

**AFGE HUD Council of Locals 222**  
***A GUIDE FOR LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATES***



How A Bill Becomes Law

Contacting Your Member of Congress

Executive Branch Leaders

Legislative Branch Leaders

LAF & PAC - *“What are they?”*

## INTRODUCTION

The AFGE HUD Council of Locals 222 (Council) legislative agenda begins with you. Our mission is to support legislation beneficial to past, current and potential HUD employees. The Council supports legislation that provides improved working conditions, benefits and opposes legislation contrary to its members interests.

The “Hatch Act” covers political activity, but NOT Non-Partisan Issue Education?

***What is Non-Partisan Issue Education?*** Any legislative or agency issues such as pay, working conditions, contracting out and personnel reform can be freely discussed with your fellow federal employees without violating the Hatch Act. Also, as Union leaders, you can also contact, or visit, lawmakers regarding Non-Partisan Issues.

Some examples of Non-partisan Issues are:

- Pay Raises
- Under funding or understaffing at your agency
- The quality of services provided by your agency
- Your rights at work
- Contracting out
- Health care, retirement and other benefits
- Ballot initiatives

The purpose of this guide is to give you the basic tools and information necessary to effectively promote Council issues to members of Congress. This will help to assure that your time and actions result in the maximum possible benefit to your members. Real change is not made at the government level, but at the grassroots level. You don't need to be a professional lobbyist to influence how policies and legislation are created. You just need to be an *Advocate*.

**Advocacy is an attempt to persuade or convince.** Knowing the answers to the 3 questions below will help you as you read through this guide.

- ***(1) Who am I trying to persuade? - (Audience)***
- ***(2) What am I trying to persuade them to do/act on? (Goal)***
- ***(3) How am I going to persuade them? (Message and Delivery)***

This guide has been prepared for those wanting to advocate. I hope that it will help you to better understand the planning process, the necessity for being prepared, how to prepare and give you the confidence to be an effective advocate.

*Tim Oravec*

Chairman, Legislative Committee  
HUD Council of Locals 222

## **OUR HUD COUNCIL 222 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MISSION**

Our mission is to support legislation beneficial to past, current and potential HUD employees. The Council supports legislation that provides improved working conditions, benefits and opposes legislation contrary to its members interests.

The Council Legislative Committee is here to help members and local leaders to learn the legislative process, gain confidence when dealing with members of Congress, and be an effective advocate for all things beneficial to the HUD employee.

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## HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW

A Bill becomes a law through a process which involves: Introduction, Committee deliberations/hearings, Floor consideration, Resolutions and finally Voting. These processes occur in both the House and the Senate. When a Bill is passed in identical form by both the Senate and the House, it is sent to the president for his signature. If the versions passed differ, the House and Senate leaders (or designees) must conference to produce a Bill that can be submitted to the President.

**Introducing a Bill.** The first step for a Bill to become a law is the introduction of the Bill to the House and/or the Senate. A Bill can be introduced at any time and must have at least one member as an author. The Bill is immediately assigned a legislative number. The leadership of the majority party and the parliamentarian review the Bill and refer it to the appropriate committee for deliberation. It is usually at this point that other members of the House or Senate **Co-Sponsor** a Bill. *While much time and effort is given to this function, co-sponsorship of a Bill is not required in order to become a law. Co-sponsorship is neither a commitment nor a guarantee that the member will vote favorably on the Bill when it comes up for a floor vote. Co-sponsorship is a tool used to influence other members of Congress to support specific Bills and to influence committees to take favorable action. Contacting members of Congress to Co-Sponsor Bills is an excellent way to get our members involved in the process.*

**Committee Deliberations/Hearings.** After the Bill receives a thorough evaluation by the Committee (usually the staffers), it may be passed on to a subcommittee for further review/action. It is usually in this stage that public hearings are held. Witnesses can appear to support or oppose the Bill. Amendments to the Bill may also be made at this point. At the end of this evaluation, the members determine whether or not the Bill will be sent to the floor for consideration. The majority of Bills proposed by the House of Representatives and Senate die in this stage.

**Floor Consideration.** Floor consideration determines whether a Bill will be voted on or not. Often, both the House and Senate may decide to establish a time frame for consideration of the Bill. The House and Senate members debate the Bill and its amendments, if any, and then decide to vote. This is stage where *filibusters* happen. A **filibuster**, or "talking out a bill", is a form of obstruction in a legislature or other decision-making body. It is an attempt to infinitely extend debate upon a proposal in order to delay the progress or completely prevent a vote on the Bill from taking place.

