



North American – Young Generation In Nuclear

**Contacting Your Member of Congress
Communication Plan**

What's this plan about?

The North American – Young Generation in Nuclear is a professional society for young professionals in the fields of nuclear science and technology. One of the goals of the organization is to inform the public of the benefits and demystify the myths of nuclear science and technology. Over the past six years, the professional society has sponsored many activities and forums where young professionals have completed outreach activities in their home districts and had the opportunity to meet with U.S. Congressmen and U.S. Senators while at national meetings. This was emphasized during the 2005 NA-YGN conference that took place in Washington D.C where NA-YGN members were briefed on the current issues in the nuclear industries; coached on positive communication styles to address the public on technical issues. The participants then “Went to the Hill” and met with 21 Congressional aids to discuss our concerns. This event will be repeated this summer during the 2009 Professional Development conference. Meetings with Congressmen and other elected officials should be a continuous effort by NA-YGN members.

This communication plan will be a starting point for those members who want to start being more politically active. The plan outlines how NA-YGN members can address their Congressmen in their home districts and provide them with the tools and information to be prepared for these meetings.

NA-YGN supports and encourages young professionals to be active in providing accurate technical information to elected officials and the public. Preparing for all public discussions on nuclear subjects can be daunting for any young professional, but NA-YGN has captured the key ingredients to help you prepare for such a meeting. Speaking to family or speaking to your U.S. Senator is essentially one in the same.

The three key ingredients to prepare for a meeting with a Member of Congress are:

- 1) Have technical, up to date information available for you and the Members of Congress you are contacting.
- 2) Learning how to contact and make appointments with elected officials you wish to inform.
- 3) Learn how to prepare and conduct a meeting with the elected officials.

How to Meet Your Member of Congress



Locate Your Elected Representatives

You can find all of your state and local elected representatives on the Nuclear Advocacy Network's website:

<http://www.nuclearadvocacynetwork.org/legislatorsearch.aspx>

Contact ALL Your Elected Representatives

Although this communication plan is geared towards Members of Congress, the same procedure can be used to meet with your Senators, City Council Members, local Township leadership, Governors, Mayors and state legislators – and they all need to hear from you!

Contact Information

- Each Member of Congress has a minimum of two offices. All Members have an office in Washington D.C. and an office in their home district. The Member's office in the home district is the one you want to contact.
- The phone number and address of the office will be listed on the Member's website.

Meeting Request

- Call the telephone number from the website.
- Ask the receptionist to put you in contact with the Member's scheduler.
- Suggested Script:
 - Hello, my name is [your name] and I am a constituent of [Congressmen's Name] and a member of North America – Young Generation in Nuclear. I would like to schedule a meeting for me and a few of my neighbors to discuss our beliefs about nuclear power with the Congressmen. We are happy to meet with [Congressmen's Name] whenever his/her schedule allows.
- Remember:
 - Many times, the Congress Member's office will schedule you to meet with an Advisor or Aid rather than the actual Member. This is just as good! Convey your message to whoever is available.
 - Members of Congress will only be in their home districts when Congress is on Recess. You may have to wait months before the Member is home and has some available time. Take whatever time slot you receive.
- You can also write a letter to your Member requesting a meeting, be sure to include your contact information so the Member's office can reach you. Follow-up on the request about a week after the letter was sent.

How to Prepare for Your Meeting With Your Member of Congress



Data Collection

The Core of NA-YGN has already prepared for you a high level briefing sheet on national nuclear facts. Please review the NA-YGN Leave Behind Sheet for this information.

Be sure to know the nuclear facts about nuclear power in your home state. The Nuclear Energy Institute has already prepared state specific data sheets, available on their website. Review your state specific data prior to meeting with your Congressman.

State specific data you should know:

- How many nuclear power plants are in your state?
- What percentage of total power generation in your state is made from nuclear power?
- How many people are employed at the local nuclear power plant?
- What is the capacity factor of the reactors in your state?
- What are the economics of having a generating station in the community?
- How much CO₂ emission is avoided by utilizing nuclear power for your state?
- What are some of the other nuclear assets in the Member's state/district, such as academic programs, jobs, manufacturing facilities?
- Are there any legislative current events relevant to nuclear power such as appropriations or used fuel storage?

Meeting Preparation

- Identify your team prior to calling for an appointment. When setting up your meeting with the Member of Congress, you may be required to list all of the participants.
- **BE ON TIME FOR YOUR MEETING!** Make sure to be on time and that you respect the Member's other commitments by not over stay your meeting.
- Introduce everyone on your team to the Member of Congress. Be sure to emphasize that you are a constituent of the Member's and you set up the meeting to discuss the future of nuclear power in the United States.
- Have your team identify who will speak to which points of information, such as safety

Helpful Hints

- **BE ON TIME!**
- Do not cut off the Member of Congress. If he/she would like to speak, let them.
- Do not make up data. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so. Offer to follow up with the Member's office and then do so.
- **Speak English!** Don't assume the Member understands the technical terms you use every day.
- Leave a few copies of the Leave Behind Sheet with the Member along with your contact information.
- Offer to work with NEI to set up a visit to a nuclear power plant for the Member and staff.
- Follow-up with a thank you note to the Member of Congress and schedule, you may need their help in the future!