



EMS
On The Hill Day

Welcome Guide



HOSTED BY

NAEMT

Advancing the EMS profession



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Dear EMS Professional,

Democrat, Republican or Independent – all members of Congress must understand what EMS does and the value EMS professionals bring to our nation.

Why does that matter? Educating elected officials and those who work for them about EMS ensures that federal legislation benefits EMS practitioners, our patients, and our communities.

NAEMT has had the honor of hosting EMS On The Hill Day since 2010. It's the only national advocacy event that brings together practitioners from all types of EMS agencies, and includes a diverse cross section of the EMS workforce – EMTs, paramedics, educators, medical directors, EMS and fire chiefs and CEOs.

We're very proud of what participants have accomplished over the last 10 years. EMS practitioners from nearly every state have held hundreds of meetings with legislators and their staff. Participants have raised awareness on Capitol Hill about the essential role of EMS across communities large and small, and about the challenges we continue to face in bringing the best patient care to those in need.

EMS On The Hill Day participants have contributed to building support for several major legislative victories – including the Patient Access to Emergency Medications Act, and funding for the Supporting and Improving Rural EMS Needs (SIREN) Act.

Eleven EMS bills that were advocated for during EMS On The Hill Day have been passed into law.

But there's a great saying by J.J. Watt, the NFL football defensive end: "Success isn't owned. It's leased, and rent is due everyday." For us, that means that we must continue to be that vocal and passionate force on Capitol Hill every year. We have to demonstrate our unity as a profession and our commitment to making sure all of our EMS brothers and sisters have the training and resources needed to take care of their patients, in all types of circumstances.

Through advocacy, we are working toward making sure legislation is passed that keeps EMS practitioners safe, supports them in maintaining their own mental and physical well-being, and ensures they are prepared to respond to mass casualty and other disasters. We want EMS practitioners to have the training and equipment to provide optimal care for the sick or injured, and to receive pay that reflects the value EMS brings to the healthcare system.

EMS practitioners need to make sure Congress hears our concerns and our message.

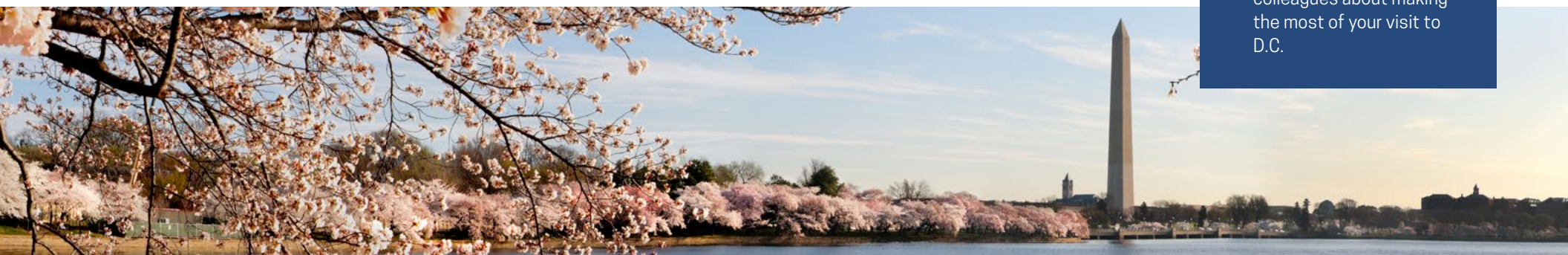
We hope you'll join us!

EMS On The Hill Day participants receive:

- An insider's view of the legislative process, Congressional offices and Capitol Hill.
- The experience of joining forces with EMS colleagues who care deeply about EMS and its future.
- The opportunity to make a difference.

