



Good  
Government  
Group

# CHAIRMAN MANUAL



**HCA**   
Healthcare<sup>SM</sup>

INTRODUCTION 1

CONNECTING WITH LEGISLATORS 2

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT BASICS 7

GRASSROOTS GLOSSARY 10

LEGISLATIVE MEETING CHEATSHEET 12

ABOUT GOOD GOVERNMENT GROUP 13

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROCESS 14



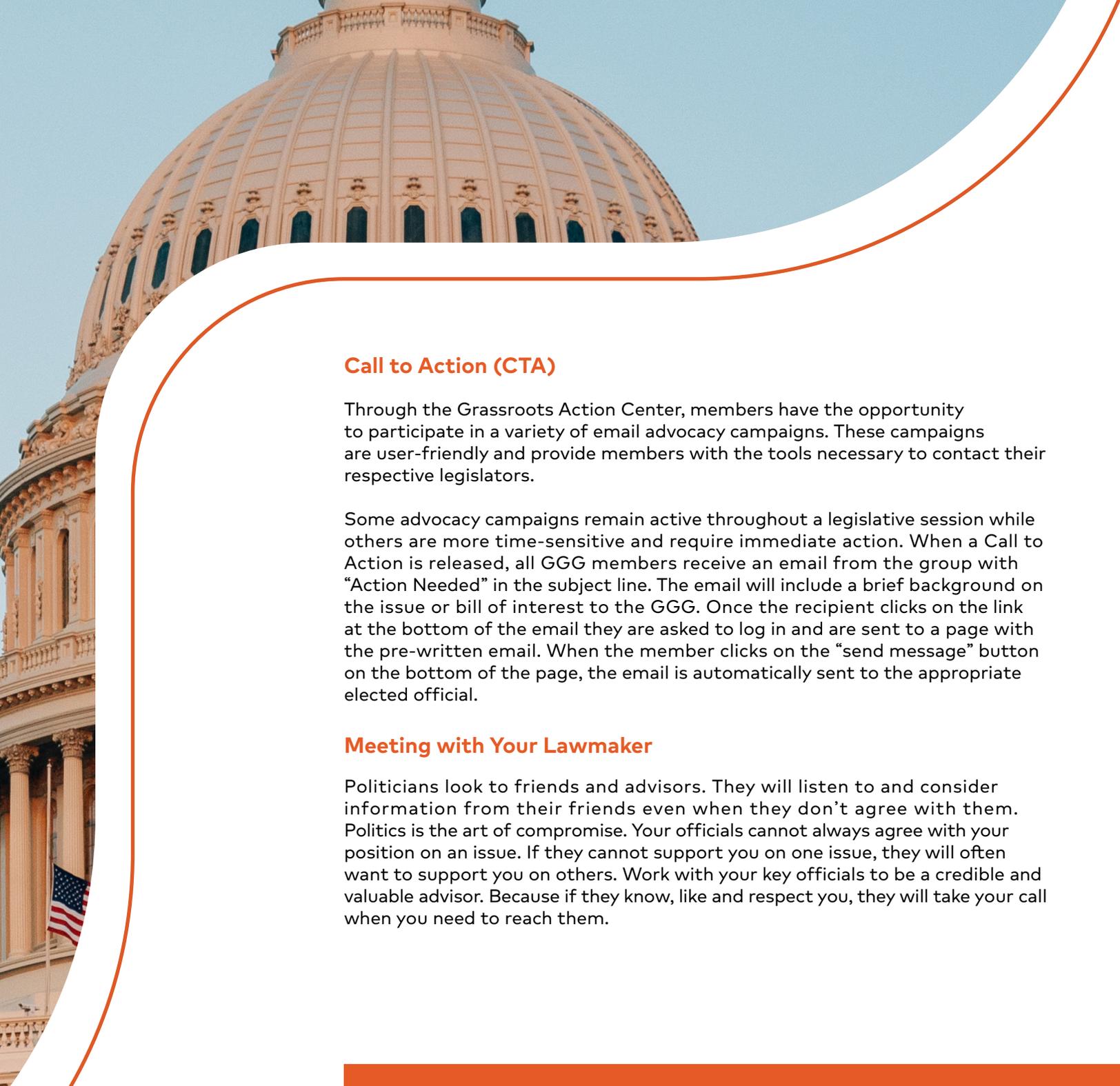
# AN INTRODUCTION TO GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY AND THE GOOD GOVERNMENT GROUP

The Good Government Group (GGG) is a nonpartisan HCA Healthcare association made up of administrators, hospital employees, physicians, volunteers, H2U members, and others.

