

# Government Relations University

East Central Branch

April 19, 2022

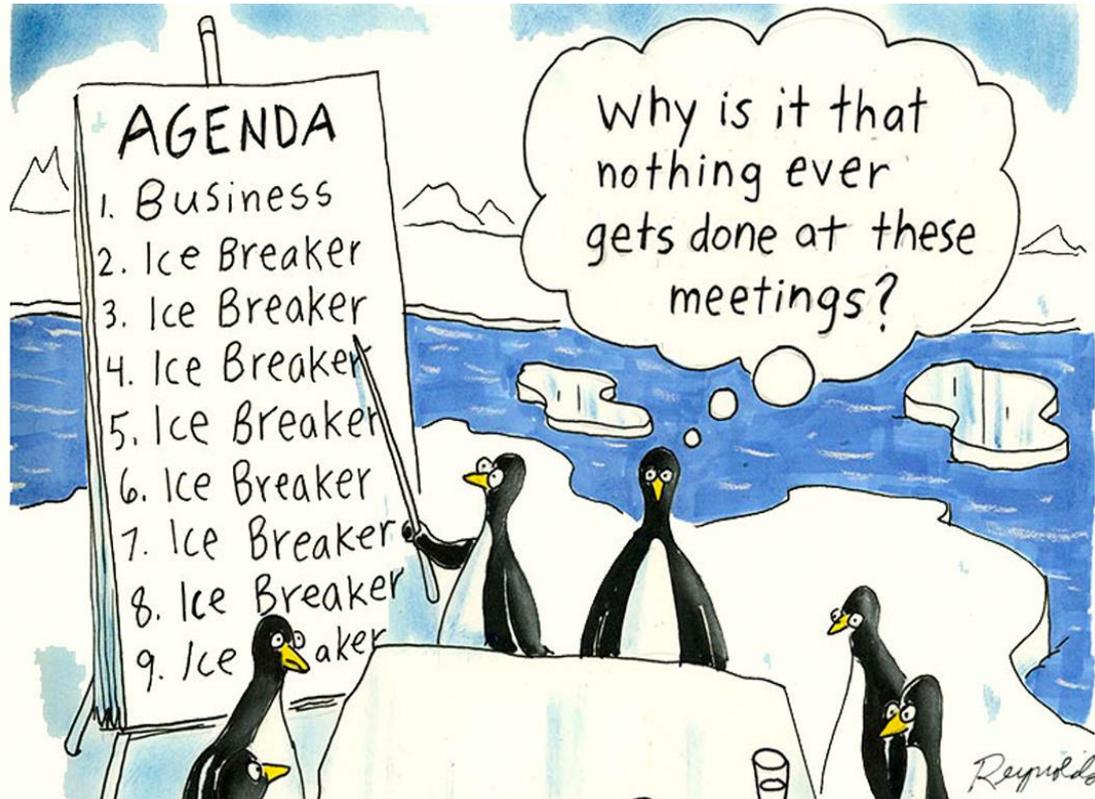
**ASCE** | ISSUES  
& ADVOCACY

# Agenda

## Presenter:

**Elisabeth 'Lizzie' Dorman**  
Sr. Manager  
Grassroots Programs and  
State Advocacy

- Welcome
- Icebreaker
- Key Terms
- Government Relations and Infrastructure Initiatives
- Policy Development
- Facts and Figures
- Federal Advocacy
- State Government
- Relations and Licensure
- ASCE Grassroots and Grasstops Programs
- Getting Involved
- Meeting with Legislators
- Florida Legislature
- Next Steps
- Q&A



- When did you champion for something effectively?
- Why do you think you were successful?

# Key Terms

## ■ **Advocacy**

- Any action that speaks in favor of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others.

## ■ **Government Relations**

- The process of trying to influence the government to make changes to the law to suit the needs of a particular group

## ■ **Lobbying**

- Activities that are intended to influence a specific piece of legislation.

Education

Research

Coalition &  
Relationship  
Building

Media  
Outreach &  
P.R.

Organizing

Lobbying

- 501(c)(3) organizations are permitted to lobby
  - Okay to advocate for issue or legislation or regulatory action
  
- Prohibited from political activity
  - Not okay to give money to candidates, endorse candidates
  
- ASCE national can provide guidance

## ■ **Coalition**

- The people and/or organizations working together for a common goal.

## ■ **Grassroots**

- “Boots on the ground”
- A group of individuals collectively advocating for a common cause

## ■ **Grasstops**

- Individuals who have critical relationships with decision-makers and can skillfully influence public policy (like Advocacy Captains)

- **Transportation Construction Coalition**
- **Americans for Transportation Mobility**
- **Water Infrastructure Network**
- **Committee on Federal Procurement of A/E Services (COFPAES)**
- **Beyond the Runway Coalition**
- **STEM Education Coalition**
- **Coalition for National Science Funding**
- **BuildStrong Coalition**
- **Hazards Alliance**
- **Earthquake/Wind Coalitions**
- **Eno Center for Transportation**
- **Building America's Future**
- **Governing Institute**
- **Value of Water Coalition**
- **Waterways Council**
- **Congressional Management Foundation**
- **U.S. Capitol Historical Society**
- **American Society of Association Executives**
- **National Conference of State Legislatures**
- **Council of State Governments**

# Government Relations & Infrastructure Initiatives



## Mission:

To serve the public and the engineering profession by:

- **Advocating for the Society's strategic goal** of enhancing infrastructure and environmental stewardship to protect the public health and safety and improve the quality of life.
- Encouraging the use of **innovative, resilient and sustainable practices**.
- Promoting the **understanding and participation of ASCE members** in public policy.
- Developing **pro-active public policy positions** on civil engineering issues.
- **Educating public policymakers** about the impacts of legislative and regulatory proposals on public health and safety, the economy and the profession.



Profession is well respected by policymakers

- Known for *Infrastructure Report Card*



ASCE Can and Does lobby!

