

# How to Communicate with Policy Makers

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# **How a Bill Becomes a Law ... sort of**

# Introduction

- Why are you here?
- What would like to take away today?
- Schedule ...



# Why get Involved?

- *You've got to insert yourself into the process. You have to find out what's going on in that process and you have to insert yourself into that decision making. Don't wait to be asked.*

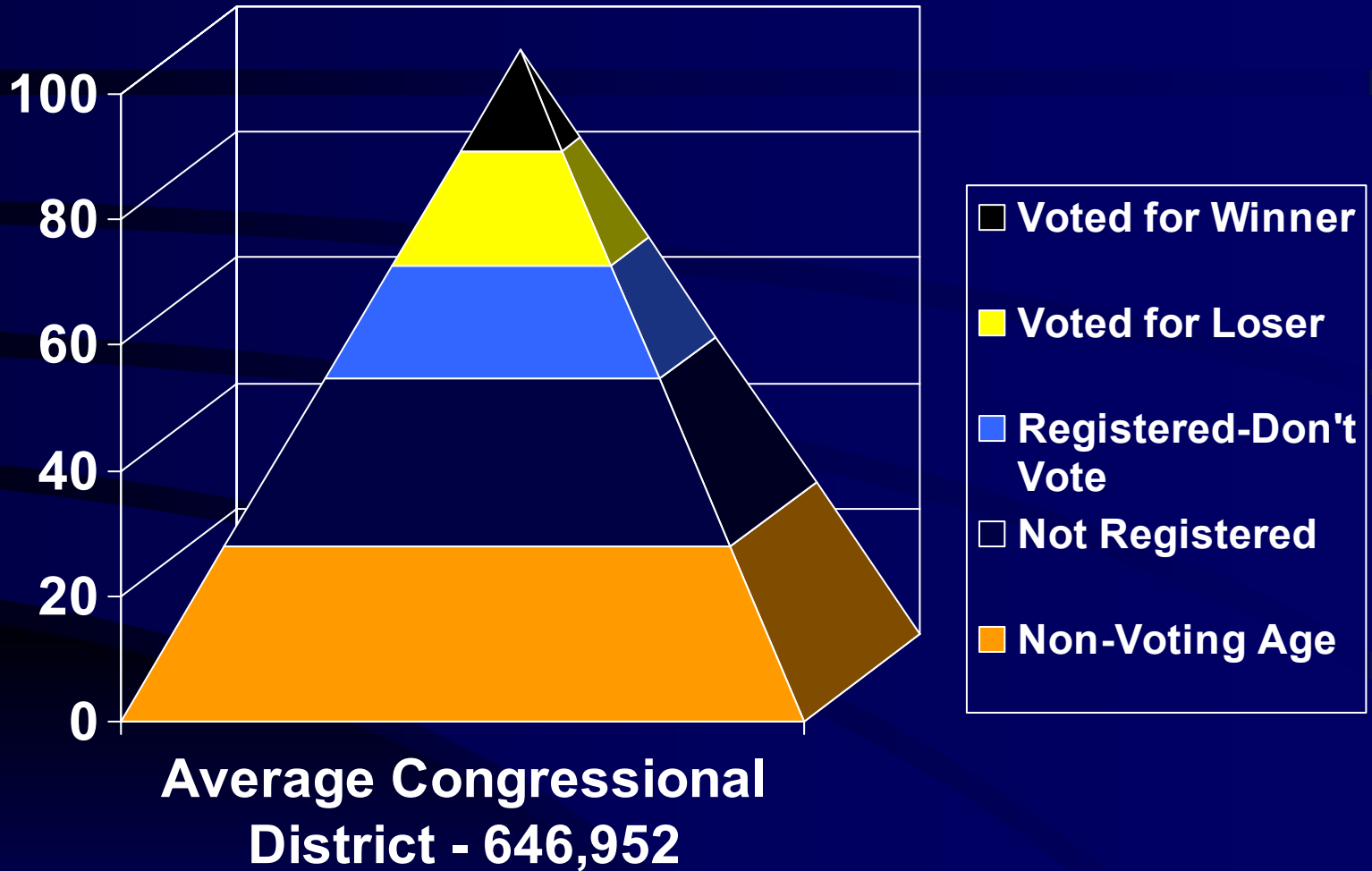
-- Texas Sen. Bill Ratliff, PE

# Why Get Involved?

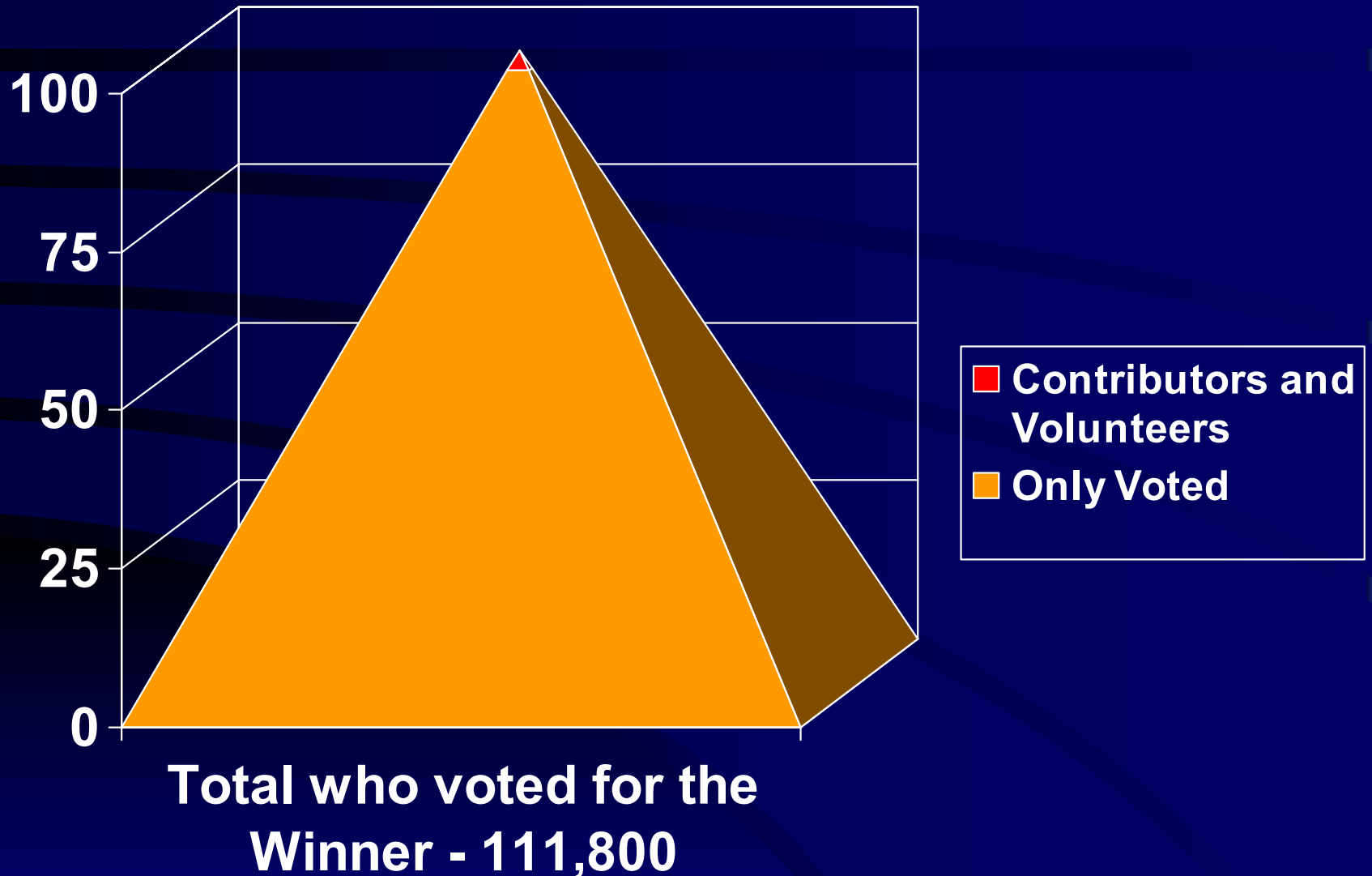
- *One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.*

