1. You and your Government Relations Representative (GRR) should use the AAMC as a resource!
   Example: You and your GRR can schedule a short visit to “prep” with the AAMC government relations team before heading to Capitol Hill. We have talking points, data, fact sheets, and other materials to prepare for your visit, or to leave with your congressional offices.

2. Prepare and make a specific request during your meeting, even if it’s just to introduce yourself.
   Example: You can ask them to cosponsor an AAMC-supported bill or urge them to oppose reductions in federal support for NIH or GME.

3. Share state-specific or district-specific information that shows why your organization is so valuable to the constituents served by the Member of Congress.
   Example: You can present state-level economic impact data or show how many of your students or residents choose to practice in your state when they complete their training (AAMC can provide that data!).

4. Develop a memorable connection with the office by referencing any personal ties you or your organization might have with the Member of Congress.
   Example: Did you (or do your children) attend the same college? Did one of their children attend your medical school? Do you have mutual friends or neighbors? Are you both members of the same club or organization? Can you thank your Member of Congress for something done on behalf of your institution? Have you attended fundraisers or other events that honored the Member?

5. Be brief and be clear.
   Your comments and materials should be brief and concise, since Members of Congress and their staff have very little time and very full schedules. Try to limit your handouts, and ideally they should be only one page long.

6. Stick to your message; don’t get drawn into a politically sensitive or awkward conversation.
   Example: Your Member of Congress might ask you to identify spending cuts to fund your request. Don’t feel obligated to respond; that’s not your area of expertise. Anything you say could become a sound-bite for your Member, and they might quote you as the source!
7. Tell them you are an AAMC member, and encourage them to use the AAMC as a resource.
   Many congressional offices view the AAMC and its staff as reliable, trusted, and unbiased resources for a variety of issues.

8. Invite them to visit your campus.
   Often, the best way to teach Members of Congress about academic medicine is to show it in action. The AAMC’s “Project Medical Education” (PME) program can help you plan an educational event for Members and their staff.

   Always send a thank you note to the person you met. It helps to cc: the Chief of Staff. Don’t be offended if you end up meeting with a staffer because the Member of Congress can’t meet with you. While they are usually quite young, they are experts in their field, care very much about their constituents, and typically have a direct line to the Member of Congress.

10. Conclude the meeting by reiterating your initial request or key message.
    Make sure you have a list of any items that require follow-up once you get home.

11. Let your GRR (and the AAMC!) know how your meeting went.
    Send us a short email about what you heard...even if all you got was a blank stare. You are the AAMC’s “eyes and ears” on Capitol Hill; your feedback helps us refine our advocacy strategies in DC.

12. Always remember that your voice matters!
    Your Members of Congress care very much about what you do, the people you serve, and the people you employ!