

Congress & Policy

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**GETTING AROUND
IN
WASHINGTON:
INSIDERS, OUTSIDERS
AND INFLUENCING POLICY OUTCOMES**

*Dr. Chuck Cushman
Senior Fellow
Government Affairs Institute
Georgetown University
cc844@georgetown.edu
gai.georgetown.edu*

Learning Objectives

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- Understand policy making in Washington
 - Why is DC so complicated?
 - Why is Congress so central?
 - How does Congress do its job(s)?
- Understand the need to communicate with Congress
 - Everyone else is doing it
 - Congress needs outside expertise
- Learn how industry, non-profits, think tanks and the public affect public policy

Why is DC so complicated?

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Cromwell



Charles I

Our English heritage and colonial experiences

George III= Charles (or Cromwell)

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George III

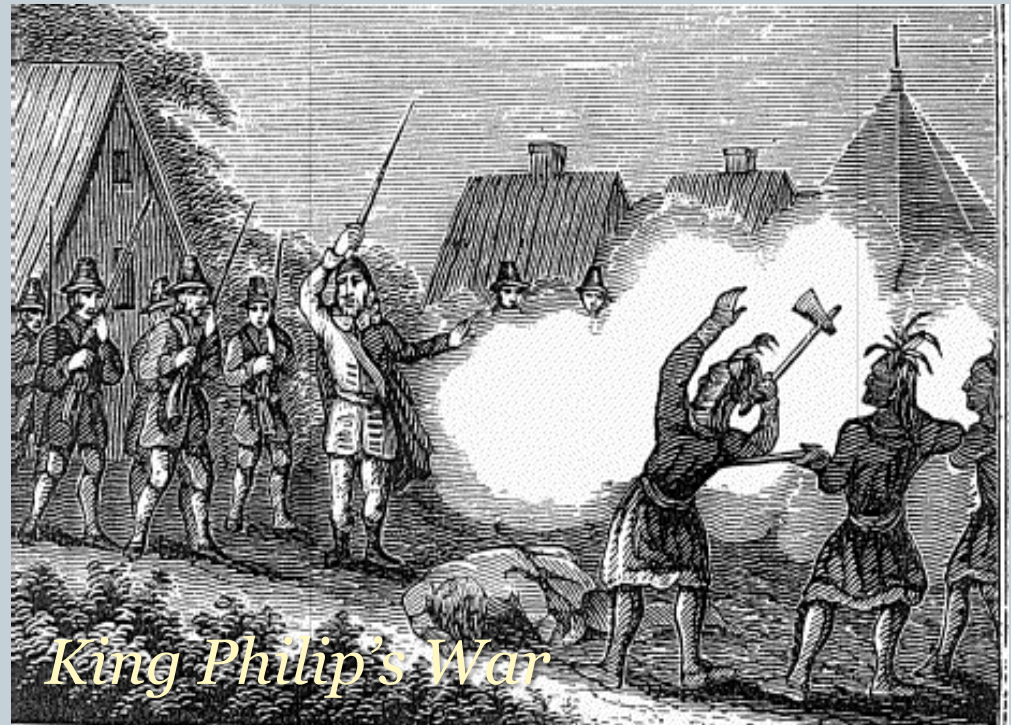
British corruption requires American independence

