Preparing for Face-to-Face Meetings with Members of Congress

**Quick Takes**

- Advocates can leverage face-to-face meetings with Members of Congress and their staff to communicate their positions and build enduring relationships with their representatives.
- However, meetings are brief and Members are busy; advocates can use the tips below to get the most out of their meetings.

**What to Keep in Mind When Conducting a Meeting with a Member of Congress**

1. **Be on time**
   - Arrive no more than 5 minutes before the meeting; Members are rarely available to meet earlier and many Hill offices are too small to accommodate groups of constituents.

2. **Be flexible**
   - Prepare to meet with either the Member or the Member’s staff.
   - If the Member arrives in the middle of your meeting, continue as usual; and the Member will ask questions if needed.

3. **Stay on Topic**
   - Raise only the issues you scheduled to discuss with the Member and the Member’s staff to keep the meeting focused and persuasive.

4. **Keep Politics Out of It**
   - Do not discuss elections or campaign support in your meeting (this could violate campaign finance law).

5. **Leave Behind & Thank You**
   - Leave behind the folder NAFSA prepared for the Member of Congress.
   - Leave behind your business card and send a follow-up thank you e-mail after your meeting.