



Scheduling a Meeting with a Representative

Members of Congress are eager to hear from constituents, like you, as a part of their duties as elected officials. Hearing from constituents on the issues that impact people in their districts and states helps inform the action they take on important legislation, such as funding measures to support the Military Burn Research Program. In the current climate, virtual meetings and phone calls are still an effective way to advocate for ABA-related policies and provide a valuable opportunity for you to build relationships with your Representative(s) and their staff. This makes them more likely to pay attention to issues concerning burn care and research and prevention, and support burn-related policies in the future.

You can set up a meeting by following these steps:

1. Find your Representative(s).

Go to <https://www.house.gov/> and enter the zip code for your home address and/or your employer's address. You may also be prompted to enter in the specific address if your zip code falls within the district of more than one Representative.

2. Contact your Representative's office to schedule a meeting.

Once you have identified your Representative(s), please find the email address of the Representative's schedule according to the list on the website. Next, request a meeting by sending an email to the scheduler. Email is the most effective way to reach out to a congressional office and coordinate a mutually convenient meeting time. The email should contain the following details: your name and address, the name and address of your employer if you work for a hospital/burn center, the issues you wish to discuss, and the times that you would like to connect. The following is a sample email that you can use to request a meeting.

Hi [FIRST NAME OF SCHEDULER],

As a member of the American Burn Association, I am reaching out to request a virtual meeting with Representative [LAST NAME] as a part of the National Burn Awareness Week to discuss military burn research funding and other issues important to the burn



community. Currently, I am a [YOUR POSITION] at [YOUR EMPLOYER], and I reside in [YOUR CITY, STATE].

During the meeting, we would like to thank the Representative for [his/her] support for funding the Military Burn Research Program under the Department of Defense at \$10M for in FY2021. This program funds multi-center clinical trials to improve care for Armed Forces members suffering from serious burn injuries, and the ABA is seeking [his/her] support for continued funding in FY2022.

Additionally, we would like to thank the Representative for [his/her] support of H.R. 806, the Portable Fuel Container Safety Act. This bill will require new safety standards for installing flame arrestors on portable fuel containers and could prevent thousands of serious burn injuries each year.

I will be available to meet with the Representative virtually on Tuesday, February 9, 2021 through Thursday, February 11, 2021 between 9:00 am – 3:00 pm EST. I am also happy to defer to whichever platform best suits the Representative whether it is a videoconferencing service or a phone call. I know the Representative's schedule is incredibly busy, and I appreciate any willingness to meet as [his/her] schedule permits.

Thank you!

3. Follow up your request with another email.

If the Representative's office does not respond within one week, send a follow-up email. You may also call the office, although please be advised that most congressional staff are working remotely, and there may not be a staff member in the office who is there to answer a phone call. A sample email text is below.

Hi [FIRST NAME OF SCHEDULER],

I hope your week is going well! I wanted to follow-up from the meeting request I sent out last week regarding National Burn Awareness Week. Would the Representative or a member of [his/her] staff have any availability to meet on Tuesday, February 8-Thursday, February 11?

Thank you!

Feel free to follow-up as needed the following week if you have still not heard from the Representative's staff. Be polite but persistent!



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Also, please recognize that you might be meeting with a member of the Representative's staff. Representatives are not always available to meet with constituents due to obligations such as hearings or votes. However, Representatives rely heavily on their staff to advise them and help them make decisions. Meeting with staff will help inform the Representative's policy positions and decision-making regarding your issues and will help you build a relationship with the Representative's office.

4. Send materials following confirmation of meeting.

Once you have confirmed the meeting with the Representative's office, please send the ABA Advocacy Week PowerPoint for the Representative and his or her staff to review in advance of your meeting. You may use the PowerPoint during your virtual meeting to help guide your talking points and discussion.

5. Notify ABA of all scheduled meetings.

Please send information regarding meetings confirmed to mgontarchick@chamberhill.com as soon as the meeting is scheduled so ABA can track the meetings.

6. Follow-up after meeting.

After the meeting, please be sure to follow-up with the Representative and/or his/her staff with an email thanking them for their time and reiterating requests made. You may also reference other details of your conversation during the meeting. When you send the thank-you note, please be sure to include a copy of last year's Dear Colleague letter requesting \$10 million for the Military Burn Research Program in Fiscal Year 2021. Also, please include the one-pager about the ABA and the one-pager on the Military Burn Research Program. A sample email text for a follow-up message is below.

Dear [NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE OR STAFF MEMBER],

I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to meeting with you virtually during National Burn Awareness Week on [DATE OF MEETING]. Thank you for taking the time to speak with me about issues important to the burn community.

You may recall that we touched on continued FY2022 appropriations for the Military Burn Research Program. [YOU CAN ADD OTHER TALKING POINTS SPECIFIC TO YOUR MEETING IF YOU WISH.] For your reference, I have included a copy of last year's letter for FY2021 appropriations.



I look forward to continuing this relationship with your office. In the meantime, if I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.