**Resolution.** Once one chamber of Congress has voted on a Bill, it is passed to the other chamber where the Bill is reintroduced. If it remains unchanged and reaches the consideration stage, then a final Bill goes to both chambers. However, many times a Bill is changed, and that requires a conference between the chambers. Bills often die at this stage.

**Voting.** When a final version of the Bill has been written, presented and accepted by both chambers of Congress, it is voted upon and, if passed, sent to the President to sign into law. The President retains the authority to veto or oppose the Bill. Should this happen, the process begins again until all three parties (House, Senate and President) agree. Congress can override a veto if two-thirds of both chambers vote to do so. Bills not considered during a two-year congress do not automatically carry over into the next Congress. If a Bill is to be carried over, it must be reintroduced. Most Bills are not carried over. Fewer than 10 percent of all Bills introduced in the House of Representatives or the Senate become law.

## **CONTACTING YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS**

*No one can do everything everywhere, but everyone should do something somewhere!*

The commitment required to be an effective union advocate can be as short as a 1 minute phone call or as long as arranging a visit to an elected official. Here are some tips for being an effective union advocate, organized from most effective to least effective.

After a member office visit, the writing of letters or making telephone calls are by far the most effective means of advocacy. Postcards, petitions, and emails (provided they include your name and address) may have some impact, but considerably less. Online petitions or petitions forwarded by email are almost always outdated and/or filled with errors and should be avoided. (These can be good for raising awareness, but may be inaccurate and are typically not effective advocacy.)

Always identify yourself (your title and who you represent) when communicating with members of Congress or their staff. Also, try to make yourself, and your issue, memorable. You're more than likely not the only person or group that is advocating with your member.

Constituents and lobbyists contact their members of Congress for a variety of reasons. In broad terms they want to effectuate legislation favorable to a particular issue of importance to them.

There are numerous ways to communicate with your member of Congress. Because we live in a high-speed high-tech society, some methods are more effective than others. In some situations, you may want to use more than one method of contact. When communicating with a member of Congress it is important that you direct it to your individual Representative or Senator. Generally, when a legislator receives a communication from other than a constituent they frequently redirect it to the constituent's Representative. With this in mind, it may be worthwhile to have a constituent with you, or (if you are a National or Regional officer) plainly state the area you represent.

## **Visiting Members of Congress**

A face-to-face visit with an elected official, or their staff, is the most influential form of advocacy. Letters and phone calls are much easier ignored, but face to face is personal. This method can be time-consuming, but it can also be fun, interesting, and very rewarding.

A personal visit with your member of Congress is the most effective way to emphasize your interest in an issue or Bill. Generally, members of Congress are in Washington D.C. between Tuesday and Thursday of most weeks. You may also schedule the meeting at the members' District office during a recess period when they are not scheduled to be in Washington D.C.

Before you make your appointment, consider how many people will attend and how much time the meeting will take, including a photo op if desired. Ideally, it should not exceed four (4) to five (5) people. Plan on no more than thirty (30) minutes and realistically expect no more than fifteen (15) to twenty (20)

minutes at their Capitol office. There is a little more flexibility at the district office. Group visits are particularly effective, especially when different organizations or constituencies are represented. If you are determined to meet with your member in person, a group visit may increase your chances.

Elected officials, particularly on the federal level, have very demanding schedules. Flexibility is important when considering who is best to meet with. Although meeting directly with your member of Congress should be your first preference, it is more common and often as effective to meet with appropriate staff people in advance of, or instead of meeting with your member of Congress. So don't be disappointed if you have to meet with a staff person - chances are that they know more about the issue than the member anyway! If you insist at this step on only speaking with your member of Congress, you run the risk of not getting your message heard at all.

When you call, introduce yourself, the organization you represent and then request to speak to the *scheduler*. The scheduler is the staff person who has the legislator's calendar and is in the best position to help you make the appointment. *NOTE: Every time you speak to someone different give your name, organization and the reason for your call.*

It may be possible that your member of Congress is not available on that date or the time you request. Have an alternative date and time set up in advance so that a meeting can be obtained when all participants are available. If that's not possible, ask to schedule the appointment with the *Chief of Staff* or *Legislative Director*. Don't assume that the scheduler will automatically assign the best staff person. All too often they assign anyone who is available. This may be a good preliminary tactic even before meeting with your member of Congress. If time permits, it may be to your advantage to first set up the meeting with the appropriate staff person with decision making authority and follow that up with a second meeting with your member of Congress.