- ✓ Advocating for issues, legislation, or regulatory action
- ✗ Giving money to candidates or endorsing candidates

# Meet Your Team



- Direct Lobbying on Capitol Hill
- Inside the Beltway Expertise and Insight
- Preparing for One-on-One Meetings with Elected Officials
- Legislative Alerts
- Press Outreach
- Talking points, Testimony, Research
- Social Media and Blogs

# Policy Development

## ASCE Public Policy and Practice Committee



Committee for  
America's  
Infrastructure



Committee on  
Licensure



State  
Government  
Relations &  
Grassroots  
Committee



Energy, Env.  
& Water PC



Engineering  
Practice PC

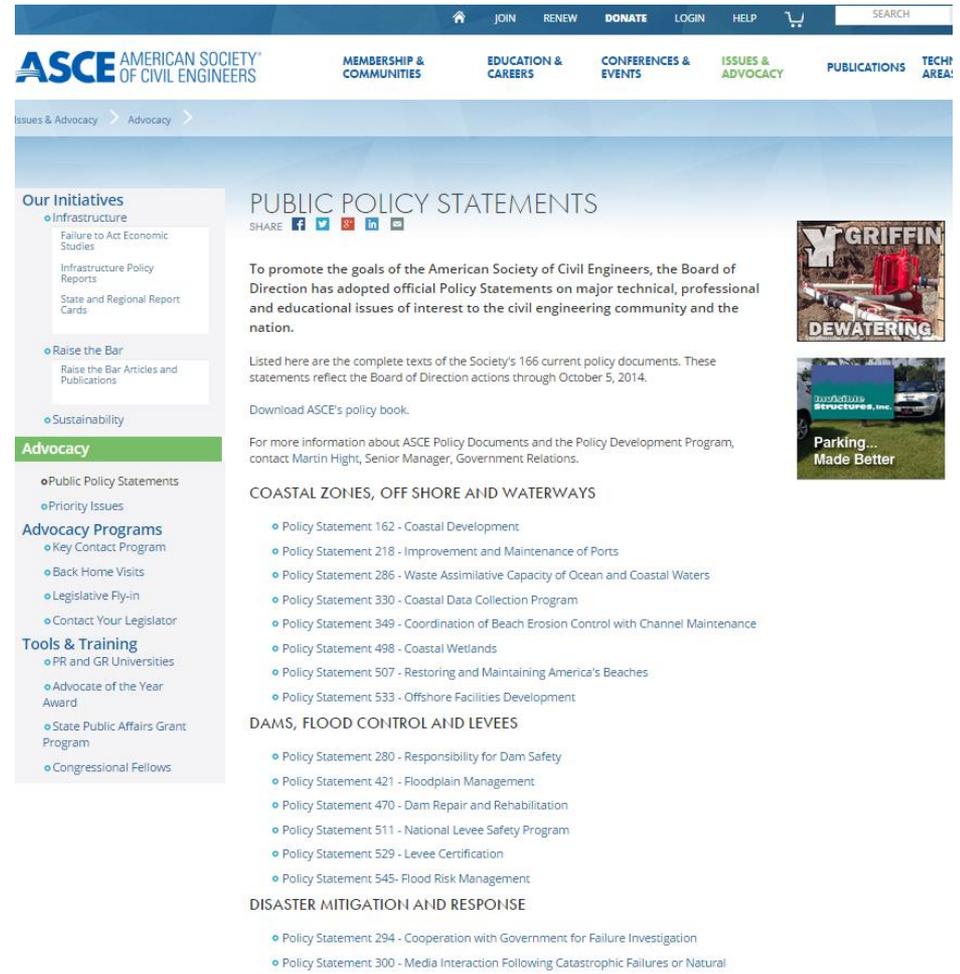


Infrastructure  
& Research  
PC



Transportation  
PC

-  172 policy statements
-  Approved by Board of Direction
-  Provide **guidance** on public policy
-  Give **permission** to act on public policy
-  Reviewed on 3-year cycle
-  Survey of members determines top priority issues at state level
-  Board approves priority issues



ASCE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNITIES | EDUCATION & CAREERS | CONFERENCES & EVENTS | ISSUES & ADVOCACY | PUBLICATIONS | TECH AREA

Issues & Advocacy > Advocacy >

### Our Initiatives

- Infrastructure
  - Failure to Act Economic Studies
  - Infrastructure Policy Reports
  - State and Regional Report Cards
- Raise the Bar
  - Raise the Bar Articles and Publications
- Sustainability

### Advocacy

- Public Policy Statements
- Priority Issues

### Advocacy Programs

- Key Contact Program
- Back Home Visits
- Legislative Fly-in
- Contact Your Legislator

### Tools & Training

- PR and GR Universities
- Advocate of the Year Award
- State Public Affairs Grant Program
- Congressional Fellows

## PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENTS

SHARE [f](#) [t](#) [+](#) [in](#) [v](#)

To promote the goals of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Board of Direction has adopted official Policy Statements on major technical, professional and educational issues of interest to the civil engineering community and the nation.

Listed here are the complete texts of the Society's 166 current policy documents. These statements reflect the Board of Direction actions through October 5, 2014.

Download ASCE's policy book.

For more information about ASCE Policy Documents and the Policy Development Program, contact Martin Hight, Senior Manager, Government Relations.

### COASTAL ZONES, OFF SHORE AND WATERWAYS

- Policy Statement 162 - Coastal Development
- Policy Statement 218 - Improvement and Maintenance of Ports
- Policy Statement 286 - Waste Assimilative Capacity of Ocean and Coastal Waters
- Policy Statement 330 - Coastal Data Collection Program
- Policy Statement 349 - Coordination of Beach Erosion Control with Channel Maintenance
- Policy Statement 498 - Coastal Wetlands
- Policy Statement 507 - Restoring and Maintaining America's Beaches
- Policy Statement 533 - Offshore Facilities Development

### DAMS, FLOOD CONTROL AND LEVEES

- Policy Statement 280 - Responsibility for Dam Safety
- Policy Statement 421 - Floodplain Management
- Policy Statement 470 - Dam Repair and Rehabilitation
- Policy Statement 511 - National Levee Safety Program
- Policy Statement 529 - Levee Certification
- Policy Statement 545- Flood Risk Management

### DISASTER MITIGATION AND RESPONSE

- Policy Statement 294 - Cooperation with Government for Failure Investigation
- Policy Statement 300 - Media Interaction Following Catastrophic Failures or Natural

