

They Work For Us!

Congressional Advocacy 101



Health Care for the Homeless advocates meeting with Congressman Al Green during the 2017 Conference

PRESENTERS

Regina Reed, MPH

Policy Organizer

National Health Care for the Homeless Council

Regina is responsible for representing the interests of the National HCH Council in Washington, D.C. on Capitol Hill. She is also responsible for mobilizing the HCH community to engage in advocacy to end homelessness!

Jamie Long, J.D.

Deputy Chief of Staff

Office of Congressman Keith Ellison (MN-5)

Jamie manages Congressman Ellison's Minnesota office and leads efforts to partner with community to improve the lives of Minnesotans. He has experience working in both the House and the Senate in DC and in Minnesota.

WHO is Congress?

WHAT does Congress do?

WHERE is Congress located?

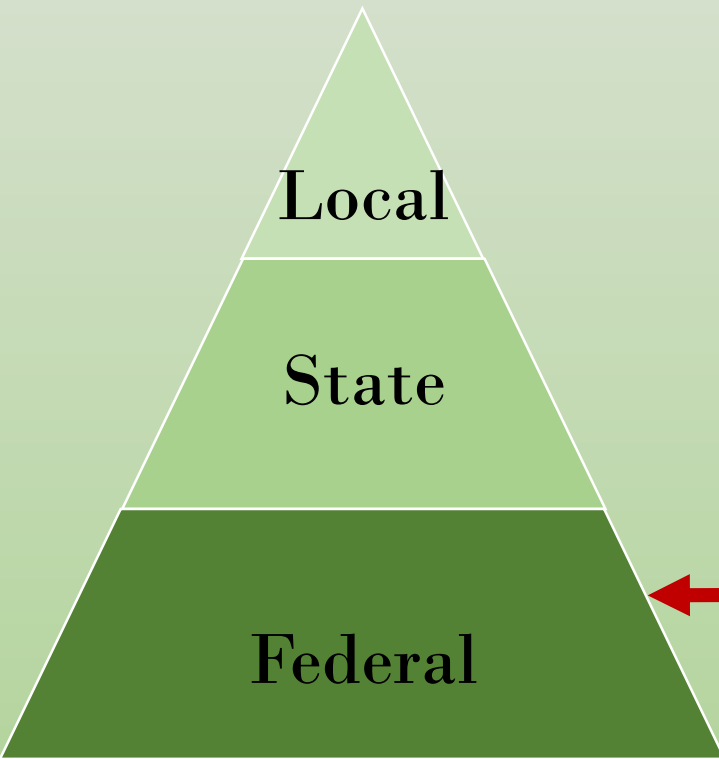
WHY should we engage with Congress?

HOW do we engage with Congress?

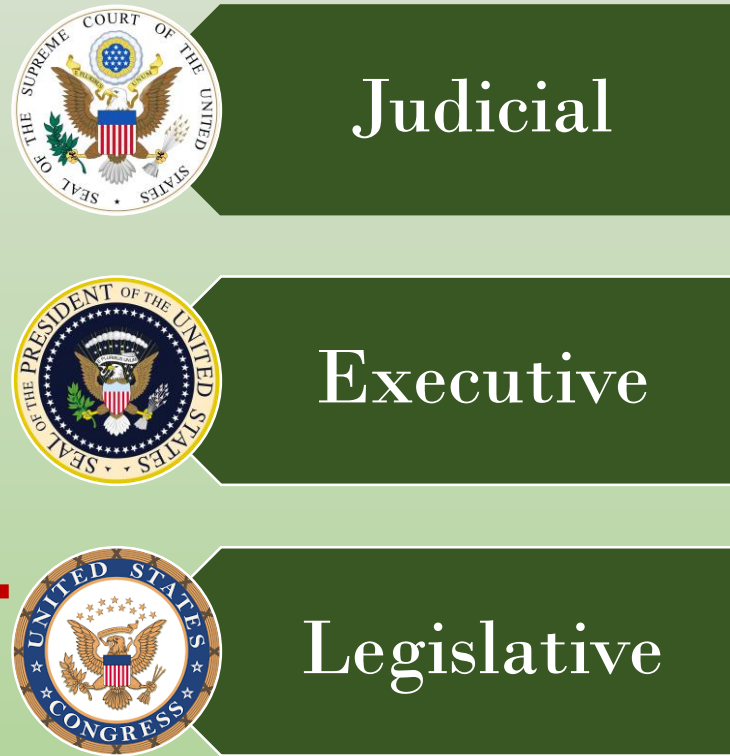
WHO is Congress?