Most, but not all, Congressional Offices in Washington require a written appointment request. Consider the template "Appt request" (Appendix 1) as a guide. For visits with the Washington DC Office, requests should be faxed (mail may be delayed weeks for screening). For local office visits, mailing might work, but faxing is preferable. For more information on your Members of Congress, including office locations and contact information (and a zip code lookup if you're not sure who they are), go to [www.unionvoice.org/afgerocks/home.html](http://www.unionvoice.org/afgerocks/home.html).

Some members of Congress require the names of all of the participants as well. This is not unusual. In the body of the letter make sure that you include your name, address email and fax number and that you want the meeting with your member of Congress, the Chief of Staff or the Legislative director. Omitting this step could leave the meeting open to be with a lower staff person that may only be able to take notes and pass them on.

It is also a very good idea to make a follow-up call a week or so before the appointment to confirm that the written communication was received and that the meeting has been set with the agreed upon person.

## **Preparing for the Visit**

Do your Homework! You should plan to discuss only one or two issues. Gather facts about the issue(s) you're talking about and make a handout that concisely outlines your issue (keep it to one page if possible). You can leave this with whomever you see (the member or staff). See Appendix 2 for a template Issue Paper. Use this sheet to practice talking about the issue, preferably with someone that is not familiar with it. This will help to sharpen your presentation and will help to make sure that you communicate the basic idea of the issue effectively. Remember, the Congress person or their staff doesn't necessarily know the issue ... you do.

If meeting as a group, you should determine ahead of time who will be the lead spokesperson at the meeting. The role of the spokesperson is different than the role of the other participants at the actual meeting. The lead spokesperson should have strong leadership abilities and be able to:

- Control the discussion and not relinquish control to the legislator or staff person.
- Keep the meeting on track and on issue.
- Attempt to get the legislator or staff member to commit to your requested action.

However, the spokesperson should not dominate the meeting nor do all of the talking. When possible each participant should contribute to the conversation. It is important, however, that all the participants speak on the same side of the issue. Work out any differences of opinion before the meeting. Should something be said during the meeting that creates differences of opinion within your group, participants should not discuss it at the meeting. This discussion can be held at a later date and discussed in subsequent meetings with the member.

The role of the meeting participants includes:

- Outline details of a specific issue and provide position paper
- Show how this Bill will assist the constituents of that member of Congress
- Provide Bill numbers and number of co-sponsors

If possible, your presentation should be developed on the basis of what capacity you are addressing your member of Congress.

**Meeting with a Committee Chair** – You will want them to approve your Bill and favorably move it to the next step.

**Meeting with a Committee Member** - You will want them to co-sponsor your Bill, vote in favor of it in committee and convince others on the committee.

**Meeting with a Legislator not on a Committee** - You will want them to co-sponsor your Bill, vote favorably when it comes to the floor and influence others.



**Chief of Staff** - As the title implies, this person supervises the congressional staff. They answer directly to the member of Congress and are charged with evaluating the political ramifications of proposed legislation and constituent requests. The chief of Staff is sometimes referred to as the administrative assistant or AA.

**Legislative Director or Committee Staffer** - The legislative Director (LD) is the staff expert responsible for informing the member on all aspects of a piece of legislation. They also can make recommendations on what stand to take. Some congressional offices have several LD's to focus on specific issues. They are also known as legislative assistants (LA's) or legislative coordinators (LC's).

**Scheduler, Appointment Secretary, Personal Secretary** - This is the contact person for anyone who wants to meet with a member of Congress. Other titles include appointment secretary, executive assistant or personal secretary

**Press Secretary or Communications Director** - The Press Secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain open and effective lines of communication between the member, his/her constituency, and the general public. The Press secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands and special requirements of both print and electronic media, and how to most effectively promote the member's views or position on specific issues.

**Caseworker** - The caseworker is the staff member usually assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing replies for the member's signature. The caseworker's responsibilities may also include helping resolve problems constituents present in relation to federal agencies, e.g., Social Security and Medicare issues, veteran's benefits, passports, etc. There are often several caseworkers in a congressional office.

**Other Staff Titles** - Other titles used in a congressional office may include Executive Assistant, Legislative Correspondent, Executive Secretary, Office Manager and Receptionist.