# Facts and Figures

# 2021 Report Card for America's Infrastructure



AVIATION

↑ D+



BRIDGES

↓ C



DAMS

D



DRINKING WATER

↑ C-



ENERGY

↑ C-



HAZARDOUS WASTE

D+



INLAND WATERWAYS

↑ D+



LEVEES

D



PARKS AND RECREATION

D+



PORTS

↑ B-



RAIL

B



ROADS

D



SCHOOLS

D+



SOLID WASTE

C+



STORM WATER

D



TRANSIT

D-



WASTEWATER

D+

America's  
Cumulative  
Infrastructure  
Grade



A EXCEPTIONAL

B GOOD

C MEDIOCRE

D POOR

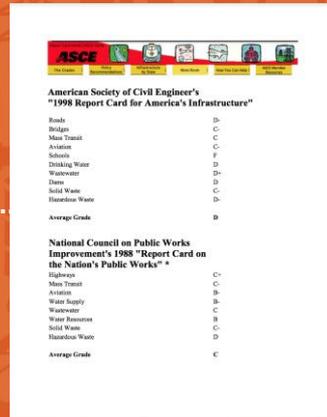
F FAILING

# ASCE's Impact through the Report Card

1988



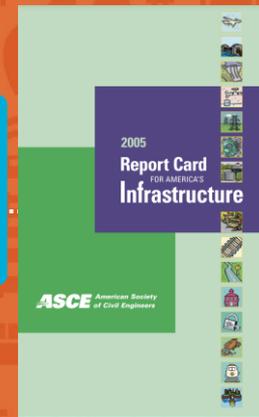
1998



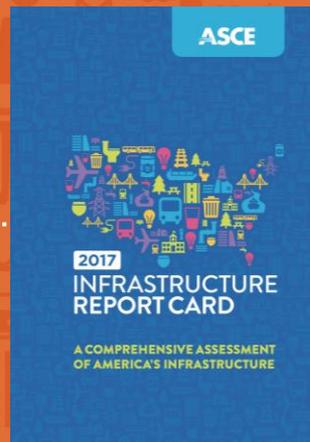
2001



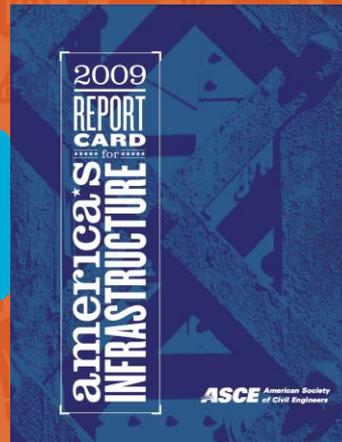
2005



2017



2013



2009



- **Report Cards are advocacy tools.**
  - ASCE's Report Card Program informs lawmakers and the public of the current condition of America's infrastructure.
- **Report Cards are not white papers, asset management tools, or technical papers.**
  - Lawmakers need information that is concise, easy to consume, and actionable.
- **Report Cards are intended for audiences with very little or no background in infrastructure.**



**2021** REPORT CARD  
FOR AMERICA'S INFRASTRUCTURE  
**ASCE**



## FAILURE TO ACT



Economic Impacts of Status Quo  
Investment Across Infrastructure Systems

Our report finds that the over the next 20 years, **the average American household will spend \$3,300 a year** due to infrastructure deficiencies. This lost disposable income comes from the disruptions of inadequate infrastructure **like sitting in traffic, hitting a pothole, power outages, and water main breaks.**

The average AMERICAN HOUSEHOLD LOSES \$63 A WEEK due to CHRONIC UNDERINVESTMENT in infrastructure. What could you buy with \$63 a week, or \$275 a month?



TAKEOUT DINNER  
FOR A FAMILY OF  
FOUR EACH WEEK.



STARTING  
A COLLEGE  
FUND.



DOING A  
HOME RENOVATION  
PROJECT.

# Federal Advocacy

# 2022 Federal Priority Issues



Clean Water, Drinking  
Water, Wastewater



Resilience &  
Sustainability



Cybersecurity



STEM Education &  
Support (K-12)



Natural Hazards Mitigation



Transportation  
Infrastructure



Qualifications-Based  
Selection



Water Resources  
Infrastructure

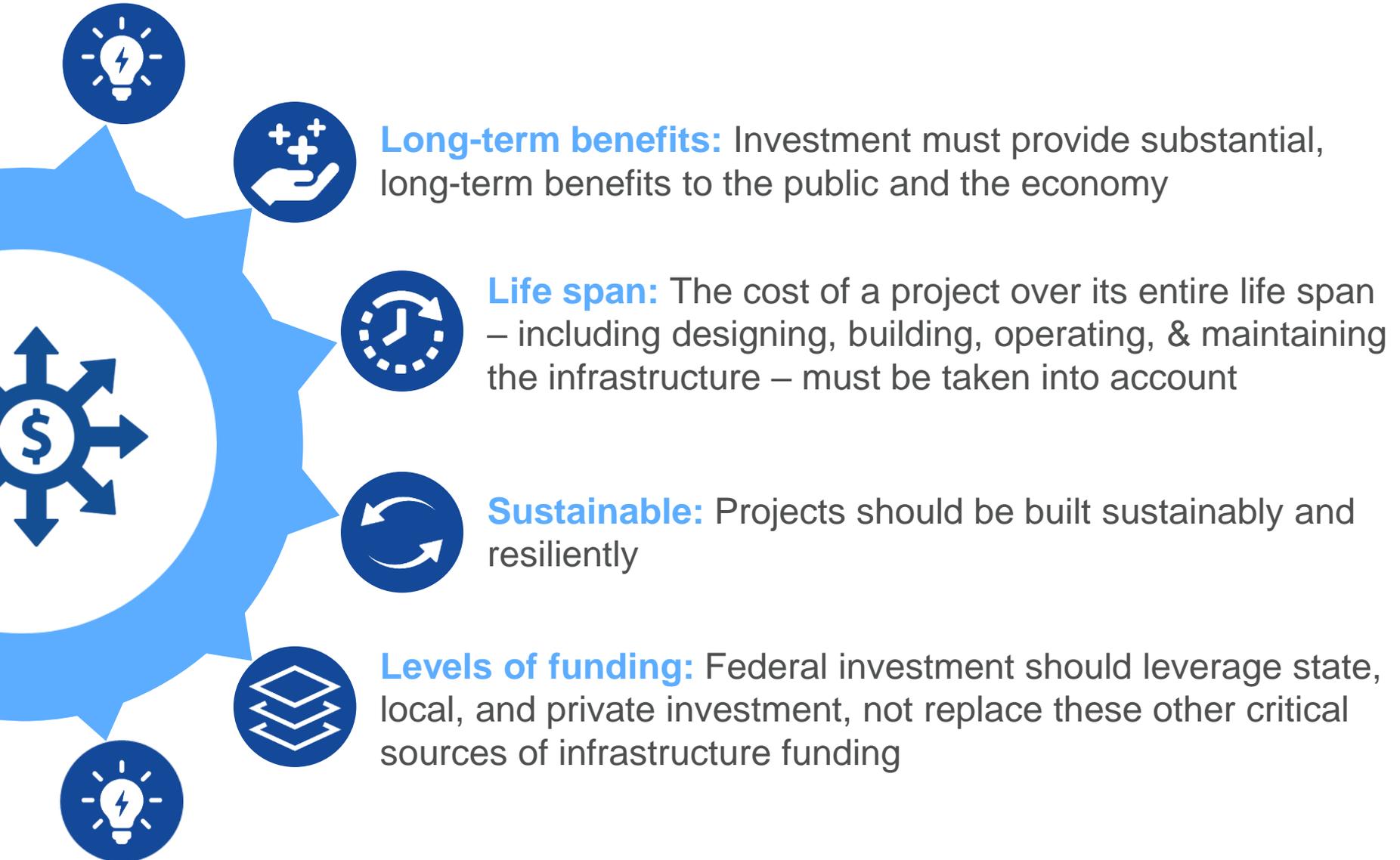


Infrastructure Investment to Stimulate the  
Economy



Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Education,  
Workforce, Planning and Development