The goal of the GGG is to educate two different audiences. The first group consists of HCA Healthcare employees. The GGG gives employees access to become better informed and engaged in federal, state, and local political issues. This is done through meetings with candidates and elected officials, political and legislative updates, and call-to-action emails. While the focus is mostly on healthcare issues, it is not limited only to them.

The second audience the GGG works to reach is elected officials, candidates, and leaders in the community. Through the GGG, we educate this audience on the facts regarding for-profit hospitals. This is done through meetings with legislators in their district offices, GGG events hosted at hospitals, and outside community events.

As chairman of the GGG, you are the conduit between your hospital and the people of power in your community. It is your job to educate and maintain relationships with them throughout the year. You want to be their primary contact regarding healthcare issues.



### Call to Action (CTA)

Through the Grassroots Action Center, members have the opportunity to participate in a variety of email advocacy campaigns. These campaigns are user-friendly and provide members with the tools necessary to contact their respective legislators.

Some advocacy campaigns remain active throughout a legislative session while others are more time-sensitive and require immediate action. When a Call to Action is released, all GGG members receive an email from the group with “Action Needed” in the subject line. The email will include a brief background on the issue or bill of interest to the GGG. Once the recipient clicks on the link at the bottom of the email they are asked to log in and are sent to a page with the pre-written email. When the member clicks on the “send message” button on the bottom of the page, the email is automatically sent to the appropriate elected official.

### Meeting with Your Lawmaker

Politicians look to friends and advisors. They will listen to and consider information from their friends even when they don’t agree with them. Politics is the art of compromise. Your officials cannot always agree with your position on an issue. If they cannot support you on one issue, they will often want to support you on others. Work with your key officials to be a credible and valuable advisor. Because if they know, like and respect you, they will take your call when you need to reach them.

**POLITICIANS LOOK TO FRIENDS AND ADVISORS. THEY WILL LISTEN TO AND CONSIDER INFORMATION FROM THEIR FRIENDS EVEN WHEN THEY DON’T AGREE WITH THEM.**

## Getting to Know Your Elected Officials

Getting to know the government officials who represent you at the federal, state, and local levels is an important first step. Face-to-face meetings are an effective way to convey a message about a specific legislative issue.

Make the request for an introductory meeting by letter or phone call. Explain where you work, what the GGG is, and that you are the chairman. If the legislator is not available, then try to meet with their staff. Spend a couple minutes researching the elected official prior to your conversation.

Keep in mind that it might take time to arrange a meeting, given a legislator's busy schedule. Expect the meeting to be scheduled for 15 minutes.

Always bring and leave your hospital's Community Benefit Report and a fact sheet about your hospital.

The fact sheet should contain the following information:

- Your name and title
- The name of the hospital
- The amount of indigent care your hospital provides
- A description of your position at the hospital

- Total number of hospital employees
- Total amount of taxes paid in the current year
- Current and future construction plans for the hospital
- Additional important details about your hospital

Do not be offended if a staff member substitutes for the elected official. Staff support of an issue can help determine whether an elected official supports the issue. Assume the legislator is familiar with only a few healthcare issues. You are the expert in the field. Be prepared to answer questions. If you do not know the answer, assure the elected official that you will get back to them with the answer.

Always end the meeting with an invitation to come to the hospital and meet other GGG members. After the meeting, follow up with the elected official promptly. Send a thank you letter reiterating the important points from the meeting and any information you promised. Include your business card.



## Hospital Tours

A hospital tour can help you accomplish many things. Having a lawmaker or candidate tour the hospital to see what you and your co-workers do every day is compelling and educational.

Schedule the tour at a time and place where a multitude of employees will have the ability to meet the special guest. Include senior staff at the hospital and the director of public affairs when planning the visit.

When setting up the tour, make sure to leave yourself enough time to see the hospital and enjoy informal discussion. You will want to map out the tour ahead of time. Choose areas that illustrate any points you want to make. Keep track of time but do not rush it.

Introduce the legislator or candidate to co-workers as you pass them. It is important to show the guest how the GGG and hospital can help them meet voters and constituents.