- Plato

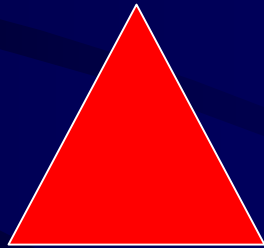
# Political Influence Model



# Pinnacle of Influence



**Today is about  
the Pinnacle ...**





# What is lobbying?

- Exchange of ideas
- Communicating with elected officials
- Making your voice heard
- Selling an issue - instead of a product



# Why is lobbying important?

- Help your profession/industry
- Help your business
- Help others



# How to lobby

- Vote
- Be an expert on your issues
- Constituent visits / site visits
- Befriend a politician
- Grassroots
- Use the media



# Email your Member

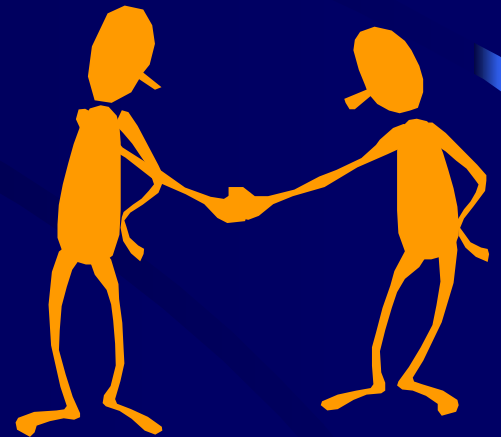
- Makes them aware of your position
- Familiarizes them with you
- You will get a response

# Call your Member

- Makes them aware of your position
- Familiarizes them with you
- You should get a response

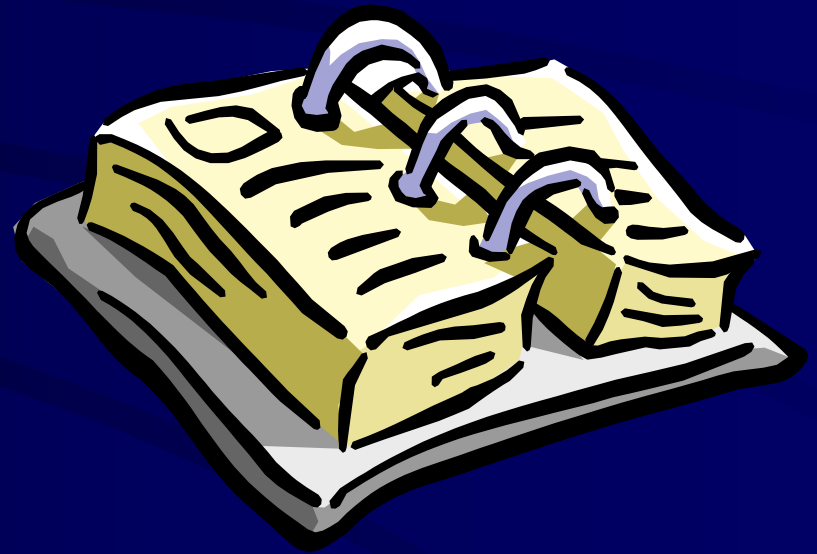
# Visit your Member

- Brings the issue HOME and is more influential than
  - Meetings with lobbyist
  - Polls
  - News releases or ads



# A Week in the Life

- Congressional schedules are very hectic...



# Monday (In the District)

6:30am	Gym
8:00am	Breakfast Mtg.
9:30am	Arrive at office
10:00am	In-Office Mtg.
11:00am	In-Office Mtg.
11:45am	Leave for Luncheon
12:15pm	Luncheon
2:00pm	Leave luncheon for out of office mtg.
2:30pm	Out of office mtg.
3:30pm	Arrive back at office



# Monday (In the District), Cont.

4:00pm	Conference Call
5:00pm	In-Office mtg.
5:30pm	Leave for Reception
6:00pm	Arrive at Reception
7:00pm	Leave reception to go to dinner
7:30pm	Arrive at dinner, make speech
10:00pm	Arrive at home

# Tuesday (In the District / Travel)

5:30am	Gym
8:00am	Flight leaves
4:00pm	Flight arrives in DC
5:00pm	Arrive at office
6:00pm	Votes – 5 votes on Suspension bills
7:30pm	Attend Reception
8:00pm	Attend Reception
8:30pm	Attend Reception
9:00pm	Return home

