

# CONTACT YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Your Members of Congress (United States Senators and Representatives) make time for meetings with constituents as part of their duties as elected officials. Face-to-face meetings are one of the most powerful ways to advocate your business, as a meeting makes you and your issue more memorable to Member of Congress and or Senators. It is important to know that the staff who work for Members of Congress are also very important. Whether you meet directly with your Senator or Representative or with their staff person, you are taking an important step by building a relationship with them. This makes them much more likely to pay attention when we call or email about a specific issue in the future.

## YOU CAN SET UP A MEETING BY FOLLOWING THE STEPS BELOW.

#1

### FIND THE LOCAL OFFICE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO VISIT

U.S. Senators and Representatives maintain offices in their home states that allow their constituents to meet with them or their staff. You can find information about the local offices of your Senators and Representative on their websites, links below:

#### [CLICK HERE FOR U.S. SENATORS](#)

Click on your senator's NAME to be brought directly to his or her website.

#### [CLICK HERE FOR U.S. REPRESENTATIVES](#)

*(also referred to as Congressmen/women)*

Click on your representative's NAME to be brought to his/her website.

If you do not know your Members of Congress you can find them [HERE](#).

## #2

## CONTACT YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS OR SENATOR'S OFFICE TO SET UP A MEETING

Once you have chosen your local office, use the guide below to contact your Member of Congress or Senator's office to schedule a meeting.

Most Members of Congress and Senators are in their district on weekends and district work periods. It is common for Member of Congress and or Senator to appear at ribbon cuttings, Chamber meetings, and other local events. Local newspapers or the Member of Congress or Senator's district office may provide this information. An Introduction at a local event or town hall is an opportunity to ask for an appointment to explain 45B and its impact on small businesses, including yours. You may also have an opportunity to attend a fundraising event and contribute.

Request a meeting. Most Member of Congress and Senators' websites include a "Request for Meeting" form that you can fill out online OR offer an email address for the person in charge of scheduling the appointments. Before calling your lawmaker's office, fill out the form or send an email request for a meeting. If you are sending an email, it should contain the following:

- Your name and address (to show that you are a constituent)
- The issues you wish to discuss (45B FICA Tax Tip Credit- H.R. 45 Representatives and S. 45 for Senators)
- The local office you wish to visit or where you would like them to visit
- The dates that you can meet (include several dates or a wide time limit so that there is flexibility in scheduling the meeting)

### SAMPLE EMAIL TO SCHEDULE MEETING

Dear [SENATOR or CONGRESSMAN/WOMAN] [LAST NAME]:

As a business owner and employer in your state (for Senators) / district (for House Reps) I am writing to request a meeting with you and your staff to discuss S. 45 | H.R. 45, the Small Business Tax Fairness and Compliance Simplification Act. This bill will extend the 45B Tax Tip Credit to beauty industry employers for the employer's share of FICA taxes paid on tips paid to employees. This existing credit has been utilized by the restaurant industry since 1993. The credit would provide much needed relief to our industry, which has suffered greatly in the past three years. Our industry is the second most heavily tipped industry behind restaurants, and this bill will increase tip reporting compliance which would boost the retirement security of beauty establishment employees.

I will be available to meet with you at your [LOCATION] office on [DATES YOU ARE AVAILABLE] and would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about this issue. I can be reached at the phone numbers listed below and will look forward to hearing from you regarding a time we can meet. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR ADDRESS]

M: [YOUR MOBILE PHONE]

O: [YOUR OFFICE PHONE]

H: [YOUR HOME PHONE]

## SAMPLE EMAIL TO INVITE A MEMBER TO YOUR BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT

Dear [SENATOR or CONGRESSMAN/WOMAN] [LAST NAME]:

As a business owner and employer in your state (for Senators) / district (for House Reps) I am writing to invite you and your aides to my place of business to discuss S. 45 / H.R. 45, which would extend the 45B FICA Tax Tip Credit to business establishments within the professional beauty industry.

I will be available to meet with you at [NAME OF YOUR BUSINESS] on [DATES YOU ARE AVAILABLE] and would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about this issue. I can be reached at the phone numbers listed below and will look forward to hearing from you regarding a time we can meet. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

[YOUR NAME]

[YOUR ADDRESS]

M: [YOUR MOBILE PHONE]

O: [YOUR OFFICE PHONE]

H: [YOUR HOME PHONE]



Follow up your request with a phone call. A day or two after you anticipate your communication has arrived, follow up with a phone call to your Member of Congress and or Senator's local office. Ask for the person in charge of scheduling your lawmaker's appointments.



Write down the date, time and person you spoke with. If you have not heard back in a few days, call again to follow up. Be polite but persistent!



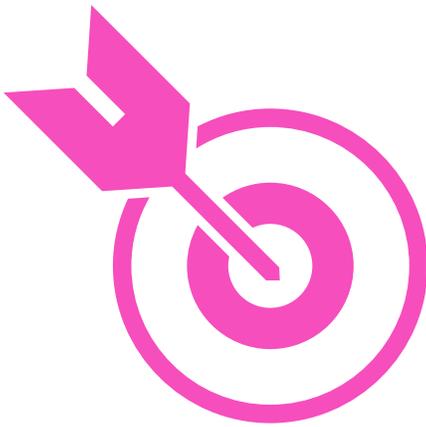
Recognize that you might meet with a member of your Member of Congress and or Senator's staff. Sometimes Member of Congress and or Senators may not be available, and you will be scheduled to meet with a member of their staff. This is still a wonderful opportunity! Members of Congress and Senators rely heavily on their aides to make decisions as aides are policy experts. Your meeting with a staff member can inform his/her recommendations to your Member of Congress and or Senator and also build an important relationship with your lawmakers' office.