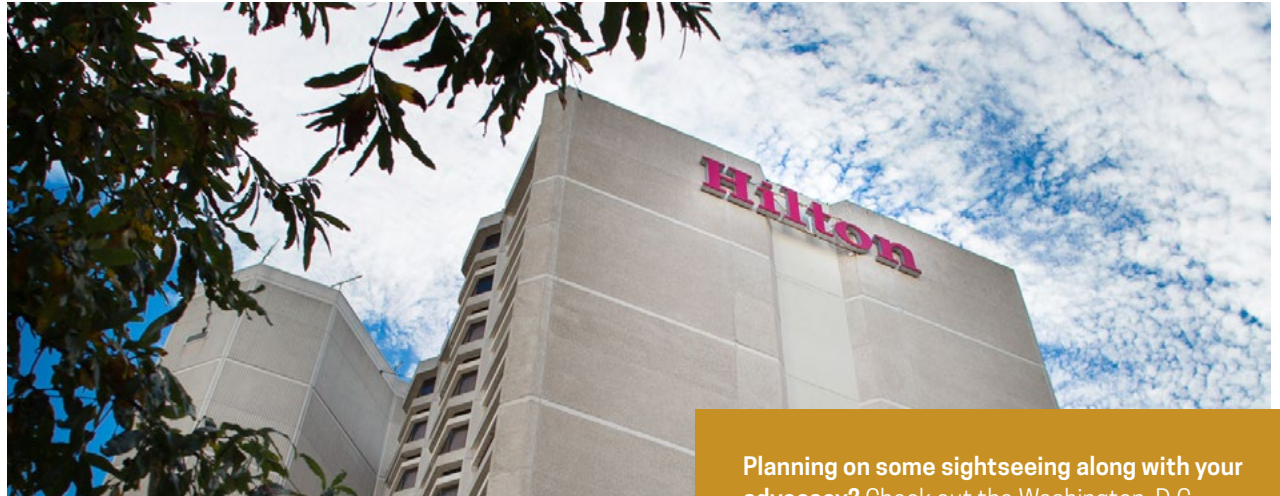
Many EMS professionals are far more comfortable navigating the roads of their local communities than the hallways of Capitol Hill. Please use this guide to find out what to expect during EMS On The Hill Day, including:

- Planning your visit.
- Tips for getting around Capitol Hill.
- Strategies for having effective meetings with members of Congress.
- Ideas from your EMS colleagues about making the most of your visit to D.C.



Budgeting and Planning For Your Trip

EMS On The Hill Day could not happen without the hundreds of dedicated EMS professionals who take time out of their busy schedules to travel to Washington, D.C. Especially if you're going to ask your employer or your EMS association to sponsor your trip, be prepared to provide information about the estimated costs.



Planning on some sightseeing along with your advocacy? [Check out the Washington, D.C. visitor's guide.](#)

Registration

[Registering](#) for EMS On the Hill Day costs \$20. The deadline is March 1, 2020. Be sure to use your home address so we can schedule a meeting with the representative from your district.

Hotel

\$229 + tax at the host hotel, Hilton Crystal City at Washington Reagan National Airport, Arlington, VA. [Reservations can be made online](#) or by calling 703-418-6800 or 800-695-7551. To receive the discounted room rate, please enter Group Code NMT. Please book your hotel room now as the special room rate is limited and only available until the group block is sold out. *Do I have to stay here?* No, but events and networking will happen here.

Meals

There are several restaurants within walking distance of the hotel. Another fun option is to take Uber or Lyft to nearby Georgetown. The front desk can give you a list of restaurants.

Local Transportation

A taxi to Capitol Hill is about \$15 to \$20. You can also walk or take a hotel shuttle to the Metro station, about three blocks away or a 7-minute walk. From

there, take the Blue or the Yellow line to the Capitol stop. Cost is \$3 to \$5. [Here's a rail map.](#)

Transportation From Airport

Uber and Lyft pick up from all area airports. Other options include:

From Reagan National Airport to host hotel:

The hotel runs a free shuttle until midnight. Call 703-418-6800 when you arrive.

From Dulles Airport to host hotel: A taxi from Dulles International Airport runs about \$60 to \$80. An airport shuttle to the hotel is about \$40.

From Baltimore Washington International to hotel: Catch a free Amtrak or MARC shuttle outside BWI airport baggage claim to the Amtrak/ BWI Marshall Rail Station. Amtrak trains (\$11 to \$30) and MARC (\$6) leave every 30 minutes to Union Station, about a half hour ride. At Union Station, take the Metro or get a cab to the hotel. SuperShuttle is another option.



Prepping For The Big Day

Before you arrive in D.C., we recommend spending a little time getting ready for your meetings on Capitol Hill.

1 Familiarize yourself with the EMS On The Hill Day legislative requests to Congress. Each year, NAEMT, in consultation with other national EMS organizations, determines which legislative requests to Congress will be included as part of EMS On The Hill Day. You will be provided with background documents on the legislative requests at least two weeks prior to EMS On The Hill Day.

One of the goals of the event is to present a consistent message to Congressional leaders, so participants are asked to only discuss the bills selected for EMS On The Hill Day.

2 Think of a good story. A powerful way to connect with members of Congress is to share a personal story about your experiences on the job. Give some thought to an anecdote you'd like to share. A few ideas:

- A CPR save or a meaningful interaction with a patient to illustrate the critical role of EMS in the community.
- A situation in which your EMS agency struggled for resources necessary for patient care. Connect this back to the legislative request.
- If your organization is developing a mobile integrated healthcare or community paramedicine program, share what you're doing, and connect it to the legislative requests.

