

Talent Mobility and the Global Economy

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Early Warning Signals:
Winners and Losers in the Global Race for Talent

Guidelines and messaging for reaching out to local congressional contacts



Building relationships is the key to educating your Congressional representatives about global talent mobility. View your interactions with Congressional offices as opportunities for building a relationship. Those offices should see you as a credible and helpful voice for talent and the support of economic development. The best time to schedule appointments is from February through July, but any time of year will do.

1

Call the Congressional office to make an appointment.

You can find contact information online for local and D.C. offices for your **Representatives** and **Senators**. Call the office you would like to visit and explain that you would like to set up a meeting with the Congressperson or staff, and why. Tell the person you speak to that you are a constituent. They may ask that you email the request.

Identify a rough timeframe for your visit because you may not get your first choice. Plan for some back and forth taking 1-3 weeks. Don't be disappointed if you have to meet with a staffer. They may know more about your issue than the member, and the member will rely on them for staking out positions.

2

Decide what you want to say.

Expect the meeting to last from 15-45 minutes and focus on a couple of core issues. These are generally:

- 1) asking that the office help publicize the *2019 Talent Mobility Report* and your school's support of the initiative, and
- 2) seeking advocacy and support for policy reform.

Find out where the member stands on talent migration issues, and determine what arguments and materials best support your request. A friendly office can be thanked for their leadership on the issue and asked to do more. A neutral office can be educated with compelling alumni stories. Seek specific actions, such as adding a link to GMAC's report on the member's Web site and keeping copies of the infographic at the office for visitors.

3

Plan your visit carefully.

Assemble a delegation of about 1-3 people for the visit. Group visits are sometimes more influential, and the experience will build relationships and skills among participants. A group visit also may make it more likely you will meet with the member. Meet in advance to decide who will speak when and about what issue. If you bring an alumni or student, make sure they play an important role in the meeting, tell their story, and talk about the value of being able to study at your school and why it was integral to their success.

Prepare and bring an information kit that includes:

- A copy of the white paper and infographic.
- Personal student stories.
- Letters or handouts from you, your student body and supportive organizations in the local community.
- Other supporting information, including local media coverage and editorials.

4

Be prompt and patient.

When it is time to meet, be punctual and patient. It is not uncommon in a busy office to have to wait because of changing schedules. Thank the member or staff person for their time. Building rapport with staff is important to developing a long-term relationship.

5

Be clear, direct and polite in your request.

Expect some introductions and pleasantries, such as who you are, where you're from and your business background. One person, usually the person who contacted the office to set up the meeting, should take the lead in introducing the group and the reason for the visit. Remember that you're trying to build a relationship, so your approach should be polite and relaxed. Stick to your talking points.

Tell them why the Congressperson should support talent mobility: it fuels economic growth and creates jobs. Ask them if you can put a copy of the white paper, infographic, and materials about your school in district offices. Offer to speak about talent mobility at events scheduled by the member. Invite the member to speak at a school event.

6

Follow up after your meeting.

Email the person(s) you met a thank you letter. It should include a brief outline of the topics you covered in the meeting, plus any additional information they may have requested.

Resources

- [U.S. House of Representatives](#) – find your federal representative
- [U.S. Senate](#) – how to contact Senators
- [U.S. House of Representatives website](#) – find out about legislative activity, leadership and committees
- [U.S. Senate website](#) – find out about legislative activity and committees
- [Congress.gov](#) – track federal legislation

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