

**HELPFUL HINTS
for
Hill Appointments**

The most important event to take place during the Disability Policy Seminar is the full day, Tuesday, March 4 that has been set aside for you to meet with your elected officials in Washington. Every effort must be made to meet with the entire delegation from your state on this day (depending on the size of your state delegation and the number of Seminar participants from your state). As you prepare yourself to fully participate in the Seminar, the following pointers should prove helpful:

- Prioritize your visits, making sure you visit your Senators and Representatives who sit on the key committees that have jurisdiction over the major issues to be dealt with at the Disability Policy Seminar.
- Security is tight on Capitol Hill. Allow at least 30 minutes to travel between House and Senate buildings. One and one-half hour time slots should allow you about 20-30 minutes with the Member and/or his/her staff, time to travel to the next appointment, and time to reorganize yourself for the next visit.
- If you have additional time after you have scheduled your priority visits, then schedule the remainder of your delegation, with a second priority targeting any Senator(s) you have not scheduled and/or your own Representative.
- If you have more time, schedule the remainder of your delegation.
- It is also a good idea to try to meet with the staff of the relevant subcommittees handling important legislation under consideration at the Seminar.
- To make your appointments, simply call the U.S. Capitol switchboard (202) 224-3121 and ask for the Senator/Representative you want. Ask for the appointment secretary, press to meet with the Member directly, and if that is not possible, with the legislative assistant (L.A.) who handles that particular issue(s). Get the name of the L.A. during your call.
- Don't be discouraged or put off if you meet only with the L.A. They are the experts (most of the time anyway), and can communicate best on the specifics we are pushing and will relay your views to the Member of Congress.
- Call before the Seminar to set up the appointments. After your arrival in Washington, call each office on Monday to confirm the specifics of your visit.
- Coordinate your visits with other Seminar attendees from your state.
- Remember, Members of Congress enjoy meeting with their constituents. They do look forward to hearing your views. They will expect you to know more about the subject than they do. They will listen and appreciate your views (they do, after all, want your next vote). So don't be afraid, make those Hill appointments now!!
- Bring a self-advocate with you. Members of Congress and their staff really pay attention to their message.

Disability Policy Collaboration
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