3 Watch the video, *How to have a Successful Meeting with your Elected Officials*. Never met with a Senator or Representative before? [This video offers tips on what to expect.](#)



It's very important that we tell our stories to our elected officials so that they will value the tremendous service we provide to our communities. EMS straddles both the public safety and healthcare worlds. It's important that our leaders understand our role in protecting our communities while also serving to improve public health.

KEVIN SPRATLIN
Lieutenant, Healthcare Navigator Program, Memphis Fire Department

Welcome to D.C. (and Arlington, VA)

Please join us at the Hilton Crystal City for the Hill Day Briefing in the Virginia Ballroom. You'll be seated at a table with other EMS professionals from your state or nearby states. Use this time to get to know one another! You'll be spending some quality time together the next day, when you head to Capitol Hill.



Welcome Reception and Hill Day Briefing

Hilton Crystal City
2399 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Arlington, VA 22202

The Agenda

Update On the 117th Congress: The briefing will include speakers who will familiarize you with hot topics in Congress, and how the prevailing mood and current balance of political power may impact our legislative priorities.

Review the Requests to Congress:

The briefing will also include the most up-to-date information about legislative requests.

TIP

The briefing will cover a lot of information quickly. Don't be intimidated. EMS On The Hill Day participants are not professional lobbyists and are not expected to be. The greatest knowledge you bring is your expertise as an EMS professional!

Getting Your Schedule

No need for you to worry about scheduling appointments with lawmakers. NAEMT works with a Congressional scheduling firm to book Hill Day appointments with Representatives and Senators from your state. Some attendees have inquired whether schedules can be given out further in advance. In short, *no*. Members of Congress can be hard to pin down and their schedules change frequently. So the last few days before the Hill Day visit is a flurry of activity for the schedulers as they finalize appointments. During EMS On The Hill Day, please do your best to stick to your schedule and make it to appointments on time!

TIP

When you find out who you'll be meeting with, fire up your smartphone and Google them. Look for things you have in common with them, such as a military background, or for a connection they might have to EMS, such as a medical background. Also consider if they're Democrat or Republican, which may influence their point of view and prepare you for the types of questions they or their staff may ask.

Other Helpful Materials

Your briefing packet will also contain a map. Take this with you to help you and your delegation navigate Capitol Hill. You'll also get "leave-behind" materials that contain information to hand to lawmakers and their staff at your meetings about this year's legislative requests, and fact sheets about EMS and the EMS Caucus.

TIP

The white domed Capitol building, which houses the chambers where votes are held, is the most distinctive of the dozen or so buildings that comprise the Capitol Complex. You'll spend most of your day in nearby buildings that house the Congressional offices, including the Hart and Russell Senate Office Buildings and the Rayburn House Office Building.

Visiting Capitol Hill

Tips for Getting There and Getting Around

You've read up on the legislative requests. You've been briefed on the priorities of the new Congress. You've got your schedule, your map and your peeps (by that we mean, your state delegation.)

Still have questions? Here are answers.



Q. How do I get from the host hotel to Capitol Hill?

A taxi to Capitol Hill is about \$15 to \$20. You can also walk or take a hotel shuttle to the Metro station, about three blocks away. From there, take the Blue or the Yellow line to the Capitol stop. Cost is \$3 to \$5. [Here's a rail map.](#)

Q. Will I have to find my way around on my own?

No. You'll be paired with others from your state. If you're a first-timer and you're the only one from your state, you'll be paired with someone from a nearby state who has attended before.

Q. What should I wear?

Your dress EMS uniform, which conveys strength, authority and your important role as a responder, is a good option. Otherwise, dress on Capitol Hill is business professional — suits and ties. Above all, **wear comfortable shoes!** Expect to walk a lot.

Q. What should I bring?

- ✓ A valid ID, such as your driver's license.
- ✓ A stack of business cards. Give these to everyone you meet.
- ✓ Your map, leave-behind folders and talking points from the briefing.

- ✓ A small notepad to jot down any questions you're asked that you want to follow-up on or ask NAEMT to follow-up on.
- ✓ A camera or a smart phone for taking pictures to share on NAEMT's Facebook page and Twitter, on your personal or advocacy coordinator Facebook page, with your local newspaper, with your employer back home, and with NAEMT to be included in the EMS On The Hill Day gallery on NAEMT's website. You're doing important work – make sure your EMS colleagues and your community know about it!

Q. What shouldn't I bring?

Contraband, like granola bars. You may be surprised that no food or drinks can be brought into Capitol Hill buildings. Your bag will be searched by security when you enter and guards will confiscate that water bottle and snack.



