



American Society of Human Genetics

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How to Schedule a Virtual Congressional Meeting: 2020 August Recess

1. Request the meeting.

- Find your elected officials and their contact information using the [House](#) and [Senate](#) websites.
- Email the legislator using the contact form or email address provided. In your email, be sure to confirm that you are a constituent, mention which institution you are from, and briefly describe the purpose of the virtual meeting.

Use this template letter as a guide:

Dear Senator/Representative _____:

My name is _____ and I am a geneticist and your constituent. I am writing to request a virtual meeting online during August with you and your staff to discuss the value of robust funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and its significance for my work. I am available to meet on (dates). Please let me know a time that would work best for you.

Thank you so much for your time, and I look forward to meeting with you to discuss this important issue. You may contact me at (email/phone #).

Sincerely,

[Your name, institution, address, and contact information]

- If you do not hear back within a week, you may follow up with the staff, as they receive many requests. Email again, and call the office and speak with the scheduler if necessary.

2. Once confirmed, prepare for the meeting.

- The purpose of the meeting is to educate your Member of Congress about the importance of the field, and the value of federal funding and its impact on your research.
- Read up on the legislator you are meeting with. Having a shared personal connection can help develop a rapport and make a lasting impression.
- Develop a list of questions the legislator might ask and how you can answer them.
- Let ASHG know the date of your meeting and who you are meeting with.

3. Attend the meeting.

- Describe your job using layman's terms, and connecting it to the legislator's constituents.
- Thank the legislator for their support on past relevant issues.
- Explain why the legislator's support of increased NIH funding would be valuable for your work, and that this year, the research community is asking for \$44.7 billion.
- Answer any questions the legislator may have and ask how else you can be of assistance.

4. Follow up.

- Send a follow-up email shortly after the visit, thanking the legislator and staffer for their time. Include links to 'leave behind' materials such as [a handout](#) or [state summary fact sheets](#).
- Let ASHG policy staff know how the meeting went! Send us an email at policy@ashg.org. We may ask you to share your experience to help other ASHG advocates.