

# American Association of Museums

ADVOCACY FOR MUSEUMS

## **Getting to Know Your Legislators**

Taking the time to learn about your legislators is an invaluable asset to advocacy efforts at any level of government. Legislators' personal history informs their public policy decisions and provides topics advocates and constituents can use to make connections with their legislators. Biography and background information about your legislators is available from a variety of sources. It is useful to know what different kinds of information can be found in different places.

## **Finding Your Federal Legislators**

Both the House of Representatives and the Senate maintain websites that allow the public to use an address-based search to determine who their members of Congress are and to find basic contact information for each legislator.

- United States Senate – [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)
- United States House of Representatives – [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)
- U.S. House Write Your Representative - [www.house.gov/writerep](http://www.house.gov/writerep)

## **A Note About Federal Legislators' Websites**

The House and Senate websites both include some basic information about members of Congress and the Senate website includes short bios for each Senator. Legislator's individual websites, however, provide the most insightful information on each member. It is through the members' websites that you can find information about the state or district, district office information, staff information and the protocol for how best to communicate with each office.

Members' websites provide the best glimpse into what issues the member is most passionate about, what issues they are taking action on, what committees and caucuses they participate in and their background information. The most informed and effective advocates will take some time to thoroughly review their legislator's websites as the first step in getting to know them.

## **A Note About State and Local Elected Officials**

Many state and local elected officials maintain their own websites where you can also find press releases, contact and background information about these policy makers. Congress.org ([www.congress.org](http://www.congress.org)) is a public website where you can look up your local, state and federal elected officials across the country.

## **The Congressional Management Foundation**

The Congressional Management Foundation is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the Congressional process by improving the management of congressional offices. Among other activities, CMF monitors, analyzes and reports on communications to and from Congressional offices and congressional websites. Visit [www.cmfweb.org](http://www.cmfweb.org) for periodic new reports.