FUN FACT

You don't have to go outside to get from building to building on Capitol Hill. The Capitol and nearby Congressional offices are connected via underground tunnels. Just head down the elevators to the bottom floor and follow the signs. You may even get to hitch a ride on the Capitol's private subway, which connects the House and Senate Office Buildings.

Visiting Capitol Hill

Continued...

Q. How will I figure out where to go once on Capitol Hill?

Check your map to find the building where your meeting will be held. Once inside, room numbers are well marked. But when in doubt, *ask!* All those young people scurrying around are staffers and interns who will be happy to direct you.

Q. Where's lunch?

There are cafeterias in the basements of the Capitol Hill office buildings where you'll have your meetings. Look for signs or follow the scent of the French fries. You should have a break between meetings at some point midday when you can grab a burger.

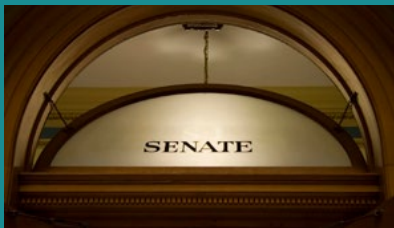
Q. How do I address a Senator or Representative?

In conversation, it's appropriate to address them by any of the following: Senator (name), Representative (name), or Congressman/Congresswoman (name).

Q. What do I do if I have time between meetings?

If there's a break in your schedule, try to make it to the group photo on the Capitol steps. (Not everyone will get there. The priority is meeting with as many elected officials and staff members as you can, so your meetings may conflict.)

You're also welcome to stop by the offices of legislators who are not on your schedule to drop off a folder and your business card. You might get lucky and he or she may happen to be in their office and will take a few moments to talk with you. (If a member of your delegation is a constituent, mention it to the receptionist.)



FUN FACT

Capitol Hill offices have Senators-only and Representatives-only elevators, supposedly off-limits to the unelected. But in recent years, members of Congress have griped that interlopers are ignoring the tradition and crowding onboard! Unless you don't mind being sniffed at by a grumpy Senator, stick to the public lifts.

What to Expect During Your Meetings

Never chatted with a member of Congress before? Here's what to expect during your EMS On The Hill Day meetings.

1. You may meet with either the elected official and/or a staff member, such as a legislative assistant who specializes in healthcare issues. Legislative assistants are valuable contacts to have because their job is to inform and advise the Representative or Senator about the issues and pending legislation.

2. Meetings may last a few minutes or up to 20. Be concise and make sure to hit your key points.



3. Remember “the ask.” Be specific about what you'd like from them. Ask if they would be willing to co-sponsor our legislative requests and join the Congressional EMS Caucus. If they are already co-sponsors and members of the Caucus, please thank them for their support.

4. They may ask questions that you don't have answers for. None of us are legislative policy experts! Jot down their questions and send them to advocacy@naemt.org. NAEMT will follow up with the member of Congress to get them answers.

After Your Capitol Hill Meetings

Please join us for a post Hill visits reception at the Hilton Crystal City! After your last meetings wrap up, head back to the hotel to meet fellow advocates, discuss your experiences and enjoy refreshments and NAEMT hospitality. The Legislator of the Year and the Advocates of the Year awards will be presented.

5. Take a picture. Ask if the member of Congress would pose for a photo with you. Email it to media@naemt.org. Tell us who's in the picture and we'll post it on social media and in the NAEMT EMS On The Hill Day photo gallery.

6. Speak from the heart. Every EMS practitioner has stories to tell. This is a chance to share yours.

7. Follow up. Email a quick thank you note to each person you meet with and ask if they need any additional information. EMS On The Hill Day is important, but advocacy is a process, so keeping in touch with legislators and staff matters too!



To be in the Capitol, advocating for issues that are important to our profession is an experience I will carry with me my whole life.

KATE LAMBERT

Prehospital Care Coordinator, West Penn Hospital, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Glossary of Key Terms

Bill — Legislative proposal before Congress. Also known as a *measure*, *proposal* or *legislation*.

Why does this matter? When meeting with lawmakers or Congressional staff, we will typically advocate for a specific bill.

Bill Sponsor — U.S. Senator or Representative who introduces a bill and is its chief advocate in Congress.

Why does this matter? When you meet with Congressional staff, you may be asked who is the bill's sponsor.

Bipartisan — Agreement or cooperation between Democrats and Republicans in support of a bill.

Why does this matter? Democrats control the House, while Republicans control the Senate. With a divided government, a bill needs bipartisan support to pass.

Chamber — Congress is made up of two chambers: the House and the Senate. The term “chamber” originally referred to the two rooms of the Capitol in which the House of Representatives and the Senate met.