Information to know and speak about during the tour includes:

- The number of people employed at the hospital
- The facility's annual payroll
- Dollars paid in property taxes on the facility
- The amount of indigent care the hospital provides
- Dollars spent locally to purchase supplies, materials, and services
- Planned expansions or facility improvement
- Benefits provided to employees at the hospital
- Any other factors that set your hospital apart from other hospitals



## Letters

A letter from a constituent is an extremely powerful advocacy tool. In general, an effective letter is limited to one or two pages at most. Start and end your letter by stating why you are writing and what it is you would like the elected official to do.

The tone of your letter should be professional and courteous, even when you disagree with a position or you're expressing disappointment about an action taken.

Letters make a difference. Federal, state, and local legislators read and respond to letters. They gauge their responses to issues from the position of their constituents. The following points are important to keep in mind when writing:

- **Remember the basics.** Personal, concise, and grammatically correct.
- **Write simply and succinctly.** Try to stick to one page, two pages at the very most. Identify the bill number and the name of the bill early in your letter. Avoid industry or political jargon.
- **Be informed, respectful, and pleasant.** Don't be confrontational or make demands. Offer solutions, if possible, and do not assume that the legislator understands the subject matter.
- **Request a response and make your request specific.** Ask the lawmakers to state their position and don't be surprised if they give you the run-around. If they do, write again or telephone and ask for an appointment. Ask to be kept informed about where this elected official stands on the issue and be sure to provide them with your full contact information.
- **Remember that written communications to a public official become public record.** Don't say anything in a letter that you wouldn't want reprinted in the newspaper.
- **Always speak to the government affairs team before sending the letter.**

**AVOID INDUSTRY JARGON AS SOME LEGISLATORS MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THE SUBJECT MATTER.**



## Phone Calls

Calling legislators is very effective, particularly in the days just before they are scheduled to take action or vote on an issue. To prepare for the conversation, jot down a few notes prior to your call. Unless you know the elected official, you will likely speak with a staff person.

Phone calls can make a difference, especially when legislative activities are moving fast. Remember these tips when making a call:

- **Call the correct office.** When in session call the member's Capitol office. During recess periods, try the home district office.
- **Prepare in advance and speak from notes.** Jotting down your key points and questions beforehand will help ensure that you get the information you need. Remember the appropriate bill number, its general purpose, and rationale for your support or opposition.
- **Avoid arguments.** Be friendly and respectful and you'll get a lot more attention for your issue.
- **Follow up with a letter.** Send a letter to recap your conversation and your views and to say thanks. Mention the staff person's name and thank them for their help.
- **Provide your full name and contact information.** Staff members will often check your contact information with their constituent database.

## Town Hall Meetings

One of the most effective ways to gain the attention of elected officials and their staff is to attend a town hall or community meeting. Legislators arrange these meetings to hear from their constituents. To accommodate travel schedules, these meetings generally occur when legislators are not in session.

Town hall meetings are a great introductory event for those new to grassroots activities. These meetings are usually advertised in the local paper or on a candidate's website. Sometimes these meetings have a scheduled topic but the meetings can also be open forums where voters have direct contact with their elected official.

Before you attend a town hall meeting, it's helpful to do some background research. Find out which committees your legislator is on and what bills they have introduced. Additionally, remember to use the Director of Public Affairs as a resource.

Even if you do not have the opportunity to ask a question at the town hall, be sure to make your presence known to the legislator and their staff. Take the time to introduce yourself as a constituent and the GGG Chairman. It will pay off in future meetings, as you can mention attending previous local events.

## Federal Government Basics

### Congressional Structure & Leadership Posts

The United States House of Representative consists of 435 voting members, who serve two-year terms and represent an average of 650,000 constituents. The number of seats per state and the lines of the congressional districts are determined by the results of the U.S. Census.

The United States Senate has 100 members, two from each state, who serve six-year terms. Decisions on what legislation is brought up in committee or to the floor for a vote are made by the House and Senate majority party leadership. The structure of the House allows the majority party to set the agenda and, assuming all members of that party vote together, pass legislation regardless of the minority party's view.

The Senate structure is less rigid and provides more power for individual legislators, even those in the minority party. This holds true unless the majority party holds 60 or more seats, also known as a filibuster-proof majority, who vote together.