The Colonies and their neighbors fought

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Chief Massasoit



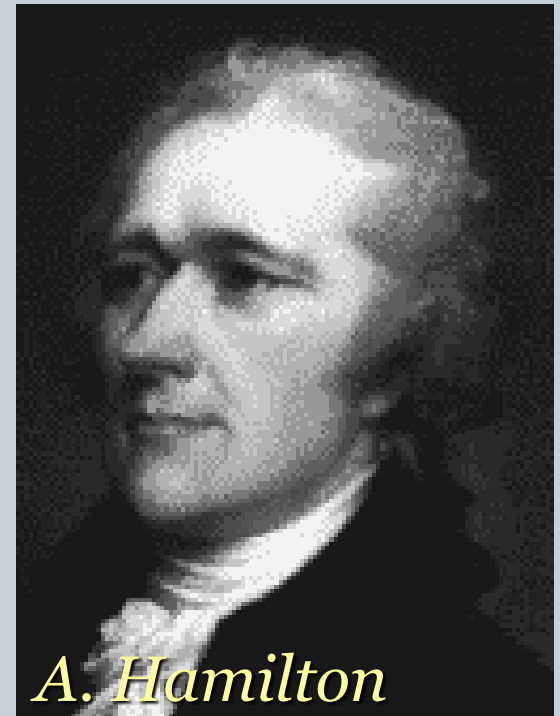
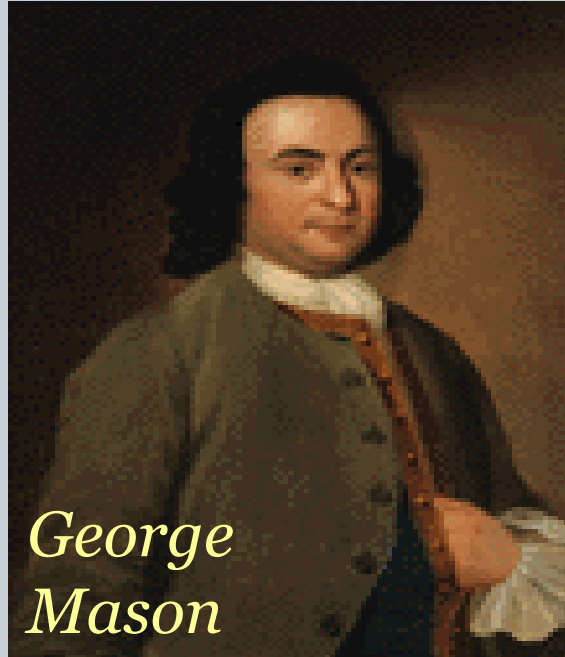
King Philip's War

The Founders needed energy in government – but they feared tyranny

1787: The Constitutional settlement

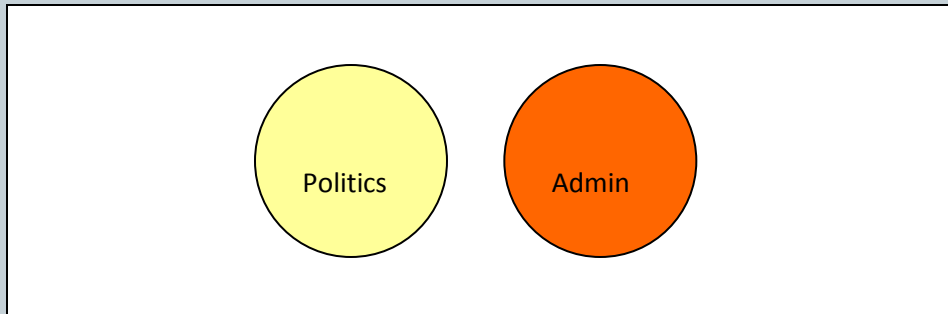
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- Federalism
- Bicameralism



Policy Making in Washington

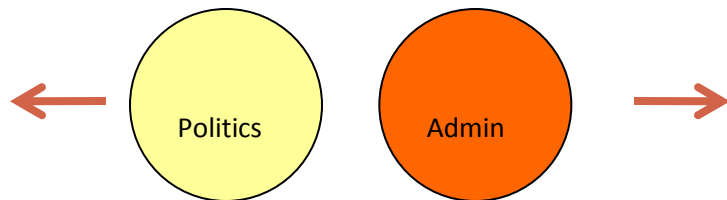
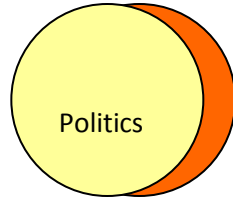
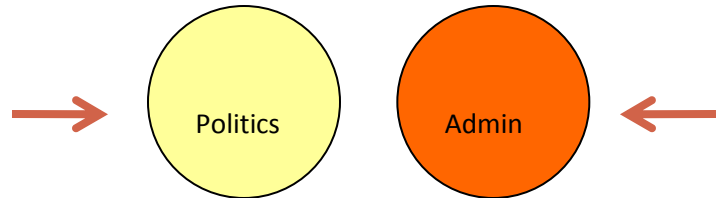
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- Original models of policy attempted to isolate administration from politics
- Progressive Era response to the excesses of the spoils system (most of the 19th Century)