# Wednesday (At The Capitol)

6:30am	Gym
8:00am	Breakfast Mtg.
9:00am	Party Caucus
10:00am	Committee Hearing starts
10:00am	House meets, go give 5 minute presentation
10:20am	Arrive at hearing
10:30am	Step out of hearing to meet with constituents
10:45am	Step back into hearing

# Wednesday (At The Capitol)

11:00am	Ask question at hearing
11:15am	Two votes called
11:25am	Arrive at Capitol for first vote
11:30am	Step into Rayburn room for meeting with Constituents
11:40am	Take second vote
11:45am	Walk with constituents back to office
12:00pm	Leave for luncheon meeting with constituent group
12:10pm	Arrive luncheon meeting
12:23pm	Vote called
12:30pm	Arrive Capitol, vote, go back to luncheon

# Wednesday (At The Capitol)

1:00pm	Return to office
1:15pm	Constituent meeting
1:30pm	Constituent meeting
1:45pm	Constituent meeting
2:00pm	Constituent meeting
2:00pm	Committee Hearing starts
2:07pm	Series of three votes called
2:15pm	Arrive at Capitol for first vote
2:20pm	Step into Rayburn room for constituent meeting
2:25pm	Take second vote
2:33pm	Take third vote

# Wednesday (At The Capitol)

2:35pm	Finish meeting with constituents
2:45pm	Arrive at hearing
3:00pm	Step out of hearing for constituent meeting
3:07pm	Run back into hearing to ask question
3:10pm	Return to constituent meeting
3:30pm	Leave hearing for meeting of Caucus
3:52pm	Two votes called
4:00pm	Staff meeting starting in office
4:00pm	Arrive at Capitol for first vote, continue meeting in cloakroom
4:17pm	Take second vote
4:30pm	Arrive in office, join staff meeting

# Wednesday (At The Capitol)

5:15pm	Leave to attend first reception of evening
5:45pm	Arrive second reception
6:10pm	Arrive third reception
6:33pm	Arrive fourth reception
7:00pm	Leave hill to attend dinner
7:10pm	Arrive at dinner
7:36pm	Final vote called
7:45pm	Arrive at Capitol for vote
8:00pm	Return to dinner, make speech
10:00pm	Arrive in office, check e-mails, schedule, pressing matters
11:30pm	Arrive at home

# Thursday (At The Capitol)

- See Wednesday
- Only difference is possible flight at 5:00pm to the west coast



# Friday (In the District)

- Much like the Monday schedule, with meetings during the day, dinners, and receptions in the evenings

# Saturday (In the District)

- Much like Sunday with limited meetings during the day (members do try to get a bit of a break!) and a potential dinner or other event in the evening.

# The Budget Game

# Successful legislative campaigns

- Issue
- Background materials
- Negotiation
- Lobbying
- Grassroots
- Media
- Coalitions



