

CONGRESSIONAL MEETING GUIDELINES

1. **Contacting your Senator and Representative:**
 - a. **The most effective time to meet with your Representative or Senator is when they are in their home district.** There is a greater likelihood the member will personally be there and will be more focused on local constituents and concerns. Enclosed in this toolkit is a list of the 2015 dates when members are likely to be in their districts.
 - b. **If you are planning on being in Washington DC, we suggest you try to meet with your legislators.** In this case please contact Angela Jackson, angela@portlandseedfund.com, or Linda Smith, LLSmith2650@aol.com of ACA. We will connect you with Eris Group, our lobbying firm in Washington which will help you get meetings schedules with your respective legislators.
2. **Timing and length of meeting:** Members of Congress have many demands on their schedules. We suggest asking for a 15-30 minute meeting, showing you respect the demands on the Member's time and can convey your concerns succinctly. Often you will get more time, but plan to keep your pitch short.
3. **Key "asks" during this meeting:** In this toolkit you will find suggested talking points for meeting with Members of Congress. It is helpful to be clear on your "asks"—what bills you want them to co-sponsor, introduce, or support and that you would like them to contact the SEC regarding verifying and expanding the Accredited Investor Definition.

We have included a three-page handout prepared by ACA titled "Angel Investing: Key to US Jobs and Economic Health" that you can give to the Congressional Member and his/her staff to re-enforce your talking points. Your focus is to ensure the Member of Congress is *personally* knowledgeable about the public policy issues effecting start-up, innovative companies and angel investors like you who support them.

Some of the points you may want to cover:

- A. **What is an angel investor**
 - B. **What is ACA (Angel Capital Association)**
 - C. **Impact of angel investors on the economy and job creation**
 - D. **Examples of familiar companies angels have supported (Google, Starbucks, Home Depot)**
 - E. **Examples of two to three companies in your state or locale that have benefited from Angel investing**
 - F. **Summarize the three policy issues: Retaining the current Accredited Angel definition, refining the SEC ruling on General Solicitation, and improving and extending the capital gains tax exemption for Qualified Small Business Stock**
4. **What to Ask For:** Inform the Member of Congress you would appreciate their help on three things:

- A. Send a letter or meet with the SEC asking the Commission to keep the current definition of Accredited Investor. Give them a hard copy of the draft Congressional letter included in this toolkit and e-mail a copy to his/her staff who sit in on the meeting.
- B. Support legislation that would clarify for the SEC what constitutes a General Solicitation (Ask them to co-sponsor or agree to vote for the HALOS Act)
- C. Support passage of the 100% capital gains tax exemption for 2015 and preferably a multi-year extension with a decrease in the investment holding period to 2 years and the inclusion of LLCs (limited liability corporations)

5. **“Bring it Home” by bringing entrepreneurs:** The most effective in-district meetings include representatives of companies located in the legislator’s district. Ask them to share their story of why Angel investing was important to their efforts. Legislators want examples, stories, and their ramifications in addition to any facts and data you provide. Bringing it home to the Congressman by showing them real-life people with personal stories to tell can be the best way to cement your relationship.

6. **Wrap-up:** If there is enough time, indicate who is “on the other side” (State Securities Commissioners, consumer advocates, AARP) and why their concerns should not apply to Angels who are risking their own money, not other people’s funds.

7. **Follow-up:** Get the name and e-mail address (or exchange business cards) with the staff person who sits in on the meeting. Ask for the name and contact information for the staff person in Wash. DC who handles SEC issues for the member of Congress. We suggest sending a “thank-you” e-mail within a day or two to the Congressperson expressing appreciation for the meeting and reiterating your discussion; copy in the staff person. Periodically request updates, perhaps by e-mail follow-ups to the staff person.

8. **Other suggested grassroots activities:** It is helpful to find other opportunities to interact with the Member of Congress such as town-hall forums, community meetings, church events, picnics, parades, or similar home district venues. Because Members of Congress meet so many citizens and deal with numerous issues, it is usually helpful to re-introduce yourself and remind the member about your meeting on Angel investing.

Consider submitting a letter to the editor or op-ed in the local newspapers about legislative issues and the needs of the district. Use local media to increase awareness about the linkages between Angel investing, job creation, and economic growth. Members of Congress and their staffs monitor the local media and will also connect your name with these issues.

Befriend the Member through the various social media channels, such as Facebook.

Invite the Congressperson to speak to your Angel Group or other community-based groups that you are active in. Legislators appreciate the opportunity.

Consider attending local fund-raising events on behalf of the members. It is okay to be bi-partisan and attend events for both political parties.

9. **Some cautions to consider:** If you are a personal friend and/or know the member well you may want to address them in an informal manner. Otherwise we suggest using their formal title of Senator or

Representative during your first meetings. It is probably best not to start by telling them you have contributed to their campaign. Do tell them that you enjoyed meeting them at (insert the location when you last saw them). When you bring an entrepreneur, know what that person will say and it is wise to steer clear of entrepreneurs who has prominently supported an opposing candidate.

10. **Give us your feedback:** The ACA Public Policy Committee and staff would welcome your comments on what meetings you arranged and the responses from your Members of Congress.