## **The Appointment**

Dress neatly and conservatively. Arrive on time. Be polite. Relax.

Expect some introductions and pleasantries: who you are, where you're from, etc. Try to compliment something the legislator has done recently. After a minute or two, make your statement about the issue that concerns you. Be cautious that you don't "small talk" through your whole appointment.

Be prepared for questions and the give-and-take of the visit.

If the Member or staffer asks you for information that you do not have or know, it's ok to say so. Write down the question and re-state it to them to clarify what they are asking and state that you will get the information and when/ how you will respond (a few days, week, etc. via email, phone, etc). ***Then follow through.*** Never lie or make things up.

A member or staffer may disagree strongly with your assumptions and with the goals you advocate. That's OK. Don't be over-argumentative. Keep the conversation positive. Don't try too hard to change their mind. Stay on the subject and move on. They may not agree with you today, but over time may see the merits of your issue. Again, Should something be said during the meeting that creates differences of opinion with your group, participants should not discuss it at the meeting. This discussion can be held at a later date and discussed in subsequent meetings with the member.

### **Concluding the visit**

Contacting your elected officials is part of building relationships with them. Members of Congress and their staffers are real human beings with normal needs and faults. You will be more effective in the future if both you and your member see your appointment as the first in a series of contacts.

### **Follow-Up**

Within a few days of your visit, it is wise to follow up with the member or staffer regarding the visit. This can be done via letter or fax. Remember to thank them for their time, re-state what you discussed, and your proposed actions. See Appendix 3 for a template Follow Up Letter.

### **Letters**

Writing letters in your own words is an efficient and effective way to influence Members of Congress. Since congressional offices receive only a handful of letters on most issues, each carries power. Please keep in mind that due to screening, many letters do not reach Congressional offices for 3-5 weeks. If you're writing about an urgent issue, fax your letter. Fax numbers for congressional offices are found on the members web sites.

Think about your letter as having distinct paragraphs, or parts (similar to the Issue Paper/Appendix 2). The opening part should clearly state the issue, your position and why you hold it. It should also give more information on the bill/action in question and evidence supporting your position. The second part should urge the Member of Congress to take specific action (i.e. support/don't support a particular bill or amendment; co-sponsor a bill; etc.). The third part should be a brief summary and provide final encouragement. When possible, try to thank your Member for some action they've taken in the past.

## **Letter-Writing Tips**

One-page letters are ideal. Say what you need to say, but be as brief as possible.

Keep letters to one issue. A letter with a laundry list of issues has less impact than a letter on one topic.

Make it legible and neat. Legible handwritten letters and well-typed letters are both effective.

When possible, include a specific bill number.

Do not write nasty or insulting letters. It is not an effective means of persuasion and may damage your reputation for future contacts.

## **Telephone Calls**

Although not as nearly as effective as visit or letters, telephone calls are very important especially when the respective legislation is being debated or voted upon. A constituent will rarely get through to a member of Congress on the telephone, but talking to or leaving a message for the relevant staff person definitely has an impact. Remember to identify yourself as an AFGE member or leader.

Your members phone number(s) can be found at: [www.unionvoice.org/afgerocks/home.html](http://www.unionvoice.org/afgerocks/home.html). When you've reached the office, you can either (1) name the issue you're interested in and ask to speak to the Chief of Staff or the Legislative Director who covers your issue or concern.; or (2) make your statement to the person who has answered the phone. The former is probably more effective; the latter more efficient. It is very helpful to have an issue paper in front of you when you call. Ask them if you may fax the issue paper to them.

## **Emails**

With today's use of the internet, email has become one of the most popular methods of communication. But keep in mind, Members of Congress receive hundreds of emails every day. Emails now require completing a form. These forms can be found by going to the website of the individual member of Congress.. Often you will receive an automatic acknowledgment that your message has been received, and you may receive a written response in the mail at a later date.

Although few if any emails actually reach the Members themselves, most are seen or addressed by the staff in some way. How emails are handled varies widely from office to office. Some will make sure you get a personal reply, some will send an automatic reply and nothing else.

Keep in mind that the advocacy stated above is much more effective than an email. If you are going to email which is certainly better than nothing, be sure to **include your home mailing address and phone number in your message!** Not only are you more likely to get a response, but your viewpoint may carry more weight (especially if you are a constituent).

## **Petitions**

Petitions, though relatively easy to circulate, are not a highly effective means of persuasion unless they will be delivered in person to an elected official. It is precisely because they are easy to gather that they are not as compelling as, say, a few personal letters. A petition is better than nothing, but taking the extra time and effort to organize a visit or write a letter is considerably better.