CIVICS REFRESHER

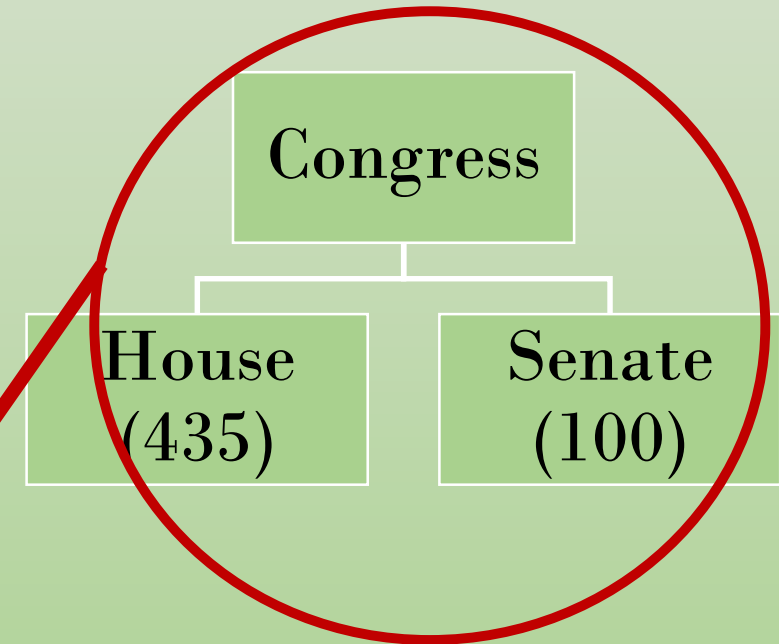
Levels of Government



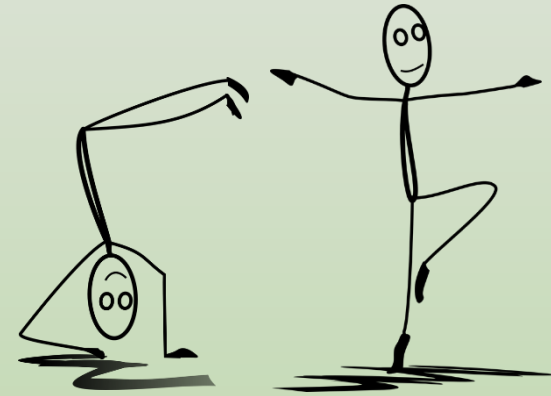
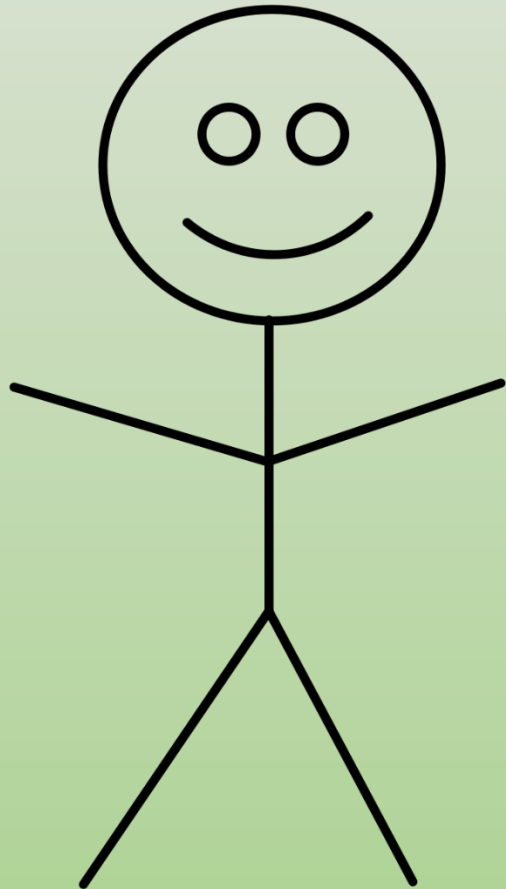
Branches of the Federal Government



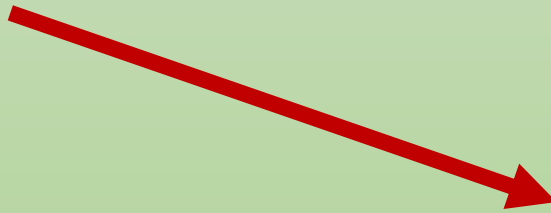
Legislative Branch



CIVICS REFRESHER



Two Senators in the Senate



One Representative in the House

WHAT does **Congress** do?

