

# **HOW to INTERACT with CONGRESS on ISSUES of INTEREST**

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# OVERVIEW

- **How to Watch**
- **Congressional Office Organization**
- **Nine General Rules**

# HOW to WATCH

- For Legislation: <http://www.thomas.gov>
- For Member and Committee Activity in the House: <http://www.house.gov/>
- For Member and Committee Activity in the Senate: <http://www.senate.gov/>
- For Key Issues of Interest in E&CE: <http://www.ieeeusa.org/forum/>  
(The IEEE-USA Public Policy Page)

# CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE ORGANIZATION

- Chief of Staff
  - Press Secretary
  - Legislative Director
- Legislative Aides ← Point of Contact
- Legislative Correspondent
- Scheduler
- Interns
- Field Representatives

# NINE GENERAL RULES

1. **NEVER** write or fax your Member of Congress or Senator!!!
2. **DO E-Mail or Call** the Legislative Aide in the office of the Member of Congress or Senator having primary responsibility for your issue!!!  
[firstname.lastname@mail.house.gov]  
[Example: john.doe@mail.house.gov]

# **NINE GENERAL RULES**

**[firstname\_lastname@senatorlastname.  
senate.gov]**

**(exceptions: bennelson and billnelson)**

**[Example: john\_doe@lott.senate.gov]**

- **Senators are all “nearly equal”.  
(Members of the Majority Party do hold  
a slight advantage on political issues.)**

# NINE GENERAL RULES

- 4. Members of the House of Representatives are NOT all equal!!! Members of the majority party hold a distinct advantage over members of the minority party and, within the majority party, seniority rules!!!**
- 5. A continuing relationship with a Legislative Aide is better than an infrequent relationship.**

# NINE GENERAL RULES

## 6. Legislation in the House of Representatives progresses as follows

- House Subcommittee\*
- House Committee\*
- House Rules Committee
- The House of Representatives

\* Staff for the members of the majority party and staff of the ranking members of the minority party serving on these entities are the key contacts.

# NINE GENERAL RULES

## 7. Legislation in the Senate progresses as follows

- Subcommittee of the Senate Committee#
- Senate Committee#
- Senate Rules Committee
- The Senate

**# Staff for the members of both parties will be key contacts.**

# NINE GENERAL RULES

## 8. For Successful Bills

- A House Bill Goes to the Senate and A Senate Bills Goes to the House for Consideration
  - Any Disagreement Between Bodies Sends the Bill to a Conference Committee§
  - Both Bodies Consider the Conference Committee Recommendation
- § Staff for any member of the Conference Committee can be contacted.

# **NINE GENERAL RULES**

## **9. Understand the Difference Between a Congressional Authorization and a Congressional Appropriation**

- Authorization: the approval of Congress to spend a specific sum of money for a specific purpose (Initiated by Committee of Jurisdiction)**
- Appropriation: the granting of a specific sum of money for expenditure for a specific purpose (Initiated by Appropriations Committee)**