

**Smart Growth America
Advocacy Day in the District
August 2008**

Scheduling A Visit With Your Elected Official

1. **Know the name of the office scheduler.** This is the only person in the office who will be able to take your request for a meeting and this is whom you ask for by name when you call. When you send your letter of request, you should put it to the attention of this person to ensure that it gets to the appropriate desk for review.
2. Be prepared to **fax information to the scheduler** for their review. This correspondence should provide a brief background of why you want to meet with the official and when. It is important to **mention that you are a constituent**, and while it is okay and usually helpful to state the issue you'd like to discuss, you should not be too opinionated on that issue in your letter.
See sample letter as an example.
3. Keep in mind that officials have very busy schedules, so it is recommended that you only ask to meet with them for a 15 – 30 minute time slot.
4. It is recommended that before calling the scheduler you first fax your request for a meeting so they have time to look at the official's schedule and availability.
5. Next, **call the scheduler**, introduce yourself, mention that you are a constituent of representative X, and let him/her know that you are following up on a request to meet with X in the district office. Let the scheduler know when, exactly, you faxed your request, so that they are more easily able to locate it.
6. Sometimes requests are lost in the chaos that typifies elected officials' scheduling offices. If the scheduler says that he/she did not receive your fax or cannot find it, don't panic! Calmly suggest that you can re-fax the same document or can send it via email if that is most convenient.
7. If the scheduler tells you that the office needs more time to assess your representative's availability on that day, let him/her know that you will follow up by calling back in another few days. Keep on them! Schedulers have many, many requests coming through the office, so in order to ensure that you are not forgotten or your request hidden under a stack of other papers, do **follow-up** and call again.
8. Finally, **thank the scheduler** for their time and effort, and let them know that you appreciate this opportunity to meet with your official.