country.

The House of Representatives recently passed a similar measure during the 111th Congress. The bill has also gained the endorsement of more than forty higher education and educational exchange organizations.

The legislation establishes an innovative public-private partnership to ensure that our college graduates step into the world with cross-cultural competency and global experience. The legislation sets forth the goal that in ten years' time one million students, fully representative of the undergraduate student population, will study abroad in diverse locations, particularly in developing countries.

Investing in the global education of our students today is one of the best investments we can make to ensure the long term competitiveness of our economy, and the effectiveness of our public diplomacy and security efforts. Each of these efforts relies significantly on our ability to understand and communicate with the rest of the world.

Again, I ask you to cosponsor the (S.473), the Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act.

Sincerely,
(Your Name)

Thank You for Your Remarks

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing to thank you for your recent statements before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee indicating your commitment to increasing international educational exchanges.

As a professional who works in international education, I was delighted to hear you speak about the importance of remaining open to students from around the world and the need for Americans to make a serious effort to understand foreign cultures and languages. I was also pleased to hear you say that the United States would benefit from a renewed commitment to training Americans in critical languages and that we need to have more exchanges with the Muslim world.

I thank you for your leadership and urge you to work with my professional association, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, to accomplish these critical objectives.

Thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,
(Your name)

Thank You

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500
January 26, 2011

Dear Mr. President:

I am a higher education professional that had the opportunity of taking a group of students to Cuba this past December. We had 38 people traveling with our jazz band that was invited to perform at the Havana International Jazz Festival.

The amazing life changing experiences that our American students had in Cuba are the reason why I'm writing to thank you for the actions you are currently taking to expand academic travel to Cuba and increase people-to-people contact with the island nation.

There is nothing like academic and cultural exchanges to achieve diplomatic understanding among nations. These types of exchanges provide a unique educational opportunity for both parties, build respect among peoples, and ultimately create the conditions for a more peaceful world.

Opening travel to Cuba is good for the United States. Given Cuba's close proximity to us and the political evolution currently taking place there, it is important that students here and in Cuba have the opportunity to learn from each other without having to go through all the red tape, permits and problems that our group faced before our trip became a reality.

Our students will never be the same, after experiencing the Cuban culture they will become, without doubt, better leaders and ethical citizens in the global community. Thank you for your leadership, and for taking the steps to expand these intercultural opportunities.

Sincerely,
(Your name)

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[www.senate.gov/pagelayout/reference/two_column_table/Political Party Leadership.htm](http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/reference/two_column_table/Political_Party_Leadership.htm)

Capitol Advantage, "The Legislative Process"
<http://capwiz.com/nafsa/issues/basics/?style=legis>

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U.S. House of Representatives, "Demographics of the 112th Congress"
http://clerk.house.gov/members/leadership_info.html

The logo for NAFSA, featuring the letters 'NAFSA' in a white, serif font. A yellow curved line is positioned below the letters, starting under the 'N' and ending under the 'A'.

Association of
International Educators

Founded in 1948, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, the leading professional association, promotes international education and the exchange of students and scholars to and from the U.S. With more than 9,000 members and 11 regions, NAFSA advances the international education agenda through advocacy, communication, professional development, and community. © 2011