

# A BUSINESS LEADER'S GUIDE TO Congressional CTE Advocacy

Policymakers want to hear from employers and business leaders in their districts, and your voice can help support CTE!

## ENGAGING POLICY- MAKERS:



### Introduce Yourself

Schedule an initial meeting or contact with your Member of Congress or their staff to introduce yourself, your business, your education partners, your business' impact on the state's economy, and your major policy issues such as the skills shortage, workforce development initiatives, funding for training programs or any other issues affecting CTE and your business.



### Provide an Opportunity to See Your Business Firsthand

Organize a tour of your business, a visit to a worksite or a product/service demonstration. This is your opportunity to provide your Member of Congress with a deeper understanding of your business and industry. These events can generate local news coverage, present photo opportunities and provide real examples for policymakers who may not be familiar with your work. These tours can also be used to highlight current employees who have come through CTE programs.



### Continue to Build the Relationship



Building a relationship based on regular communication builds trust and ensures your voice will be heard! Ideas include:

- **Weigh in on important policy issues.** Call or write your Member when important education and workforce development issues arise. ACTE's Legislative Alerts provide step-by-step instructions and talking points.
- **Attend town hall meetings and community events.** Even if you don't participate in a public discussion, these opportunities can provide you with an opportunity to speak individually before or afterwards with policymakers or their staff.
- **Join a formal feedback group or council.** Many Members of Congress have advisory councils focused on specific issues and composed of leaders within their states or districts.
- **Write in the local paper.** Writing letters to the editor or op-eds can be an effective way to spread the positive CTE message to Members of Congress.
- **Join a professional organization.** Local, state and national organizations can offer opportunities to advocate with like-minded colleagues and for face-time with local policymakers.



## GENERAL TIPS

- In any communication, be sure to share:
  - ✓ the name, location and a brief overview of your business
  - ✓ how many people your business employs
  - ✓ your position
  - ✓ the education and skills your employees need
  - ✓ how specific policies could impact your business
  - ✓ how Congress can further support your business
- Members of Congress have one office in D.C. and most have multiple offices in their district or state. Often, starting with a district/state office is best if you are setting up an initial meeting or business tour. Later, you should connect with the D.C. office to weigh in on specific policy issues, but your local contacts can help direct your inquiry.
- Locate your elected officials here: [www.congressweb.com/acte](http://www.congressweb.com/acte)

For more information on congressional advocacy, including more detailed tips, resources and talking points, visit [www.acteonline.org/advocacy](http://www.acteonline.org/advocacy).