




## Advocating for CACFP: How to Host Elected Officials




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### Presented by



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### Agenda



WHY NOW?




INVITE YOUR ELECTED OFFICIAL



PREPARE FOR THEIR VISIT




HOST THEM AT YOUR SITE



FOLLOW-UP ITEMS



LEARN FROM YOUR PEERS!




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### Why Now?

The entire month of **August** all federal representatives are in recess and will be in their home state/district.


Timeline: June (Invite Your Elected Official to Visit in August) → July (Prepare for the Visit) → August (Follow-up and Thank Your Representative) → Aug-Sep (Share Your Experience with Your Community and NCA).  
 Additional steps: Continue to Follow-up if You Haven't Gotten a Response (July), Host Your Federal Representative While They're in Recess (August).



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## Invite Your Elected Official




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### Find Your Elected Official


- Search for your federal representatives by zip code: <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>
  - House Representative recommended: specific to a district
- Find your state representatives by address: <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>
- Find your local elected officials by city: <https://www.usa.gov/local-governments>

**1 Representative: Bonarri, Suzanne**




State: Oregon  
Party: Democrat  
Served: House 2013 Present  
Contact: 2011 Stephen House Office Building  
(503) 261-4650  
Contact

**2 Senator: Wyden, Ron**




State: Oregon  
Party: Democrat  
Served: Senate 2009 Present  
Contact: 2011 Tom Sawyer Office Building Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-4700  
Contact

**3 Senator: Wyden, Ron**



State: Oregon  
Party: Democrat  
Served: House 1991-1998  
Served: Senate 1999 Present  
Contact: 2011 Tom Sawyer Office Building Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-6244  
Contact




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## Decide Some Specifics

- Where to invite them?
  - Provider: your child care center/home
  - Sponsor: choose a site that is located in a convenient location to your official's district office
- When to invite them?
  - August – don't give a specific date, give multiple options
  - Choose a day of the week when you typically have high participation
  - Choose a time of day when a meal or snack is being served



\*\*\*Be flexible to your official's schedule

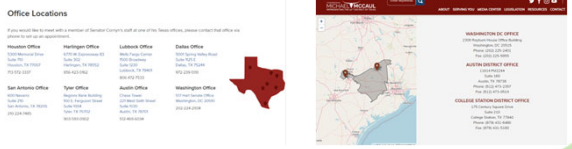
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## Contact Your Elected Official

Call their office located closest to you (**fastest and most effective**)

- Federal officials have offices located in D.C. as well as multiple offices in their home state



Senator Representative

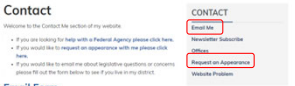
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## Contact Your Elected Official

Most elected officials have an email form on their website contact page

- "Email Me" or "Request an Appearance"
- NCA email template




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## Prepare for the Visit



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## Research Your Elected Official

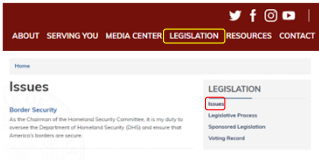
Do some research on the policy priorities and interests of your elected official

This will shape how:

- They approach their visit
- You adjust your talking points

Main sources:

- Their website - highlights key interest areas
- Congress.gov – shows all legislation they supported




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## Supporting Materials

Create a packet of supporting materials that include:

- CACFP Factsheet
- Any outreach materials you send to your community
- A list of partnering organizations
- A bio about yourself and your program
- Supporting materials for any specific policies or issues you want to discuss – NCA Advocacy Report




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## Let Parents Know

- Inform the families you serve about the elected official's visit
- Invite them to join the visit and share stories
  - And/or provide written stories about how much they appreciate your program
- Code of Conduct for Parents
- Send out photo release forms, if you don't already have them on file



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## Get the Kids Involved!


Have the kids help add a personal touch beforehand!

- Hang up your kids' drawings around your facility/home
  - Focus on healthy eating or gardening
- Activity: My Favorite Healthy Snack



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## During the Visit



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## Tour Your Site

- Show them around your center/home
- Tell them more about your program.
  - What are your services?
  - What populations do you serve?
  - How many participants do you have?
  - Why does CACFP matter for your participants?



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## Get Them Involved!

- Invite them to hand out meal/snack to the kids
- Invite them to help cook
- Invite them to help in your garden
- Invite them to read a story to the children




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## Key Issues

- [Increase Reimbursement Rates](#)
- Reduce Paperwork
- Eliminate Tiering of Family Child Care Homes
- Allow Virtual Monitoring
- Allow an Additional Meal or Snack

## Make Your Ask



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## Document Their Visit

- Take photos while they help serve the meal and talk with the kids (with permission)
- Take a photo with them yourself
- Ask them for a quote about their experience.