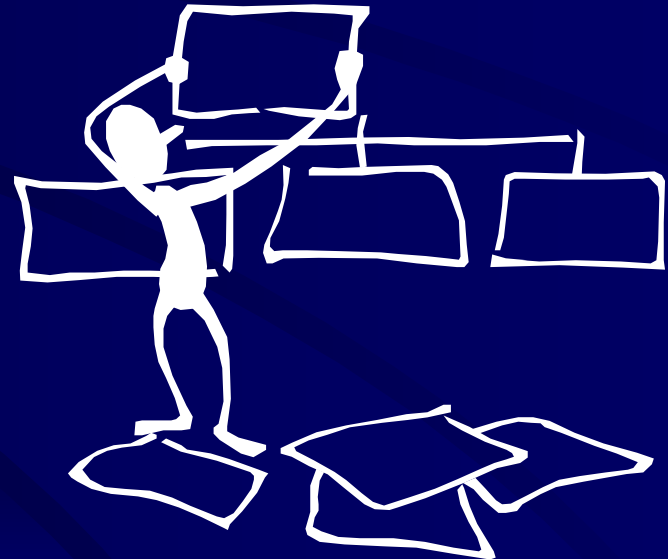
# Issue

- Something to take action on
- Affects you or those around you



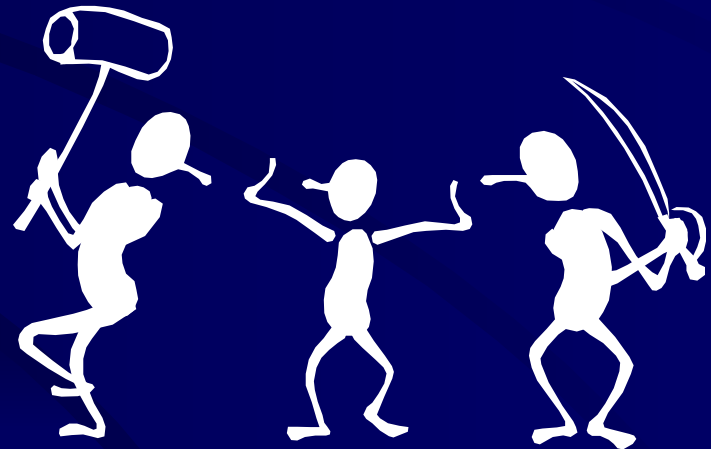
# Background materials

- Supporting arguments
- Statistics
- Anecdotes



# Negotiation

- Get what you need
- Sometimes compromise is necessary



# Lobbying

- Education and advocacy
- Direct contact with elected official
- Straight from your own mouth
- Staff are important, too



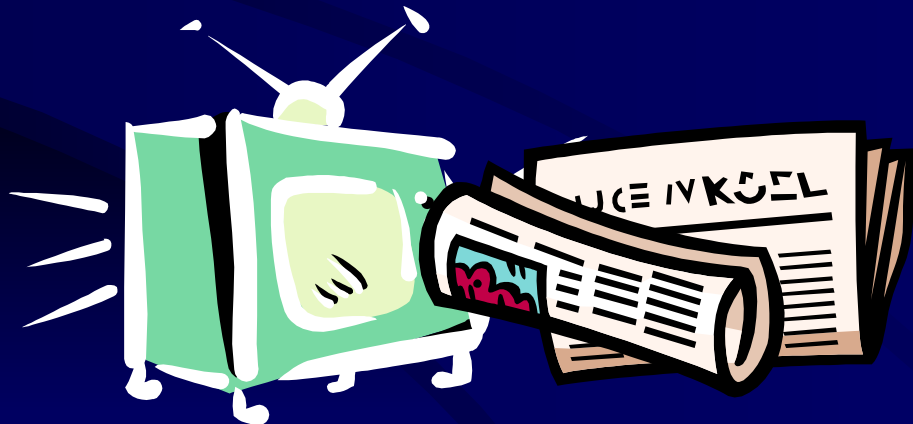


# Grassroots

- Importance of constituency
- Power in numbers
- Involve members in democratic process
- Local knowledge

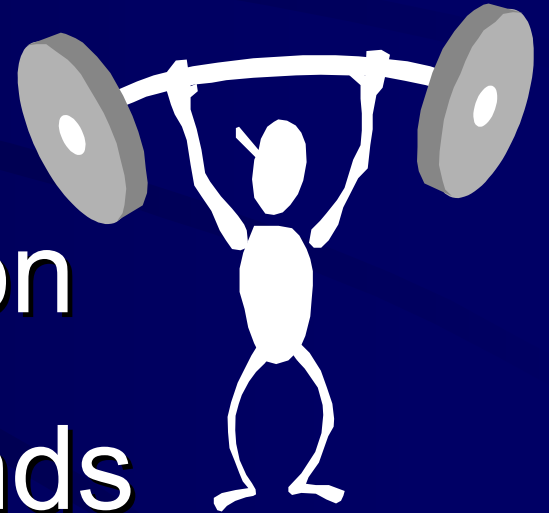
# Media

- Larger audience
- Hit lawmakers from multiple angles



# Coalitions

- Many groups better than one
- More muscle
- Broader cross-section
- Variety of backgrounds



# How a bill becomes law

- Not always textbook
- Flow of wind hazards legislation
- Role of expert in process