Policy Making in Washington

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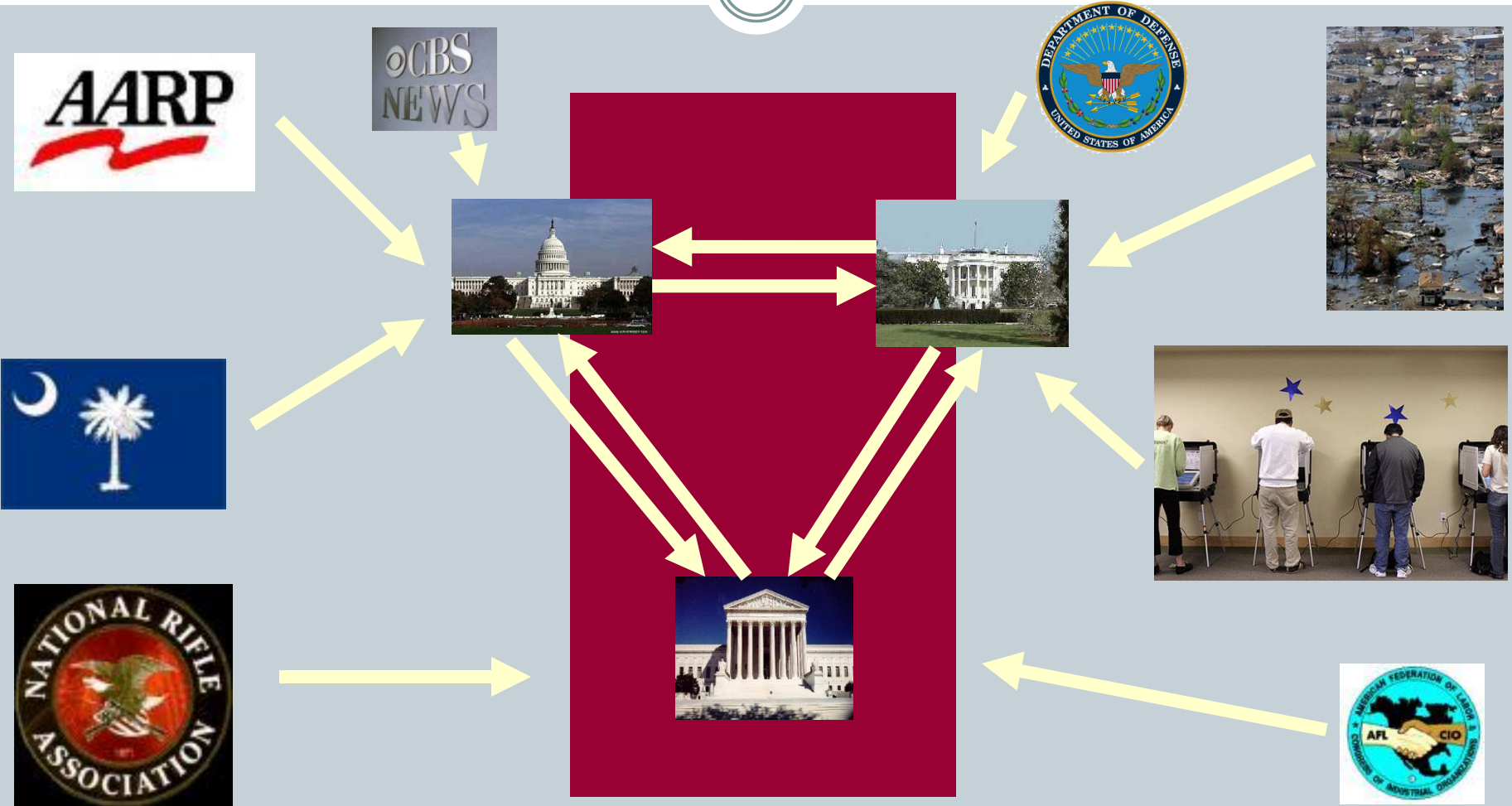
- Sorry, not that easy!
- Not all policies have the same **POLITICAL** impact (science policy vs. taxes)
- Most policies are not static – political impact varies over time



“You can't take politics out of analysis” -- Deborah Stone

The Policy Making "System"

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No "central scientific, universal, objective method to define problems"

The Policy Making “Systems”

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Consensus



Results



Rules



Opinion



Command



Narrative



Conflict

Good is not the same thing in policy and political terms

Congress: Two Roles in conflict

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Article I. Section 1.

All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Section 2.

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature....

Section 3.

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Congress is both national lawmaker and local representative

Role 1: Lawmaking

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Committee on Science, Space, and Technology



Congress needs outside expertise!

Role 2, Part 1: Representing the people

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MACARENA CHALLENGE: Overwhelmingly popular, monumentally stupid ideas will pass the House....

Role 2, Part 2: Representing the states

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100 WOULD-BE PRESIDENTS

Why talk to Congress?

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Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

--First Amendment, 1791

It's a right guaranteed to all Americans

And everybody else uses it – even if you don't

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- Industry makes massive lobbying effort
- Non-profit groups work to energize public support
- Media report (and misunderstand?) science topics
- Citizens write letters, call, and visit on issues

Mills's Law: Where you stand depends on where you sit....

