Training/Preparation for the ASD/NSS/SFF August 2018 Home District Blitz/Fall Fury

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Chair, August 2018 Home District Blitz/Fall Fury
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What is a Congressional Blitz?

• Any organized effort by a particular group to hold Congressional visits during a time window

• Examples:
  • SEA (Space Exploration Alliance) February in DC
  • ASD/SFF/NSS March Storm
  • Many others …
What is a Home District Blitz?

• An organized effort to visit members of Congress in their home districts during a recess

• Advantages:
  – Less expensive to participate in
  – Better chance to actually meet the Congressperson
  – Value in talking to both home office and DC staffers

• Disadvantages:
  – Specialized space staffers usually work in the DC office

• Examples:
  – AIAA usually does an August Home District Blitz
  – ASD/NSS/SFF does an August Home District Blitz
How does the 2018 August Home District Blitz/Fall Fury compare to the March Storm in DC?

• The Home District Blitz (HDB) is in your home state, not in DC
• The March Storm in DC occurs during one week in March, while the Home District Blitz/Fall Fury starts in August and run into the fall
• Both events use talking points/slides based on the ASD annual campaign goals
• Any space interested person is welcome to join both events
How does the 2018 August Home District Blitz/Fall Fury compare to the 2017 August Home District Blitz?

- The key difference is suggested by “Fall Fury”
  - The Blitz will continue until all key targets are visited
  - This will, based on past experience, take at least several months

- I thought we were trying to match the August recess?
  - There is no August Recess for the Senate this year

- Experience last year suggests that our ability to actually meet with Senators and Reps goes up a lot by stretching the meetings over several months
  - This allows for follow up meetings with the Senator/Rep after an initial meeting with a staffer
Getting Started

• Sign up at: https://goo.gl/forms/nWduC0lU2rG1n6yn1
  – The Blitz participant list will not be sold or otherwise publicized

• There is a lot of material at http://www.nss.org/legislative/ including detailed instructions for setting up appointments
What Happens Next?

• Determine your Congressional District
• Contact Ian at ian.burrell@allianceforspacedevelopment.org to let him know what you are doing
  – He will either point you to a district/state coordinator or enlist you as the coordinator for your district/state
  – He may direct you to a key meeting that is already set up
• Most likely, you will need to set up the Congressional meeting
• Target August, but later is OK
• Decide how many meetings you want to set up
How Ambitious Are you?

- The basic goal is to meet with your own Congressperson
- The next step is to meet with your two Senators
- Contact Ian and he will suggest priority targets on key committees
Making the Appointment
(for the Team Leaders, which is probably you)

- Know the correct name of the Representative/Senator and how to pronounce it
- Identify yourself as an representative of the August HDB who lives in state/district
- Be prepared to prove you live in state/district
- Say that a group from August HDB wishes to speak with the Congressperson/Senator
- Know what you want to talk about and describe it in a few sentences
- If you need to call back, call back daily until the meeting is set up
- Once the appointment is made, send email to ian.burrell@allianceforspacedevelopment.org with the basic info – team leader, name of staffer, and date of meeting
- Ian will help you to get other people in the district to attend the meeting, but if it ends up being just you, that is fine
Preparation

• Team Leader:
  – Print out 2 sets of the talking point slides to give to the staffer(s) and/or Representative/Senator
  – Print out 1 set of the talking point slides for themselves
  – Print out 2 copies of each of the Bills: one to give away and one for yourself
  – Research the background of the Representative/Senator

• Team members:
  – Print out 1 set of the talking point slides for themselves
  – Research the background of the Representative/Senator
More Preparation for All

• Know in advance what your main points will be
• Have a plan for which team member will present which talking point
• The leader should be prepared to present the introduction slides
• Know in advance if and why your Congressperson supports space
  – Know if a NASA location or aerospace industry is located in their district
The Actual Visit

• Bring a camera or use your cell phone camera
  – Have a designated camera-person
  – Especially take a picture if you meet with the Congressperson/Senator

• Make sure your team is on-board with the talking points

• Know who will talk first, second, and so on

• It is best to have one leader but to ensure that all get to say something

• Get there early

• Did you take pictures????
Dress Code

• Men
  – Conservative suit and tie; jacket and slacks OK

• Women
  – Business suit/dress slacks/conservative dress

• No-Nos
  – Jeans, cut-offs, shorts, sandals
  – Cocktail dresses or revealing clothes
  – NASA jump suit, Spock ears, mission patches, etc.
  – Ties with rockets on them
  – Message T-shirts unless it is an official NSS/SFF T-shirt or other official garb from your space group

• OK
  – Space related tie clip or lapel pin
It’s Showtime

• Your meeting will be short – as little as 10 minutes but no more than 30 minutes
• Get right to the point
• Always refer to Senator XXXX or Congressman YYY or Congresswoman ZZZ
• **Emphasize that you are unpaid volunteers and DO NOT** represent the aerospace industry
• Be sure and ask for at least one specific action
• **Don’t forget to ask for a picture if appropriate**
• Your leader needs to be willing to cut off stuff that is off-topic or rambles on
The Friendly Staffer

• Knows a lot about space
• Favorably inclined toward NASA
• May not know much about commercial space
  – A chance to educate
• Be sure to identify how we can help the staffer and/or the Congressperson
• If they wish, we will meet with the space staffer in DC at their convenience
The Hostile Staffer

• Old version: NASA is a waste of money that ought to go to the poor
  – Focus on economic benefits of space
  – Focus on the benefits of space to STEM education

• New version: Commercial Space is bad, Elon Musk is arrogant, etc. etc.
  – Try to find a positive common ground
  – Try to understand the roots of their concerns
Party Ties

• Republicans often react best to:
  – Arguments based on national security concerns
  – Arguments based on national prestige

• Democrats often react best to:
  – Arguments based on the value of scientific research
  – Arguments based on how space supports STEM education

• Members of all parties react well to:
  – Anything that puts jobs or money in their state/district
The Wrap

• Don’t overstay your welcome
• Say thanks and shake hands
• Leave copies of talking points and Bills
  – One complete set is fine
  – Bring a second for a possible second staffer
• Get the business cards of the staffer(s)

• **TAKE A PICTURE OF YOUR TEAM WITH THE CONGRESSPERSON OR SENATOR IF POSSIBLE**
After You Leave

• Send thank-you to the staffer
• Have a de-briefing with your team if possible
• Fill out the standard report form at [http://www.nss.org/legislative/](http://www.nss.org/legislative/)
• Staple the staffers card to the form
• Scan the form and attach to an email
• Send the email to: ian.burrell@allianceforspacedevelopment.org
• Attach:
  – All pictures taken