**Congress works on many issues important to the
Health Care for the Homeless community.**

**Medicaid
Health Centers
Mental Health & Substance Use
Housing
SSI/SSDI
Food Stamps
Tax Credits
& Many Others...**

Congress has the sole authority to enact legislation, write the federal budget, declare war, the right to confirm or reject many Presidential appointments, and substantial investigative powers.

Congress works on many issues important to the Health Care for the Homeless community.

**It is their job to represent the interests of the people living in their state and district...
THEY WORK FOR US!**

Mental Health

Health

**Food Stamps
Tax Credits
& Many Others.**

sole authority
legislation, write the
declare war, the
subject many
appointments, and
investigative powers.

WHERE is Congress located?

WASHINGTON, DC

IN THE STATE/DISTRICT

ONLINE



The Capitol Building, Washington, D.C.



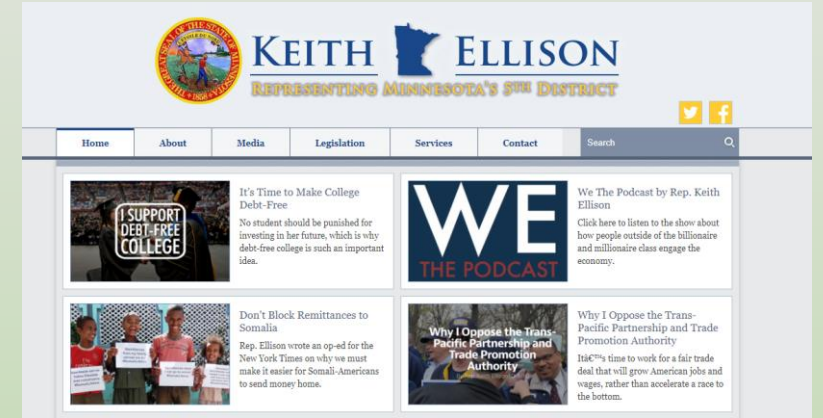
Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C.



The outside of Rep. Ellison's Minneapolis Office



The outside of Senator Amy Klobuchar's Minneapolis Office



WHY should we engage with Congress?

You must engage with Congress because:

- ✓ **You know more than they do**
- ✓ **You are a subject matter expert**
- ✓ **You have real world experience**
- ✓ **You may have taken an oath**
- ✓ **Your job may require it**
- ✓ **You have a moral obligation to yourself and your community**



HOW do we engage
with **Congress**?

FIND CONTACT INFORMATION BY...

- Looking on the member's website
- Calling the office and asking
- Through advocacy staff or coalitions

PRO TIPS

- *Congressional Hotline: (202) 224-3121*
- *House staff emails - Jane.Doe@mail.house.gov*
- *Senate staff emails - Jane_Doe@SenatorLastName.senate.gov*
- *Google is your friend*
- *If they are your delegate, let them know*

WAYS TO ENGAGE

- Online
 - Email
 - Social media
 - Website forms
- On the phone
 - Cold call
 - Pre-scheduled
- In person
 - At your clinic
 - In-district office
 - Capitol hill office

A quick note on legality

Advocacy versus **Lobbying**



The process of making your voice heard on an issues that affects your life and the lives of others. This includes education, outreach, data sharing, relationship building, and **lobbying**.

Nonprofits and health centers can and should engage in non-lobbying advocacy and there are no legal restrictions.

Activities that are in support or opposition of a specific piece of legislation.

Nonprofits and health centers can lobby, but with restrictions.

→ Private citizens can engage in unlimited advocacy and lobbying.

→ Obtain permission from your employer before identifying with them for congressional lobbying or advocacy.

→ When in doubt, identify as a private citizen.

“Hi my name is Danielle and I’m a doctor serving very low-income people in Minneapolis. I’m here today representing myself as a private citizen.”

CONGRESSIONAL ADVOCACY

Jamie Long, J.D.

Deputy Chief of Staff

Office of Congressman Keith Ellison (MN-5)

Thank You!



Staff and clients from Baltimore's Health Care for the Homeless on Capitol Hill

CONTACT

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