# Principles for Infrastructure Investment



# State Government Relations & Licensure

-  Continuing Education & Licensing
-  Cybersecurity
-  **Infrastructure Investment to Stimulate the Economy**
-  **Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Education, Workforce, Planning and Development**
-  Natural Hazards Impact Mitigation
-  Qualifications-Based Selection for engineering services
-  Resilience and Sustainability
-  Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education & support (K-12)
-  State Support for Civil Engineering Higher Education
-  Transportation Infrastructure Investment
-  Water Resources Infrastructure



The debate over the **role of government in regulating** occupations and professions has recently come to the forefront



“Professional” and “occupational” licensure being **discussed in a similar manner**



Organized effort to **introduce model state legislation** around the country to undermine licensure



“Consumer Choice” bills  
Allows for practice without a license if disclosed  
to public



Requires the review and analysis of  
licensure requirements  
With recommendations to remove any  
“unnecessary” requirements



Eliminates specific **occupational** licenses



Increases state oversight of occupational  
regulatory boards



Eliminates the PE licensing board (or cuts  
funding)



Executive orders requiring review of  
licensure requirements  
With recommendations to remove any  
“unnecessary” requirements

## **ARPL:**

- Founding member of Alliance for Responsible Professional Licensure
- New coalition educates policymakers on the critical nature of licensure
- Members include societies for design professionals and their licensing boards

## **Professional Licensure Coalition (PLC)**

- Monitors Federal Legislative & Regulatory activities relating to licensing

## **Design Professionals Licensure Coalition**

- Stakeholders from Engineering and Architecture Societies meet to share information relating to threats in the state

## **Professional Certification Coalition (PCC)**

- Monitors activity in the states relating to non-profit certification programs

# ASCE's Grassroots and Grasstops Programs



## Sections/Branches lead the effort

- Large membership and Governing Structure presents challenges and opportunities for advocacy
- Very few Sections/Branches have any staff or lobbyists



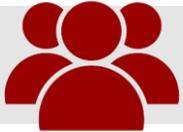
## ASCE relies on volunteers to advocate

- State Government Relations & Grassroots Committee
- Key Contacts
- Advocacy Captains



## Society Staff can provide

- Expertise & Guidance
- Tools & Resources



## Open to all ASCE members

Visit [www.asce.org/keycontacts](http://www.asce.org/keycontacts) or email [govwash@asce.org](mailto:govwash@asce.org)



## Develop relationships with elected officials by:

Writing email messages and/or making phone calls

Making “back home” visits



## Outstanding Civil Engineer Advocate of the Year Award

Individual and Team Award

Nominations due January 2023



## 2023 Fly-in: Mid-March

Application: Deadline Early December 2022

Notifications of acceptance send mid-December 2022

# 2022 Legislative Fly In

225 ASCE Members from 48 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico

231 Congressional meetings

Prominent speakers included:

- Dr. Geraldine Richmond, Undersecretary of Science and Innovation at U.S. Department of Energy
- Senator Rob Portman (R-OH)
- Representative Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ)
- Errol Barnett, Transportation Correspondent, CBS News
- State Transportation secretaries from LA, NH, and GA





# Getting Involved

## Government Relations Protocol when representing ASCE



If you receive a call regarding an ASCE government relations issue from a policymaker that has not been referred by the ASCE Government Relations Department, contact the department



Uncoordinated contact with policymakers may result in incomplete, inappropriate or inaccurate information being disseminated



Contacts with policymakers must be coordinated with ASCE GR Department.

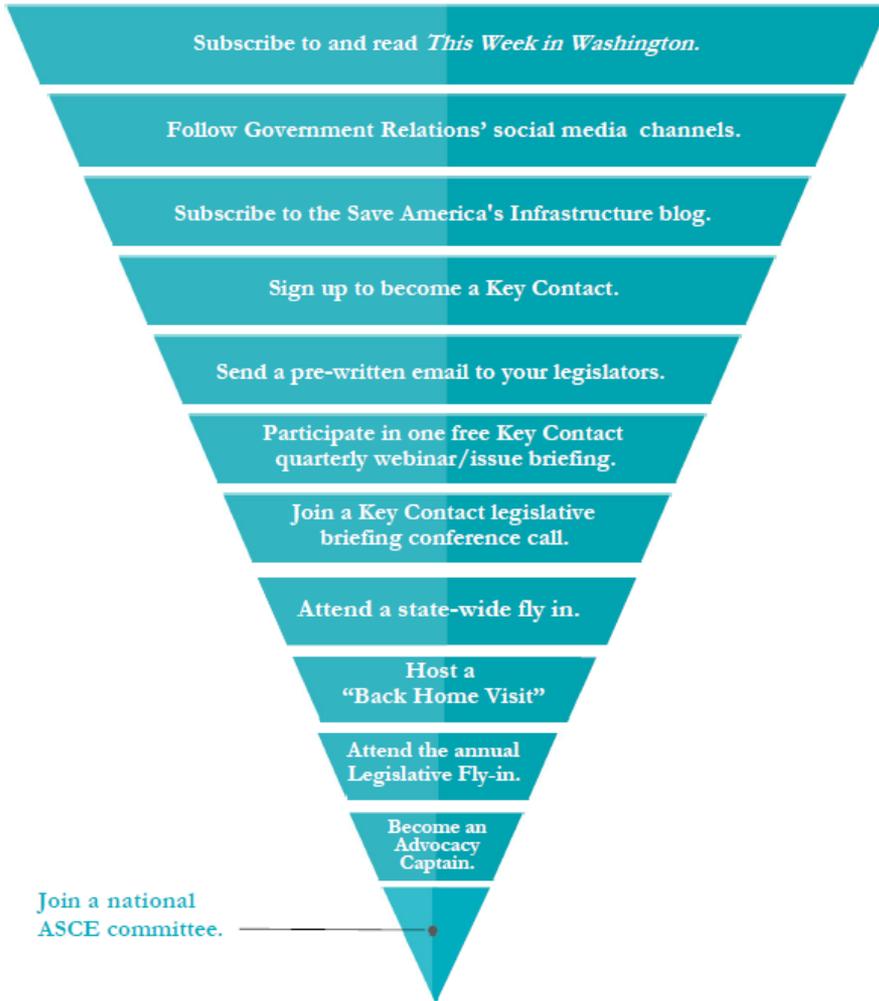


Examples: Comments on rulemaking, requests to speak at events, requests for information from policy makers and regulators