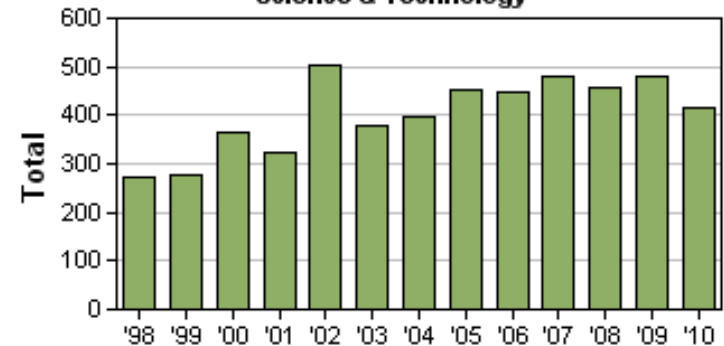
Lobbying is big business

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Total Lobbying Spending

1998		\$1.44 Billion
1999		\$1.44 Billion
2000		\$1.56 Billion
2001		\$1.64 Billion
2002		\$1.82 Billion
2003		\$2.04 Billion
2004		\$2.17 Billion
2005		\$2.43 Billion
2006		\$2.62 Billion
2007		\$2.85 Billion
2008		\$3.30 Billion
2009		\$3.49 Billion
2010		\$3.51 Billion

Annual Number of Clients Lobbying on Science & Technology



If there is an issue, there is an advocate....

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"Please, do not make us suffer any more..."
Access to Pain Treatment as a Human Right

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH



WWF

for a living planet®



... doing Grassroots organizing, Hill visits, letter campaigns, education....

Over 400 Think tanks press their views

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BROOKINGS

CATO
INSTITUTE

APS
physics



American Association of Petroleum Geologists

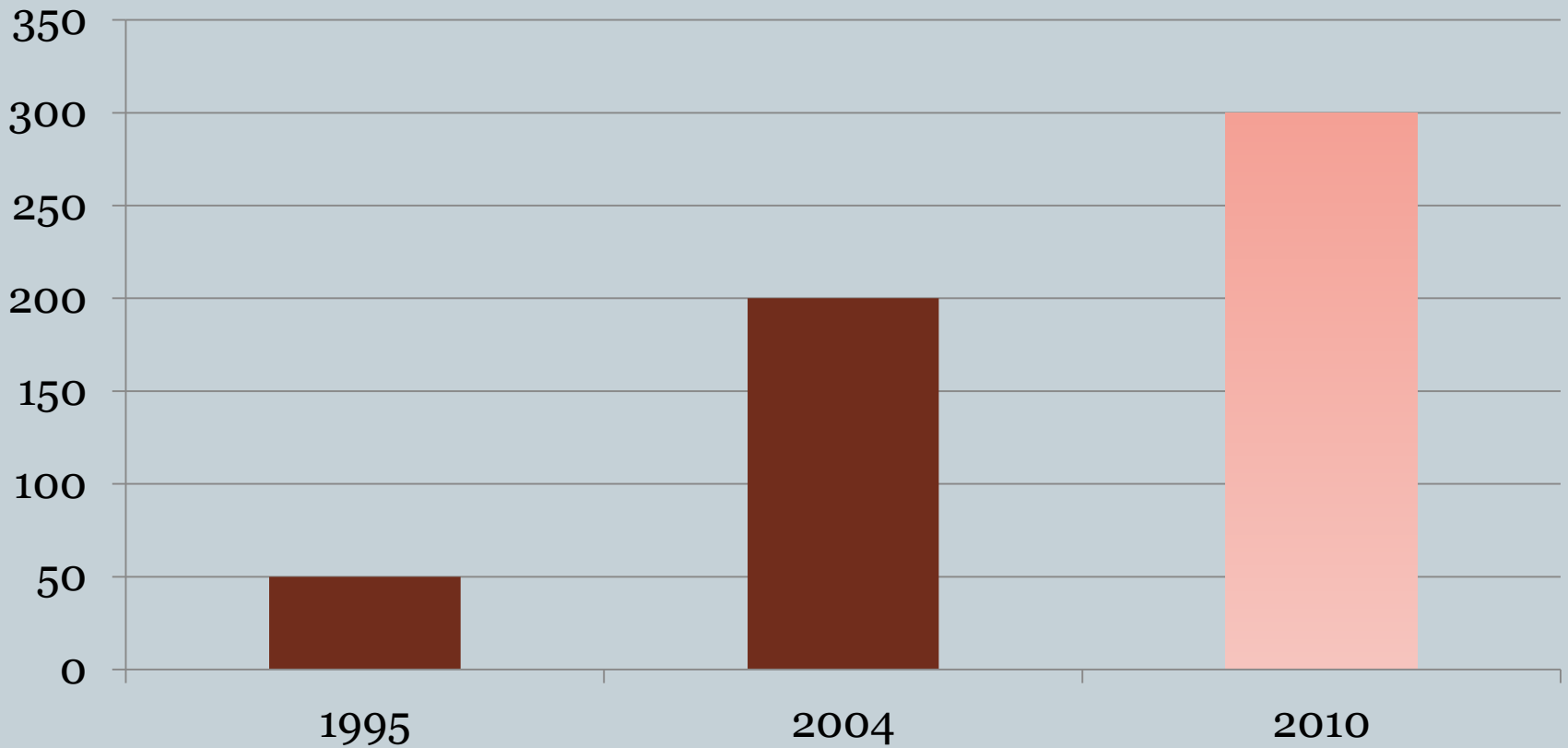
An International Geological Organization



