

## NASCOE Guide for Contacting Your Congressional Representatives

If you have never contacted your local representative before and you are not sure where to start or how to go through the process, then the next few simple steps will help you navigate the process. If this all sounds intimidating to you, rest your fears, there's nothing to it!

### Step One – Identifying who your representatives are

- Everyone is represented by their two state Senators and a member of Congress that is elected within a defined district, based on where you live.
- If you are not sure who your representative is, you can easily look them up using this link by entering your zip code: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>
- Senate contact information can be obtained by selecting your state at: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact>
- The results of this search will give you their Washington, D.C. phone number and a link to the representative's website.

### Step Two – Calling your Representative

- Realize that unless you have a very close personal relationship with your Congressman or Senator, you will not be speaking to them directly. They simply do not have time to talk to all their constituents. Therefore, they have aides that specialize in various areas to take your calls.
- When you call, **BE POLITE**. These office aides are no different than you and I speaking to farmers about program regulations that we have no control over. They are often just as frustrated as you are with the situation.
- **Always use your personal phone and email and never conduct congressional contacts while on official duty. This is very important.** We as federal employees are prohibited from lobbying members of Congress. Always remember when calling your representatives to **identify yourself as a constituent or as a NASCOE association member; never as a Farm Service Agency employee.**
- Once you introduce yourself as an NASCOE association member, ask to speak with the aide responsible for Federal Employee issues. If they are available, the receptionist will transfer you. If not, present your position to the receptionist and ask that they pass the information along to the appropriate aide. **When speaking as a NASCOE association member, use information in the NASCOE Position Paper and PLEASE stick to the provided bullet points.**
- Congressional offices are very interested in what their constituents' views are, so they are taking note of your comments.

- Don't expect an answer or solution to your concern. They may comment on the representative's position if known, but in some cases the issue is new or unique and they are not yet prepared to speak for the Representative on the issue.
- **Thank them for their time.**

### **Step Three – Follow up**

- If you are asked to provide any additional information, please let us know so that we can help you follow up on their request.
- You can contact the NASCOE Legislative Committee Co-Chairpersons at:
  - Clint Bain [clint.bain@nascoe.org](mailto:clint.bain@nascoe.org)
  - Neil Burnette [neil.burnette@nascoe.org](mailto:neil.burnette@nascoe.org)

### **Step Four - Still not Comfortable?**

- We highly recommend calling your congressional offices. However, if you are not comfortable doing this, access the representative's website and then click the "contact us" button and this will allow you to communicate via email.
- Follow the "Step Two" procedures to submit your communication in email format.