Why does this matter? The Senate and House have their own respective procedures and rules.

Co-sponsor — Senators or Representatives who add their name to a bill to indicate support.

Why does this matter? One of our goals during EMS On The Hill Day is to seek more co-sponsors for the legislation important to EMS to demonstrate bipartisan and widespread support.

Committees — The workhorses of Congress, where much of the detailed legislative work occurs. Committees and their subcommittees examine measures during hearings and modify, accept, or reject them during “markup.” Members of Congress typically serve on more than one committee and on several subcommittees.

Why does this matter? Committees play a key role in the movement of a bill through Congress. There are 20 House committees and 3 special committees; 21 Senate committees; and 5 joint committees, which each have jurisdiction over different areas of public policy – for example, Budget, Homeland Security, Veteran’s Affairs, and Ways and Means. Each committee has multiple subcommittees. For example, both the House Ways and Means Committee and the Energy and Commerce Committee have a Subcommittee on Health, while the Homeland Security Committee has a Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications. On occasion, special and select committees are established to investigate specific questions.

Companion Bills — Comparable bills introduced in both chambers with similar language. Designation of bills as “companions” generally indicates some cooperation between their sponsors.

Why does this matter? Many of the bills we support have companion bills in the House or Senate.

Conference — Selected members of the House and Senate who meet to resolve differences between two versions of a bill. Members of the conference often are referred to as *managers* or *conferees*.

Why does this matter? Conference works out the differences and/or finds compromises.



Walking the halls of Congress was one of the best experiences I have ever had. A person might think it will be intimidating, but it's not. It's inspiring.

MARK BABSON
Paramedic, Ada County Paramedics, Idaho

Glossary of Key Terms Continued...

Congressional Caucus — A group of members of Congress who have agreed to pay extra attention to a particular issue or subject. The U.S. House of Representatives has an EMS Caucus; there is no EMS Caucus in the Senate. (The House has far more caucuses than the Senate.)

Why does this matter? One goal of EMS On The Hill Day is to invite more members of Congress to join the EMS Caucus.

Congressional D.C. Office — All members of Congress have an office in the Capitol Complex in Washington, D.C. The staff at Congressional D.C. offices focuses on policy and legislation from a national perspective.

What does this matter? These are the offices and the staff you'll visit during EMS On The Hill Day.

Congressional District Office — Located in whichever Congressional District the member represents, the district staff focuses primarily on constituents' needs and concerns, and a more local perspective. Senators have multiple district offices throughout the state.

Why does this matter? Members of Congress spend at least a portion of their time at home in the district office. After EMS On The Hill Day, you may want to schedule follow up visits with members of Congress or their staff from your state while they're in their district office.

"Dear Colleague" Letter — A short letter sent by a bill's sponsor to other members of their chamber describing the legislative proposal and soliciting co-sponsors. So named because the letter begins with the salutation, "Dear Colleague".

Why does this matter? A dear colleague letter is a useful tool to educate lawmakers on a bill.

Hearings — A meeting of a committee or subcommittee generally open to the public to take testimony and gather information and opinions on proposed legislation, to conduct an investigation, to provide oversight regarding the performance of a government program, or to review a problem or issue within the committee's jurisdiction.

Why does this matter? Hearings provide further investigation of a specific issue. Representatives

of NAEMT have been asked at various times to provide testimony during these hearings.

Midterm Election — Elections held at the midpoint of a president's 4-year term. Federal offices that are up for election during the midterms include all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and about 35 seats in the Senate.

Why does this matter? Elections that take place during presidential election years often get higher voter turnout, but midterm elections are still very significant. With so many seats in Congress up for grabs, the balance of power between Democrats and Republicans can shift as a result of midterms, which is what happened in 2018.

Relationship Building — Relationship building means getting to know members of Congress and their staff. You will begin this process during EMS On The Hill Day. But to build the relationship, you'll need to follow up after your meeting via emails, phone calls and in-person meetings. Consider a thank you note for their time, an offer of a ride along for members of Congress from your district and keeping members of Congress from your state posted on important issues facing EMS.

Why does this matter? Over time, as you get to know your elected officials and their staff, you're helping them develop a better understanding of EMS and its concerns, which can build support for EMS and advocacy initiatives.



What I like most about participating is feeling like I'm actually part of the process. It's easy to complain. It's another thing entirely to take steps toward solving those problems. I left Capitol Hill feeling like I made important strides toward solving some of the issues we face. I've since heard back from the offices I visited and we continue to talk about things.

SHAUN ST. GERMAIN
Paramedic and EMS instructor, Maine