

HILL VISITS AT HCH17: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW

Logistics:

- Allow proper time to get to the Capitol buildings and go through security (at least 30 min).
- Call the office if you are running late to let them know. Always call if you have to cancel.
- Bring a business card. When you arrive, tell the lobby staff who you are and who your meeting is with.
- Be prepared for your meeting to take place in a cramped conference room, hallway, or lobby.
- Be prepared to make a quick pitch, meetings do not usually last longer than 15 minutes.
- Take notes during or after the meeting so you can follow up and report back to the Council.

Tips:

- You are in these offices to tell your story, not to be a policy expert. If you do not know how to answer a question, admit it and offer to get back to them. This is a great opportunity to follow up.
- Leverage your constituent power and mention details specific to your CITY/STATE as often as possible.
- Be open to counterarguments and politely respond when it is appropriate. Never argue.
- Take advantage of this meeting by taking pics for social media and inviting them to visit your project.
- The Agenda below is a *rough* guide. Talk about what matters to you and leave space for open dialogue.

Agenda:

1. Make introductions (brief)

Each attendee will introduce themselves and describe their involvement with the issue of homelessness (1 or 2 sentences). If you work for an agency summarize the services you provide. Consolidate intros for large groups.

2. Start with something positive

We want to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of the work we do at our clinic AND/OR your commitment to an equitable health care system AND/OR protecting Medicaid. If you're stuck, try: Thank you for making health care reform a priority, which we can all agree needs some work. Be sincere!

3. Lay out the intention of the meeting

We are here today to talk to you about the work we do in CITY/STATE to address the health care needs of those experiencing homelessness and how we can work together to end homelessness. Specifically, we ask that you protect the progress we've made under the Affordable Care Act, particularly through Medicaid Expansion AND/OR protect funding sources for affordable housing in our CITY/STATE.

4. Share personal stories

This is the most important part of the meeting. Let them know the personal ramifications of their policy decisions! Share your true experience with health care and housing. Tell the story of how you (or an individual you know) benefited from the Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, and/or affordable housing programs. If you were not able to benefit, explain why you need more access to these services and how they would benefit you.

5. Make a SPECIFIC ask

We ask that SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE X supports us AND/OR continues to support us by opposing any form of cuts to the Medicaid program, which includes a phase out to a block grant or per capita cap AND/OR rejects budget cuts to affordable housing. Expand on this using our talking points as needed.

7. Encourage dialogue while staying positive

Always allow space for responses and questions. If they are supportive, say “Wonderful! We are so glad!”. If they are not supportive, ask about their hesitations so that you may address them. “Thank you for talking with us about this. We hope we can continue to share our experiences with Medicaid and/or housing.”

8. Closing

If appropriate, invite staff to attend our rally on Friday (5:30pm Lafayette Square). Thank them again on your way out and make sure you have contact info to follow up. Report back to the Council on how your meeting went (rreed@nhchc.org or text/call 443 286 5537)

National HCH Council advocacy work is funded through private donations.