Reach out to [govwash@asce.org](mailto:govwash@asce.org) or 202-789-7845

## Individual Members



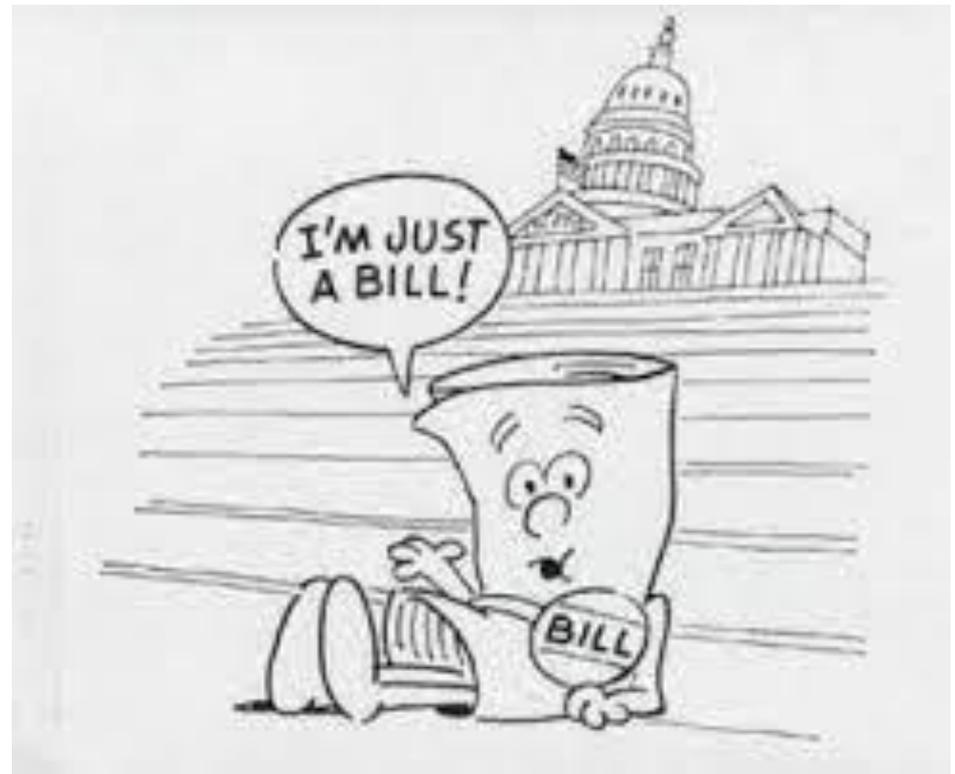
## Region/Section/Branch



# Meeting with Legislators

## Why are Civil Engineers Critical to the Process?

- Advocate for strategic policies that protect public health and safety and improve quality of life
- Encourage the use of innovative and sustainable practices
- Educate policymakers on the impacts of legislative and regulatory proposals to public health and safety, the economy, and the profession

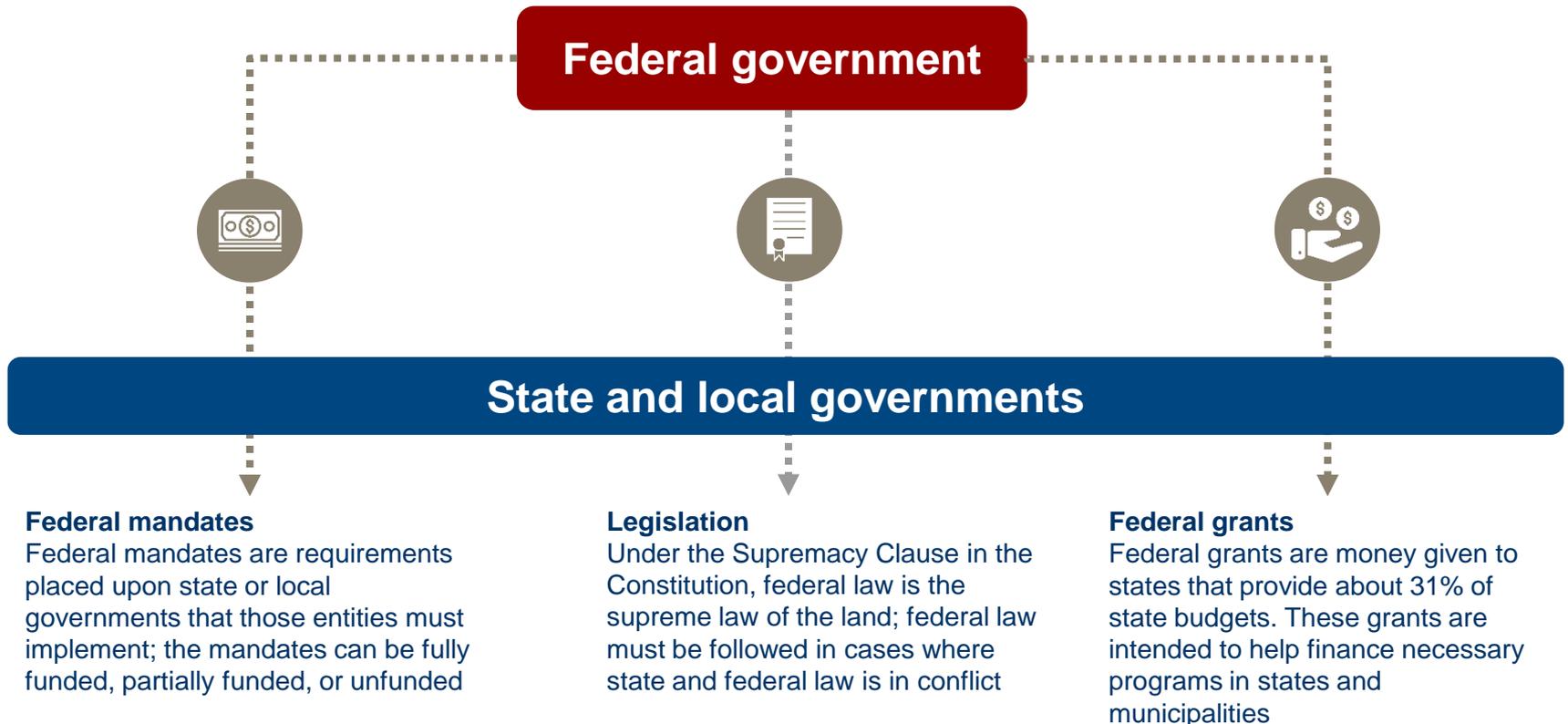


US federalism establishes three levels of government with executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

