

ATTENDING FUNDRAISERS ON BEHALF OF THE PAC

Why Your Participation is Important

As a PAC contributor, your involvement is critical to the PAC's success. You represent our profession, and as a supporter of our political efforts, you should also represent our PAC. Thank you for taking the time to elevate our voice.

While our Washington lobbying team works to build strong relationships with candidates, you have the opportunity to have a tremendous impact on these efforts. As a constituent and representative of the PAC, your presence at a candidate fundraising event demonstrates our commitment to a candidate. Since candidates often have more time at in-district fundraisers, it is also a chance to have meaningful conversations. These conversations are meant to introduce the candidate to our profession and who we represent. As a member of this profession, the information you share will be memorable and provide lasting impact.

Candidate Events: What to Expect

Candidates' fundraising events are great opportunities to educate office-seekers on our profession. **Fundraising events are not a venue to ask for legislative support.** Instead, they provide a forum to share information on what our profession does, how many constituents we represent and what our key issues of importance are, as well as a chance to connect with candidates on a more personal level.

Events can range from a handful of attendees to a large reception. In either case, you should feel comfortable talking to the candidate and his/her staff. To help in this effort, consider researching these items before you attend the event:

- Basic facts about your candidate. Understand the district they are seeking to represent and their professional background, as well as their general opinions on key campaign issues. Check their campaign page or, if an incumbent, their congressional bio.
- Candidates' interests to identify a personal connection, shared hobby or passion or community connection. Politics is a personal business. Don't underestimate the value of a mutual connection as an icebreaker.
- Current status of our organization's annual policy priorities (you can find this information here [\[link\]](#)). This will prove helpful should discussion of issue priorities arise.

Approach the event as a relationship building exercise, rather than viewing it as conducting a transaction. Finally, remember that, in addition to being a representative of the PAC, you are also a potential voter. Candidates and their staff will welcome you and the chance to talk with you.

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Dos & Don'ts for Attending Fundraisers

DO:

- Be flexible. Candidates for Congress have busy schedules. As such, they may need to arrive late or leave early. Take advantage of your time with the candidate, no matter how limited.
- Connect with staff! Staff are an integral part to any candidate's efforts. Staff members are important to build relationships with, so take time to talk with them. Exchange business cards and offer to be of service should they ever have questions on our organization's priorities.
- Take the time to introduce yourself, your title and place of practice. Also identify yourself as a constituent and mention that you are there on behalf of our PAC.
- Stay friendly and positive, regardless of whether you are a member of the same political party.
- Emphasize general issues of importance to our industry. While you should avoid talking about specific legislation, this is a great opportunity to use personal stories to highlight our policy priorities.
- Be respectful of the candidate's time. Don't monopolize a candidate to the detriment of other attendees.
- Dress appropriately for the occasion, as indicated on the invitation. When in doubt, err on the side of caution and wear business attire.

DON'T:

- Be nervous. They want to know you. You are a potential voter, after all!
- Suggest in any way that the contribution is in return for any previous or future legislative action.
- Characterize the PAC contribution as a tool that will help you/our organization gain future access to the candidate.
- Offer any endorsement of the candidate on behalf of our organization. PAC contributions do not equate to an official endorsement.
- Promise future contributions from the PAC.
- Be confrontational or argumentative with the candidate or a member of their staff.
- Fake an answer to a question you are unsure of. Promise to get back to them if they have specific questions. The PAC's staff will be happy to follow-up.
- Become too casual in your conversation or forget to use proper names and titles.
- Assume your colleagues or family members can attend with you. Generally, the cost to attend covers one person. Our national PAC staff will indicate if other individuals can attend with you.