***Problem:* No coordinated  
research program to  
address wind hazards**

***Idea:* A small coordinated  
Wind Hazard Reduction  
Program based on the  
model of the National  
Earthquake Hazard  
Reduction Program  
(NEHRP)**

**Began in 1999 as a series of meetings between ASCE and congressional staff, and officials from NOAA, NIST, NSF, FEMA and others**

**Wind Hazards Reduction  
Coalition formed with  
professional and trade  
associations, universities  
and industry**



**First Break: Rep. Dennis  
Moore of Kansas agrees  
to form Congressional  
Wind Hazards Reduction  
Caucus**

Becomes issue champion

# Caucus formed with 25 members in the House of Representatives

Rep. Walter Jones of North  
Carolina signs on as  
Co-Chair of Caucus

***10/19/00:***

**H.R. 5499 – Windstorm  
Hazard Reduction  
Research and  
Technology Transfer Act  
introduced by Reps.  
Jones and Moore**

**106<sup>th</sup> Congress ends**

# **Began again in 107<sup>th</sup> Congress**

**Rep. Jones drops out as  
Republican champion**

**2001: Lack of  
tornados and  
hurricanes hinder  
efforts to build  
awareness**

***10/11/01: Wind Hazard  
Reduction Coalition  
testifies at House  
Science Committee  
hearing on severe  
storms***

***12/20/01: H.R. 3592,  
Hurricane, Tornado and  
Related Natural Hazards  
Research Act introduced***

Rep. Melissa Hart of  
Pennsylvania replaces  
Rep. Jones as lead  
Republican sponsor



# Ongoing ASCE/Coalition efforts

- Congressional briefings and other events
- Wind Hazards as part of ASCE Congressional visits
- Back Home Visits
- Key Alerts
- Staff visits

**107<sup>th</sup> Congress ends**

**Began again with 108<sup>th</sup>  
Congress...**

***5/7/03: H.R. 2020,***  
**Hurricane, Tornado and**  
**Related Hazards**  
**Research Act introduced**  
**by Reps. Dennis Moore**  
**and Mario Diaz-Balart of**  
**Florida**

**Second break: Rep.  
Moore attempts to attach  
H.R. 2020 to H.R. 2608 –  
NEHRP Reauthorization**

Withdraws amendment upon  
Chairman Boehlert's promise  
to bring up H.R. 2020 during  
future meeting

**H.R. 2608 passes House  
Science Committee and full  
House (important later)**

**Rep. Randy  
Neugebauer of Texas  
is designated lead  
Republican on issue  
as Science Committee  
staff is fully engaged**

# **Field hearing in Lubbock, Texas**



**New bill negotiated  
between Republican  
and Democratic staff  
from House Science  
Committee and Wind  
Hazard Reduction  
Coalition**

***3/17/04:* H.R. 3980,  
National Windstorm  
Impact Reduction Act  
introduced**

**6/28/04: H.R. 3980 passes  
House Science  
Committee**

**7/9/04: H.R. 3980 passes  
full House**

**Meanwhile in the  
Senate...**

**Senate Commerce  
Committee announces  
plans to combine H.R.  
3980 and H.R. 2608**

With a few minor hiccups,  
full Senate approves  
10/6/04

# House concurs with Senate

Again, not without a few  
snags

**10/25/04: H.R. 2608 (with  
H.R. 3980) signed by  
President**

**Public Law 108-360**

**109<sup>th</sup> Congress:  
Oh, you want funding  
too...**





# Tips on Dealing With Staff

- Talk to the Right Person
- Remember, Your Issue Is One of Many
- Staff Contact Has Advantages Over Member Contact
- Institutional Memory in an Elected Official's Office Can Be Short
- Expect (and Appreciate) Youth



# Ideas for an Ongoing Relationship: Come up with your OWN plan

## Ask members to...

- Meet in the district
- Visit a project
- Write an article
- Demonstrate ongoing support through:
  - Letters
  - Votes
  - Legislation

## You should...

- Attend and coordinate fundraisers
- Give recognition awards
- Thank your lawmakers
- Learn as MUCH as you can
- Train and organize your grassroots
- Keep track of important data about your work

# Most important part...

- YOU!
  - Citizen
  - Expert
  - Leader in Society