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## Follow-up Afterwards



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## Stay Connected


- Send a thank you email the day after the visit
- Share your experience with your community/peers
- If you made an ask, wait two weeks to send an email or phone call to follow-up
- Maintain a relationship



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## Let Us Know How it Went!

- Post on social media and tag @NationalCACFP and your elected official
- Send your photos and stories into [nca@cacfp.org](mailto:nca@cacfp.org)
  - Try to share a quote from your elected official



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## Learn From Your Peers!



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## Hosting an Elected Official: In Practice

**Invite:**

- Meet an elected official's staff at a community event
- Call their district or DC office and asked for the scheduler
- Know when your elected official will be in town
- It's okay if they ask to reschedule
- Be persistent
- Schedule 1-3 months in advance

**Prepare:**

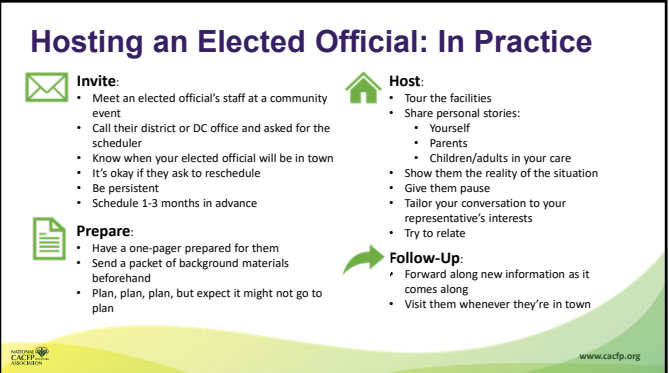
- Have a one-pager prepared for them
- Send a packet of background materials beforehand
- Plan, plan, plan, but expect it might not go to plan

**Host:**

- Tour the facilities
- Share personal stories:
  - Yourself
  - Parents
  - Children/adults in your care
- Show them the reality of the situation
- Give them pause
- Tailor your conversation to your representative's interests
- Try to relate

**Follow-Up:**

- Forward along new information as it comes along
- Visit them whenever they're in town



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## Sponsor of Family Child Care Homes

### Invite:

- Typically, someone already knows the elected official – Ask them to make the initial introduction
- Send an email followed by a phone call

### Prepare:

- Create agenda
- Pull numbers from meal tracking software
- Estimate economic impact on community
- Send media packet to official in advance

### Event Attendees:

- All 3 federal elected officials (staff may come in their place)
- Child care providers & their families
- Parents
- Media

### Host: Legislative breakfast/lunch

- Elected officials can choose to speak
- Most time spent mingling
- Parents and providers share stories with officials
- 45 minutes

### Follow-up:

- When new information is released, forward to elected officials
- Meet with officials when they're in town
- Take quick trip to DC

### Tips:

- Remember they are real people, they could be your neighbor
- Everything that is brought to the table holds equal weight
- Really get to know their staff
- Do a meet and greet when office changes



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## Food Bank

### Invite:

- Met district staff at a community event and exchanged cards
- Extended invite via email
- Invited for Christmas recess, but they came during spring recess

### Prepare:

- Have a one-pager for them to take with them

### Host:

- Tour of facilities
- Discussed Hunger Issues
- Shared staff personal stories
- Saw volunteers packing food

### Dealing with Divergent Views:

- Give a different perspective from what they may be hearing
- Show them the reality
- Give them pause
- Reconsider your wording
- Try to relate

### Follow-up:

- When in DC spoke with legislative assistants
- Send over new materials

### Tips:

- Know who the scheduler is
- Don't give up, sometimes its not that first recess, be persistent.
- Bring back a successful graduate of your program
- Avoid Acronyms



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## Head Start Site

### Invite:

- Already familiar with one federal representative
- Reached out to staff person
- Scheduled for when the representative was going to be in their home state
- Also hosted federal officials who were interested in education and Head Start

### Host:

- Tour of facilities
- Spoke about:
  - Education
  - Federal funding of Head Start
  - Need for state funding for preschool services
- Official read to the children
- 30 - 45 minutes long

### Importance of Visit:

- Elected official enjoyed their time at the facility
- Allows them to see the work being done on the ground day-to-day
- Gives context to why funding is needed

### Tips:

- Be persistent!
  - The squeaky wheel gets the grease
- Take advantage of personal connections
- Understand how receptive your elected official will be to an invite – who is in office makes a difference



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Questions?

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