# #3

## PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING

Check the <https://www.probeauty.org/advocacy/FICA> for materials. You will find information to help you decide on your talking points, as well as materials that you can leave with your elected official.

Decide who will attend the meeting. Bringing more than four or five people can be hard to manage. Keep it small, and try to bring people who represent different groups or demographics that have an interest in the legislation such as other beauty industry employers in the area. Share information about the legislation and common talking points. If you are unable to bring other individuals you may bring a letter with their signature in support of the legislation to your meeting.



Agree on talking points. It's tough to make a strong case for your position when you are disagreeing in the meeting! If a point is causing tension in the group, leave it out.

Plan out your meeting. People can get nervous in a meeting, and time is limited. Be sure that you lay out the meeting beforehand, including who will start the conversation.

The goal is to ask the Congressman or Senator to 1) co-sponsor the bill, 2) ask them to help you enlist other co-sponsors, and vote for the bill. Your first meeting with no prior relationship is most likely going to be with a staff member. Educate them, leave the handouts (attached), and ask when you should follow up. Asking your Member of Congress and or Senator or his or her staff member to do something specific will help you know how successful your visit has been!

# #4

## DURING THE MEETING

Be prompt and patient. Elected officials run on very tight schedules. Be sure to show up on time for your appointment and be patient -- it is not uncommon for Member of Congress or Senator to be late or have your meeting interrupted by other business.

Keep it short and focused! You will have 20 minutes or less with a staff person, and as little as 10 minutes if you meet with your elected official. Make the most of that brief time by sticking to your topic.

Bring up any personal, professional or political connections to the elected official that you may have. Start the meeting by introducing yourselves and thanking the Member of Congress or Senator for any actions he or she may have taken in the past to support your business (this may be included on their web site – look for small business advocacy and common sense legislation like ours), and for taking the time to meet with you.

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**STICK TO YOUR TALKING POINTS! STAY ON TOPIC, AND BACK THEM UP WITH RELEVANT MATERIALS TO LEAVE WITH THE MEMBER OF CONGRESS OR STAFF.**

Provide personal examples of the impact of the legislation. It's important to explain how this tax burdens your business and explain how you can use the tax credit to improve benefits, make capital improvements to build your business, etc. Making it personal will be what gets the Member of Congress and their staff engaged.

Ask when you should check back for a response. Often, if an elected official hasn't taken a position on legislation, they will not commit to one in the middle of a meeting. If he or she has to think about it, or if you are meeting with a staff member, ask when you should check back. If you need to get additional information to your Member of Congress and or Senator, set a clear timeline for when this will happen.

## #5

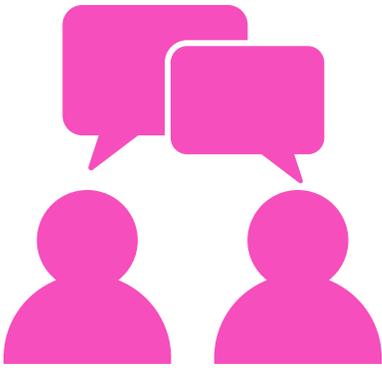
### **AFTER THE MEETING**

Right after the meeting, compare notes with everyone in your group to understand what the elected official committed to do and what follow up information you committed to send.

Each person who took part in the meeting should promptly send a personal thank you letter to the Member of Congress.

Follow up in a timely fashion with any requested materials and information.

If the elected official or staff member doesn't meet the deadline for action you agreed to during the meeting, ask him or her to set another deadline. Be persistent and flexible!



If you meet with a member of Congress, let Kati Rapoza ([kati@probeauty.org](mailto:kati@probeauty.org)) know what you learned during your meeting. Knowing what feedback your Congress member gave, what issues are important to him or her, and what positions he or she took will help us make our national lobbying strategy more effective! you agreed to during the meeting, ask him or her to set another deadline. Be persistent and flexible!

SHARE PHOTOS AND ARTICLES VIA EMAIL AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

MAKE SURE THAT YOU PROVIDE THE NAME, EMAIL ADDRESS, AND DIRECT PHONE NUMBER FOR THE OFFICE TO COMMUNICATE WITH.

PLEASE CONTACT KATI RAPOZA WITH QUESTIONS OR FOR GUIDANCE DURING THIS PROCESS AT [KATI@PROBEAUTY.ORG](mailto:kati@probeauty.org)

KATI WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH TALKING POINTS AND GUIDANCE FOR YOUR MEETING OR EVENT.

# RESOURCES

## **H.R.45 SMALL BUSINESS TAX FAIRNESS AND COMPLIANCE SIMPLIFICATION ACT**

[www.congress.gov/118/bills/hr45/BILLS-118hr45ih.pdf](http://www.congress.gov/118/bills/hr45/BILLS-118hr45ih.pdf)

## **S.45 SMALL BUSINESS TAX FAIRNESS AND COMPLIANCE SIMPLIFICATION ACT**

[www.congress.gov/118/bills/s45/BILLS-118s45is.pdf](http://www.congress.gov/118/bills/s45/BILLS-118s45is.pdf)

## **WEBSITE: FICA TAX TIP LEGISLATION**

[www.probeauty.org/advocacy/fica](http://www.probeauty.org/advocacy/fica)