## **Postcards**

Postcards have some influence, but they are not nearly as effective as letters. A postcard that you write yourself is much more effective than a preprinted postcard. However, if your choice is between writing a postcard and doing nothing - write the postcard.

## **THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**

### **President Barack Obama**

[www.whitehouse.gov/administration/president\\_obama/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/president_obama/)

### **Vice President Joseph Biden**

[www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice\\_president\\_biden/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice_president_biden/)

### **The White House**

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20500

[www.whitehouse.gov/contact/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/)

## **THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH LEADERSHIP**

**U.S. Senate**    [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

### **Majority Leader**

Harry Reid

[Reid.senate.gov](http://Reid.senate.gov)

### **Minority Leader**

Mitch McConnell

[Mcconnell.senate.gov](http://Mcconnell.senate.gov)

### **Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs**

<http://banking.senate.gov/public>

Chris Dodd - Chair

Richard Shelby – Ranking Member

### **Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development**

Robert Menendez – Chair

David Vitter – Ranking Member

### **Appropriations Committee**

<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

Daniel Inouye – Chair

Thad Cochran – Ranking Member

**U. S. House of Representatives** [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

**Speaker of the House – Nancy Pelosi**

[Speaker.house.gov](http://Speaker.house.gov)

**Majority Leader – Steny Hoyer**

[www.majorityleader.gov](http://www.majorityleader.gov)

**Minority Leader – John Boehner**

[Republicanleader.house.gov](http://Republicanleader.house.gov)

**Committee on Financial Services**

[financialservices.house.gov](http://financialservices.house.gov)

Barney Frank – Chair

Spencer Bacchus – Ranking Member

**Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity**

Rep. Maxine Waters - Chair

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito - Ranking Member

**Appropriations**

[appropriations.house.gov](http://appropriations.house.gov)

David Obey – Chair

Jerry Lewis - Ranking Member

**Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies**

[appropriations.house.gov/Subcommittees/sub\\_tranurb.shtml](http://appropriations.house.gov/Subcommittees/sub_tranurb.shtml)

John Olver – Chair

Tom Latham - Ranking Member

## **What Is The Legislative Action Fund (LAF)**

Each AFGE Local and Council is encouraged to contribute \$2 per active member to AFGE's Legislative Action Fund (LAF). Money from the LAF Fund is then used to provide AFGE members with legislative and political education materials as well as assistance in training and mobilizing AFGE members to conduct grassroots lobbying and political action activities. **LAF funds are not used for activities directly aimed at the election or defeat of a specific candidate.**

LAF funds are the engine that drives AFGE's grassroots political action activities (everyday lobbying). For example, there wouldn't have been a SWAMP Campaign without the LAF Fund. The money raised annually has been used to develop fact sheets, organize rallies, conduct training and generally support the network of AFGE activists who are performing legislative activities across the country. LAF funds are also used each year to develop grassroots materials to support our fights for better wages and benefits for AFGE Members and to increase funding for agency budgets. They support grassroots training for AFGE members and non-partisan voter education and get-out-the-vote activities.

At AFGE, the LAF funds raised from Locals in a particular District is divided in two. One-half is credited to the National LAF and one-half is credited to each District's LAF account.

## **What is a Political Action Committee (PAC)?**

All candidates seeking office in the U.S. House of Representatives, U.S. Senate and challengers must raise money to support their campaigns. Many look to PACs for financial support. AFGE-PAC seeks contributions only from AFGE members who are U.S. nationals. It is the vehicle for making financial contributions and operates under a written charter that complies with all aspects of the Federal Election Campaign Act. *Political Action Committee, or PAC, is the name commonly given to a private group, regardless of size, organized to elect political candidates. Legally, what constitutes a "PAC" for purposes of regulation is a matter of state and federal law. Under the Federal Election Campaign Act, an organization becomes a "political committee" by receiving contributions or making expenditures in excess of \$1,000 for the purpose of influencing a election.*

### **An Overview of How a PAC Works:**

Most PACs require a written request from a bona fide congressional candidate or his or her campaign committee. Rarely are funds authorized without having first received a written request. The request triggers a process in which District and Local leadership are usually consulted. The PAC Coordinator is contacted who then seeks *advice* from the local leaders and members in the candidate's state or congressional district. The results of that process are sent back to the national office where the legislative staff and the national officers make the final determination as to whether and how much to contribute to a particular candidate.