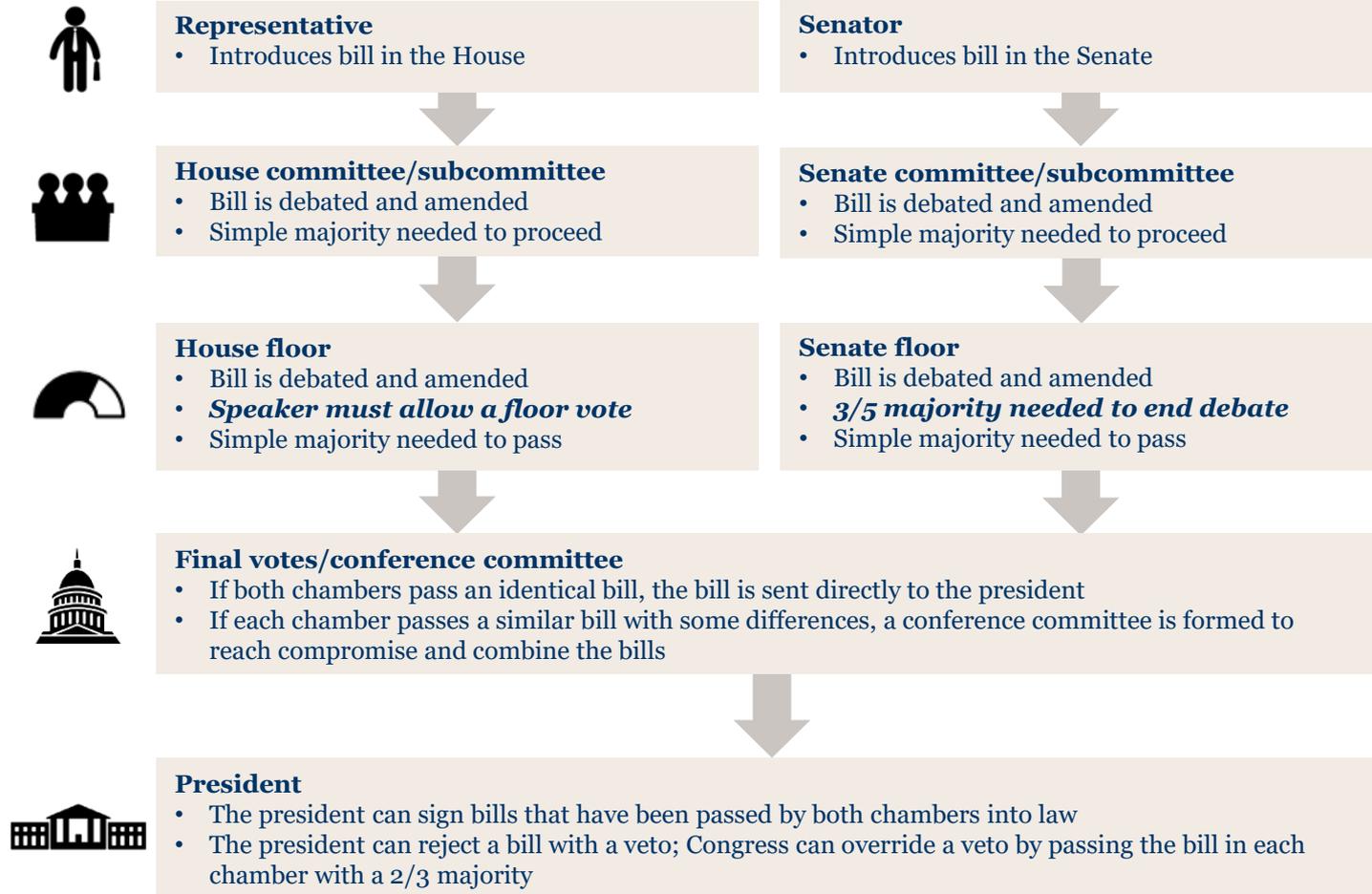
## Overview of the levels of government

Level of government	Executive	Legislative body	Judicial body
 Federal government (United States)	President	Congress: House of Representatives Senate	Supreme Court and federal courts
 State government (50 states)	Governor	State Legislature: State representatives State senators	State Supreme Court
 Local government (counties and municipalities)	Mayor	City Council	State-appointed judges

