



How to Learn About Your Congressional Delegation

WHAT TO KNOW	WHERE TO FIND OUT
<p>WHO YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ARE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify your representatives in Congress by visiting www.house.gov/writerep.
<p>LEGISLATIVE INTERESTS AND PASSIONS</p> <p>Most members of Congress seek elected office because they care about something – a specific issue, a region of the country, even something from their career history.</p> <p>Knowing these interests can help you tailor your requests and find common ground for building a relationship.</p> <p>Start with a member’s own Web site to see how they describe their interests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Check the House and Senate Web sites at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov to link directly to members’ Web pages. ➤ Visit www.capwiz.com/nyt for information on members. ➤ Check the Thomas site at http://thomas.loc.gov to find bills introduced or co-sponsored by your representative or senators. The Thomas site is a congressionally mandated online service providing access to information about federal legislation, congressional calendars, presidential nominations and other resources.
<p>VOTING HISTORY</p> <p>If you want to know how your member of Congress voted on a specific piece of legislation, you can search by bill number, name or subject and then look for your member’s name in the “roll-call vote.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Go to the Thomas site at http://thomas.loc.gov, then search for the bill or resolution. If there has already been a vote, you will find a link under Major Congressional Actions. Click on the link and look for your member’s vote. If the Major Congressional Actions link is not live, there hasn’t been a vote on this item.
<p>COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS</p> <p>The committees that members of Congress are assigned to are a measure of their interest in a particular topic, as well as their ability to give support and advice in those policy areas. A member’s committee service can also be an indication of how educated that member’s staff are likely to be about your issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Find House committee assignments on the House Clerk page at http://clerkweb.house.gov. ➤ For information on Senate assignments, check the main page at www.senate.gov.
<p>PARTY AFFILIATION</p> <p>Although you should always work with both parties, knowing an elected official’s party affiliation may give you a sense of his or her perspective on the world.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Party affiliations are available on the House Clerk page at http://clerkweb.house.gov. For the Senate, check the main page at www.senate.gov.
<p>PERSONAL INTERESTS</p> <p>Often, Congress members’ personal interests or background can be as helpful to you as their professional interests.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scan members’ bios for hobbies, memberships and other background that may help you establish a connection. Go to their events. Many members of Congress host “town hall” meetings throughout their states and districts. These provide an opportunity to introduce yourself and learn firsthand about their interests. Also check local papers and Web sites and talk to other people in the community who know your members well.