What about voters?

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Contacts



CMF 2008: 50% of all adults in US have contacted Congress....

So how do we deal with all of this?

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- Your allies may only be tactical
- Your voice is one among many
- Your word is your bond
- Your Congress needs your professional advice

Seven Rules for Success

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- Know your audience
- Tell the truth
- Be precise
- Be succinct
- Work with allies
- Be available
- Follow up

Rule 1: Know your audience

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- **Who's who on the Hill?**
 - Know your committee and subcommittee leaders
 - ✦ Bios
 - ✦ Legislative record
 - ✦ Key staffers
- **Triage your issue**
 - History of the issue?
 - Who is a champion? Supporter? Neutral? Opposed? Hardcore foe?
- **Allies outside the Congress?**
 - Inside government
 - Outside

Someone else is surely talking to them too....

Rule 2: Tell the truth

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- Personal staff knows their district and issues
- Committee staff knows issues and procedure
- But they still need WH, agency, NSF, and field input to make sense of science policy
 - Agencies focus on own issues
 - NSF is broader
 - AAAS and others tell them how it works in the field
- You are not the only official they will talk to – and they will know who is off the reservation

Don't spin, don't over-promise: tell them the straight poop

Rule 3: Be precise

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- When they ask a question, answer it ... not the one you want to answer
- Listen to their concerns – they do not think like you, so take care
- Give them the info they need to understand the answer you are giving
 - “That is how we do it” doesn’t work
 - They do not need the history of the topic since 1675 either
- Bottom Line, up front: what is your message?

Stick to the facts, but if they ask your opinion, see rule 2....

Rule 4: Be succinct

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- Members are pressed for time: respect that and they will respect you
- 30 minutes is a long meeting
- Congress does not speak PowerPoint
- Or equations or acronyms
- Expect to meet with staff, not the member
 - They are overworked and underpaid
 - They are dedicated to their boss's POLITICAL success
 - They are always looking for solid sources of info since they cannot manage all the research they need to do alone
 - ✦ 5-7 committees to monitor
 - ✦ Bills in committee and on the floor
 - ✦ 200 or more letters a week to answer
- **No staff increases in Congress for 30+ years**

If it is longer than a page, don't bother

Rule 5: Work with allies

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- Повторение -- МатъУчение
- LOBBYING is forbidden to inside players
 - A bill
 - A position on the legislation
 - A call to action
- Outsiders can LOBBY Congress where officials cannot

Does your story track with your allies?

Rule 6: Be available

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- Remember: oversight is one of Congress's key Constitutional responsibilities
 - Multiple sources of info, at multiple levels in every relevant agency
- Congressional oversight is more than scheduled hearings
 - Letters, phone calls, emails
 - Visits to offices, labs, and facilities
 - GAO is a huge part of Congressional fact-finding
- Bad news does not age well: “Be kind... No surprises”

Rule 7: Follow up

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- With too much to do and too many issues pressing for attention, you need to keep your issues alive through continuing contacts
- Arrange visits to key sites for member and staff
- Call back to check in occasionally
 - Whenever they are prepping a major bill, you need to remind them of your issues
 - Don't overdo it – stalking is bad
- Keep the liaison office informed

A great briefing goes nowhere if you don't reconnect

What do the Liaison offices do?

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They maintain contact and develop the situation

- Scheduling of visits
- Coordinate answers to inquiries
- Assistance with briefings
- Develop ongoing relationships with key members and staff
- Keep agencies informed of Hill action
- Assist with follow up

Don't go into a meeting blind – get briefed before you go

Reminder: Learning Objectives

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