# How do the levels of government work together?



# How a Bill Becomes a Law



# Florida Legislature

**Current Status:**

In special session

**Regular Session:**

January 11, 2022 - March 14, 2022

**Special Session:**

April 19, 2022 – April 25, 2022

**Carry-over:**

No

**Governor:**

Governor Ron DeSantis

**House Control:**

Republican

**Senate Control:**

Republican

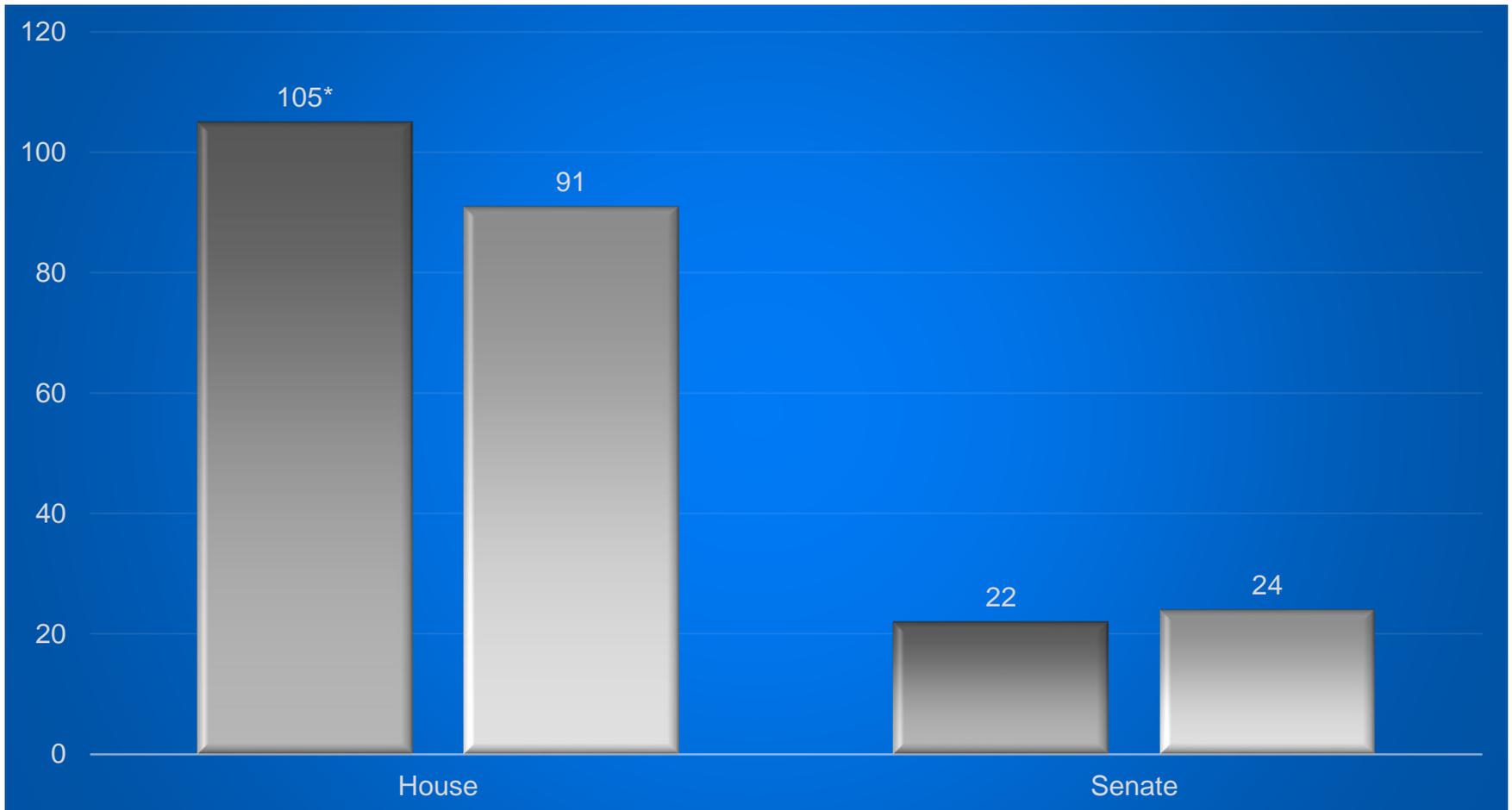
## Senate

- Agriculture - Chair Sen. Darryl Ervin Rouson (D)
- Appropriations – Chair Sen. Kelli Stargel (R)
- Commerce and Tourism - Chair Sen. Ed Hooper (R)
- Education - Chair Sen. Joe Gruters (R)
- Environment and Natural Resources - Chair Sen. Jason Brodeur (R)
- Finance and Tax - Chair Sen. Ana Maria Rodriguez (R)
- Transportation - Chair Sen. Gayle Harrell (R)
- Joint Legislative Budget Commission – Co-Chair Sen. Kelli Stargel (R)

## House

- Appropriations – Chair Rep. Jay Trumbull (R)
- Commerce – Chair Rep. Blaise Ingoglia (R)
- Education & Employment – Chair Rep. Chris Latvala (R)
- Judiciary – Chair Rep. Erin Grall (R)
- State Affairs, Environment, Agriculture & Flooding Subcommittee - Chair Rep. James Buchanan (R)
- Ways and Means – Chair Rep. Bobby Payne (R)
- Joint Legislative Budget Commission – Co-Chair Rep. Jay Trumbull (R)

## 196 House representatives and 46 senators in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress have state government experience



\*Including 1 Independent and 1 New Progressive Party Member

Source: National Conference of State Legislatures



## Members value staying in touch with constituents...

- Constituent conversations guide policymaking
- Reelection hinges on their ability to serve the constituents who vote them into office
- Members trust their staff to help them listen to constituents, so advocates should not be surprised if they meet with staff in lieu of a member



## ...and find personal communications persuasive...

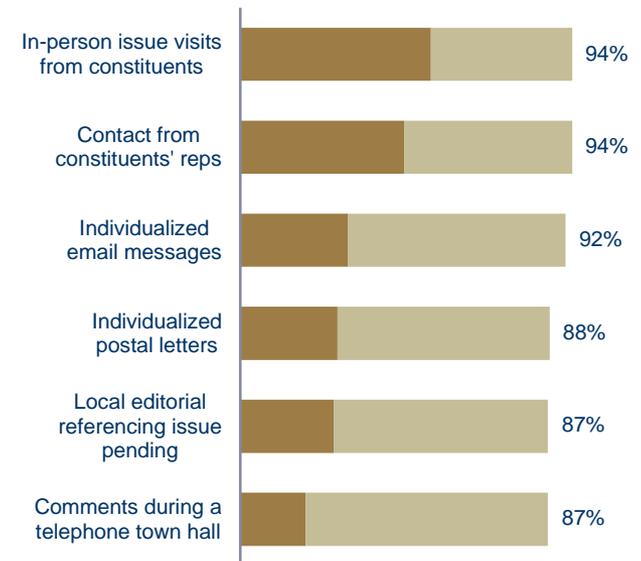
- Individual letters and e-mails can have greater influence on member decision-making than form letters
- Advocates should focus on sending more personal messages to their member of Congress to capture their individual voice or perspective



## ...but visitors with first-hand knowledge of policy impacts are most compelling

### Influence of advocacy strategies directed at a Member's/Senator's Washington office

*\*Asked of Chiefs of Staff, Comms. Directors, Legislative Directors/Assistants*





## #1: Be on time

Arrive no more than 5 minutes before the meeting – Hill offices are too small to accommodate lingering people, and members are rarely available to meet earlier. Inform the scheduler if you are going to be late in case another meeting time must be arranged.



## #2: Be flexible

Prepare to meet with either the member or the member's staff; treat both with equal respect. If the member arrives in the middle of your meeting, continue as usual; the member will ask questions if needed.



## #3: Stay on topic

Raise only the issue you scheduled to discuss with the member and/or the member's staff to keep the meeting focused and persuasive.



## #4: Keep politics out of it

Do not discuss elections or campaign support in your meeting; it intimates that the member is "for sale." Respect the member's political views and relationships outside of the issue at hand.



## #5: Leave information behind

Leave behind a 1-2 page briefing with data points on the issue discussed with the member's office; the document should serve as a helpful resource for staff as the issue moves through Congress.

## Pre-Meeting Huddle

- Arrive 10-15 minutes before
- Review talking points and message; last reminder of who is supposed to do what

## Introductions

- Briefly introduce yourself in terms of your profession, connection to the district, and how many members you represent

## Make Your Request

- Stay on message! Make a clear request to the legislator; ask for a commitment and then listen carefully to the response.