Top leadership posts in the U.S. House of Representatives include:

- **Speaker of the House:** Chosen by members of the majority party
- **Majority Leader:** Dictates the floor schedule on behalf of the majority party
- **Majority Whip:** Manages the vote or “whip” count for the majority party
- **Minority Leader:** Chosen by the members of the minority party
- **Minority Whip:** Manages the vote or “whip” count for the minority party

Top leadership posts in the U.S. Senate include:

- **President Pro Tempore:** Symbolic role held by the most senior member of the majority party
- **Majority Leader:** Dictates the floor schedule on behalf of the majority party
- **Majority Whip:** Manages the vote or “whip” count for the majority party
- **Minority Leader:** Chosen by members of the minority party
- **Minority Whip:** Manages the vote or ‘whip’ count for the minority party



## State Government Basics

Under the U.S. Constitution, powers not specifically granted to the federal government are reserved for the states and the people. Those powers are divided between state and local governments.

All state governments are modeled after the federal government and consist of three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial.

### Executive Branch

In each state, the Executive Branch is headed by a governor who is directly elected by the people. In most states, several other executive branch leaders are also directly elected, often including the lieutenant governor, the attorney general, the secretary of state, and auditors and commissioners.

### Legislative Branch

All 50 states have legislatures consisting of elected representatives, whose role is to consider matters brought forth by the governor or introduced by its own members, in order to create legislation that may become law. The legislature also approves a state's budget and initiates tax legislation. This system provides checks and balances among the three branches of government, mirroring the federal system to prevent any branch from abusing its power.

All states but Nebraska have bicameral legislatures made up of two chambers: a smaller upper house and a larger lower house. Together the two chambers pass laws and fulfill other governing responsibilities. The smaller upper chamber is always called the Senate, and its members generally serve longer terms – typically four years. The larger lower chamber is most often called the House of Representatives, but some states call theirs the Assembly or House of Delegates. These chambers' members usually serve shorter terms, most commonly two years. Some states impose term limits that cap how long individual legislators may serve consecutively in the same office.

### Judicial Branch

Most state judiciaries consist of trial courts, appeals courts, and a high court. In most (but not all) states, this high court is called the Supreme Court. Court structures and how judges are appointed/elected are determined either by legislation or the state constitution. Appellate courts and the state's high court review cases to determine whether errors were made in lower courts, and therefore do not hold trials. Rulings made in state supreme courts are usually binding; however, when questions are raised regarding consistency with the U.S. Constitution, matters may be appealed directly to the United States Supreme Court.



## **Committee Assignments & Issue Jurisdiction**

Members of the state Senate and House (or its differently named counterpart) are assigned to serve on committees, hold hearings, and consider legislation before it is brought to the floor by their respective leadership.

Committees consist of members of both parties, but the chair is always a member of the majority party, and the minority party has fewer members on the committee. The decision whether to bring up legislation or hold a hearing is determined by the chair and leaders of the majority party.

Each committee oversees a different area of jurisdiction and legislative issues. It is not uncommon for bills, especially larger and more complex measures, to have issues of overlapping jurisdiction and require review by multiple committees.

## **Bill Introduction & Sponsorship**

Legislators may introduce a bill to address a specific issue or co-sponsor a bill introduced by another legislator. Obtaining a large number of co-sponsors on a bill is one strategy for gaining attention and credibility on an issue, because a show of widespread support enhances the proposal's chances of passage.

## **Committees & Subcommittees**

An important time for constituent involvement comes at the committee and subcommittee stage. Legislators may not yet be committed to specific bills or legislative language, and grassroots advocates have an opportunity to communicate their positions on the issue and suggest specific provisions or bill language. Action by committee members' constituents can be very effective in winning lawmakers to their side at this point.

Communications may focus on supporting or opposing specific language developed by the subcommittee, providing testimony on an issue, encouraging lawmakers to sponsor amendments, or asking a committee member to vote for or against a bill. Again, action by committee members' constituents can be quite effective.

## **Conference**

In order to pass the Legislature and move on to the governor, bills must be identical when they receive final votes. Opportunities for grassroots impact are more limited at the conference stage, which is when select members of the House and Senate work out differences between similar bills passed by their respective chambers. Grassroots communications, particularly from constituents of the conferees, may influence whether the House or Senate version is accepted in a final compromise bill.

## **Floor Action**

Constituent communication with all senators and representatives is important when legislation comes to the Senate or House floor for a vote. Grassroots efforts at this stage focus on encouraging a legislator to either vote for or against a bill, to sponsor a floor amendment, or to vote for or against a floor amendment offered by another legislator.