## **Contributing to PAC.**

PAC funds are distributed to candidates who are sympathetic to the concerns of federal employees and retirees. **Any contribution is voluntary** without any strings attached. For instance, a contribution cannot be made with a request that it only be used for a specific candidate. If you want to make a contribution to a specific candidate then it is suggested that you make it directly to that candidate's campaign committee.

There is no minimum or maximum contribution. Federal law requires that PAC's report the name, address and employer information (if employed) for contributions that are in excess of \$200 in a calendar year. IRS rules also require that a statement be made that all PAC contributions are NOT tax deductible.

## **Federal Election Commission Law Prohibits Contributions from Locals, Councils, the proceeds from raffles, bake sales or Auctions.**

Collecting voluntary PAC contributions at off-site local or Council meetings and conventions is encouraged. The laws governing such contributions prohibit consolidating individual member's contributions in the form of a Council or local check. Also, many AFGE locals have a tradition of generating contributions through raffles, auctions and bake sales. This is a popular method to obtain contributions for the Alzheimer's Fund, FEEA or other fund raising activities; Collecting PAC funds through raffles, auctions, bake sales and other similar activities must be avoided at all cost due to conflicts with the campaign laws.

For More info regarding PACs, go to [www.afge.org//Index.cfm?Page=PoliticalActionCommittee](http://www.afge.org//Index.cfm?Page=PoliticalActionCommittee)  
PLEASE NOTE: IT IS FORBIDDEN TO ACCESS THE ABOVE WEB SITE FROM A GOVERNMENT OWNED COMPUTER. PLEASE USE YOUR PERSONAL DEVICES WHEN ACCESSING THIS SITE.

## **WEBSITES OF INTEREST**

### **HUD Council of Locals 222**

[www.afgecouncil222.com](http://www.afgecouncil222.com)

### **Council Facebook Page**

HUD AFGE Council

### **AFGE National Page**

[www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org)

### **GovTrack.us**

<http://www.govtrack.us/>



**APPENDIX 1** (WORD version available on the Council Web Site [www.afgecouncil222.com](http://www.afgecouncil222.com))

**Appointment Request Template**

**USE YOUR UNION LETTERHEAD IF POSSIBLE**

[Your Address]

[Date]

The Honorable [full name]  
U.S. Senate (or U.S. House of Representatives)  
Washington, DC 20510 (20515 for House)

Dear Senator (Representative) [last name]:

I (we) am (are) writing to request an appointment with you on [date]. I am a (title or member) of the [Union local or region (use the full Title, i.e. American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) at HUD] in [your city], and I'm concerned about [issue].

I realize that your schedule is difficult to project at this point, but it would be ideal if we could meet between [time] and [time].

I believe [issue] is important because [etc, 1-2 sentences].

My home address is \_\_\_\_\_. I can also be reached by phone at \_\_\_\_\_ or email at (home e-mail). I will contact your office during the week of [1-2 weeks before the visit] to confirm the details of the appointment.

Thank you for considering my request to meet with you.

Sincerely,

[name]

**APPENDIX 2** (WORD version available on the Council Web Site [www.afgecouncil222.com](http://www.afgecouncil222.com))

**American Federation of Government Employees  
Local or Region  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

**Title of Issue**

**Issue:** Be as brief as possible

**Proposed Action:** State what action(s) you are asking them to take.

**Authority/Legislative History:** If possible. This may not apply to your issue.

**Background:** State the problem, how it effects the members constituency, and how the proposed action will help.

**For More Information:** Please contact

**APPENDIX 3** (WORD version available on the Council Web Site [www.afgecouncil222.com](http://www.afgecouncil222.com))

**Follow up letter Template**

**USE UNION LETTERHEAD**

[Your Address]

[Date]

The Honorable [full name]

U.S. Senate (or U.S. House of Representatives)

Washington, DC 20510 (20515 for House)

Dear Senator (Representative) [last name]:

Subject: Meeting with Member or staff regarding AFGE-HUD issues

On behalf of AFGE-HUD, thank you for listening to our concerns regarding the issues concerning the employees at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

During our visit with \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_, I (we) supplied information regarding what we consider an issue facing HUD and its employees. The issue is:

Again, thank you for meeting with us. We hope that you will assist us in our efforts to provide admirable service to the communities in which we live. Should you have any questions, or require further information regarding the above issues, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Name

Title

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