## Post-Meeting Huddle

- Huddle with your team and determine follow-up tasks – especially who will send the formal “thank you” to the legislator

## Thank You

- Thank them for their time! Offer to follow up with additional information

## Give local stories and statistics

- Frame the issue in terms of local stories or statistics that give the leader a reason why they should pay attention and be invested

# Do Your Homework and...Make the Ask!



**#1: Does your story feature a constituent or business from the correct district or state?**

Introduce the geographic connection and convey appreciation.



**#2: Is the issue the story illustrates one that the policymaker is personally interested in?**

Summarize his/her connection to the issue in one sentence.



**#3: Is the story timely or urgent, i.e., because of an upcoming vote or current trend?**

Provide a one-sentence overview of why the story is important now.



**#4: Do you know the name of the staffer? Are you familiar with his/her work?**

Address him/her personally; add one sentence to demonstrate something else you know or appreciate about his/her recent work.



**#5: Is your policy team planning to engage with the legislative staff on the same issue?**

Reference any outreach that has already or will be taking place between your counterparts.



**#6: Is there a microsite/leave behind with more information?**

Provide a one-sentence call-to-action with a description of the kinds of specific information that can be found in the included link or attachment.

- **1 Minute - “The Elevator Pitch”**
  - Brief introduction
  - Explanation of issue and why legislator should care
  - Offer next steps legislator can take – if time allows
  
- **5 Minutes – Add Personal Narrative**
  - Narrative weaving together the constituent’s personal experience and the policy solution under consideration
  
- **15 Minutes – Add “Question & Response”**
  - Invitation for legislator to pose questions and raise concerns
  - Active listening by volunteer to identify opportunities to follow up with policymaker

## Send a thank you message

- Send a follow-up e-mail several days after meeting with a member
- Be brief, thank the office for their time, and remind the office of the issue at hand
- Leave a link to a reliable source of information on the issue for the office to reference

## Attend events in the district

- Attend town hall meetings or other public events in the district to build a stronger relationship with your representative
- Visit with in-district staff to make connections at home.
- Find opportunities to engage in policy matters in the district and serve as trustworthy resource to earn visibility for your issue

## Stay in touch

- **Do not** over-communicate, but **do** pass along new info about your issue as it is released
- Communicate with your representative in a respectful and informative manner to gain the representative's respect—for you and your points of view

## Advocacy fit checklist

- The story represents problems many constituents face – it's not too extreme an example.**

“How does your story represent broader problems within your community?”

- Story is relevant to policymaker and district.**

“How might your neighbors be experiencing similar challenges?”

- Story connects to policy.**

“What are the broader implications of your story?”  
“What really needs to change in your community?”

## Storytelling delivery checklist

- The story made me care.**

What is meaningful? Which emotions does the story stir?

- Language is accessible.**

Remember that staff are not engineers and you will need to use plain language.

- Story is well-articulated.**

Emphasize their feelings and senses (e.g. “I felt...” and “the water was ice-cold...”).

- Story is well-paced.**

Prepare a 1-minute, 5-minute, and 15-minute version.

Next Steps

# What Can You Do Next?



Take Action on Key Alerts



Read *This Week In Washington*



Host a State Legislative Day



Engage/Monitor the PE Board



Select/Nominate an Advocacy Captain



Incorporate Government Relations into Chapter Meetings



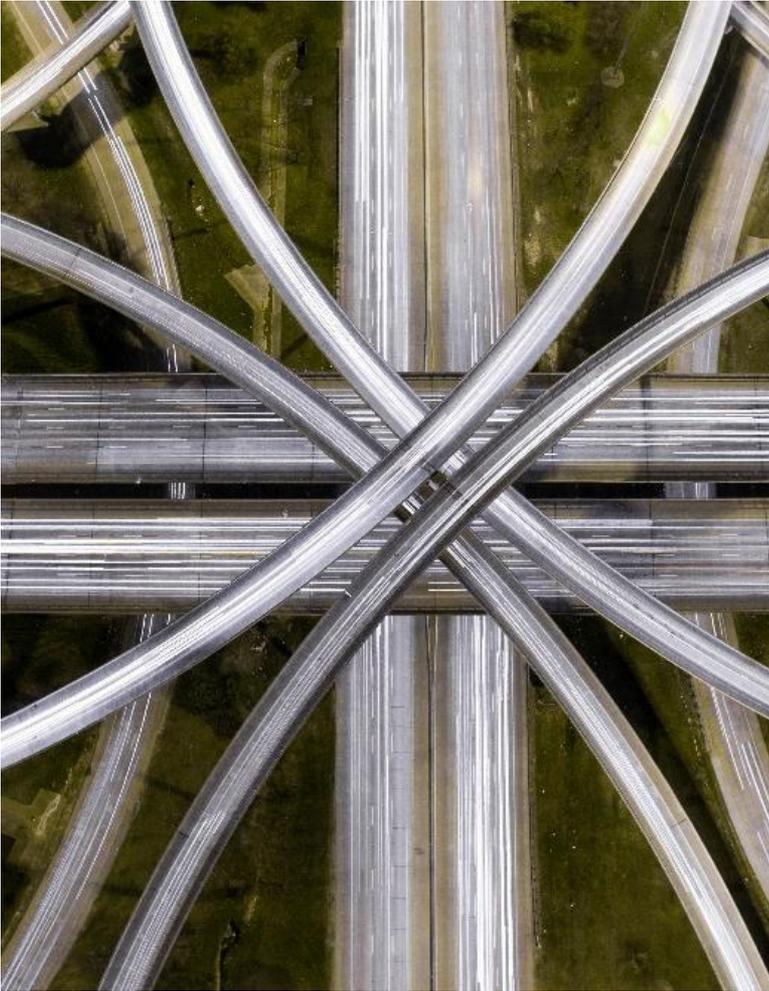
Link to Your State's Legislative Tracking Page

# Gas Prices Relief Act: Background

- The Senate introduced the Gas Prices Relief Act (S.3609) on February 9.
- The House introduced companion legislation (H.R. 6787) on February 18.
- The legislation would suspend the current 18.4 cents-per-gallon federal gasoline tax through until January 1, 2023.
- The purpose of this bill is to address concerns about inflation and the rising cost of gasoline.



# Gas Prices Relief Act: ASCE Position



- ASCE strongly opposes this legislation.
- The federal fuel tax is a modest and reliable source of revenue.
- A “holiday” would mean a \$20 billion blow to the Highway Trust Fund.
- The gas tax suspension wouldn’t guarantee savings for consumers.
- Pausing the gas tax would set an irresponsible precedent.