# GRASSROOTS GLOSSARY



Abbreviations: The following abbreviations are commonly used:

<b>AB</b>	Assembly Bill
<b>ACR</b>	Assembly Concurrent Resolution
<b>HB</b>	House Bill
<b>SB</b>	Senate Bill
<b>SCR</b>	Senate Concurrent Resolution
<b>SR</b>	Senate Resolution
<b>ACA</b>	Assembly Constitutional Amendment
<b>AJR</b>	Assembly Joint Resolution
<b>HR</b>	House Resolution
<b>SCA</b>	Senate Constitutional Amendment
<b>SJR</b>	Senate Joint Resolution

**Act:** A bill passed by a legislative body and signed into law by the executive.

**Adjournment:** To terminate a session of a legislative body.

**Amendment:** An action of a legislative body to delete, alter, or revise the language of a bill or an act. Bills may be amended by either house at any one of a number of stages in the legislative process.

**Appropriation:** A legislative grant of money for a specific purpose.

**Assembly:** The lower chamber of some legislatures.

**Authorization:** A legislative action that establishes a substantive program, specifies its general purpose and the means for achieving it, and indicates the approximate amount of money needed to implement the program. In Congress, an authorization bill is usually enacted before the appropriations bill providing financing for the program is considered.

**Bill:** A proposed law. Most legislative proposals before a legislative body are in the form of bills.

**Calendar:** An agenda or list that contains the names of bills or resolutions to be considered before committees or in either chamber of a legislature. The placement of a bill on a calendar is no guarantee that the bill will be considered by that chamber or that it will be taken up in the listed order.

**Caucus:** An informal meeting of a group of the members, sometimes called on the basis of party affiliation.

**Committee Chairperson:** The member of the majority party who heads a standing or select legislative committee.

**Committee of the Whole:** An informal procedure used by a legislative body to expedite business by resolving itself into a committee for the consideration of bills and other matters.

**Concurrent Resolution:** A special measure passed by one house with the other concurring, but not requiring the president's or governor's signature.

**Conference Committee:** A special joint committee appointed to reconcile difference when a bill passes the two houses in different forms.

**Consent Calendar:** A listing of noncontroversial bills which it is unanimously agreed should be passed.

**District:** A geographical, political division of a state from which a legislator is elected.

**Engrossing:** Comparison of the printed bill to assure its likeness to the original and that any amendments are properly inserted.

**Enrollment:** The filing of resolutions with the Secretary of State and of bills with the Governor, following the final proofreading by the house of origin.

**Floor:** A colloquialism describing the interior of either house.

**Held in Committee:** When a bill fails to get sufficient votes to pass out of committee.

**Hearing:** A public session of a committee of a legislative body to obtain information on a proposed law or resolution.

**Interim:** The interval between regular sessions, or a long recess within a session.

**Interim Study:** A bill referred for interim study is dead for the session. The subject matter of the bill is assigned to an appropriate committee for study during the period the legislature is not in session (the interim).

**Joint Committee:** A legislative committee composed of members of both houses.

**Joint Resolution:** A measure, similar to a bill, that must be approved in both houses and by the president or governor.

**Majority Floor Leader:** The chief spokes-person and strategist of the majority party who directs the party's resources in legislative efforts.

**Motion:** A formal proposal offered by a member.

**Position Papers:** The written position of an organization or a person on a particular issue.

**Ranking Member:** The member of the minority party on a legislative committee who ranks first after the chairperson.

**Readings:** The three readings of a bill required at different stages of the legislative process. In Congress, the first reading is when the bill is introduced and printed by title in the Congressional Record. The second, often a



reading in full, is when the bill is brought out of committee for consideration before the chamber. The third reading, usually by title only, comes after amendments have been voted on and the bill comes up for a final vote.

**Representative:** A member of the House of Representatives in Congress or of the lower house of state legislatures.

**Senate:** The upper house of Congress and of 49 state legislatures.

**Senator:** A member of the United States Senate or of the upper house in state legislatures.

**Session:** The period during which a legislative body assembles and carries on its regular business.

**Speaker of the House:** The presiding officer in the House of Representatives and in the lower chamber of state legislatures.

**Veto:** Action by the executive to disapprove a measure. May be overridden. A "pocket veto" occurs when a governor fails to sign a bill after final adjournment and cannot be overridden.

**Whip:** An assistant floor leader who aids the majority or minority floor leader of each party in each House of Congress and in state legislatures.

# HOW TO CONDUCT A MEETING AT YOUR LOCAL LEGISLATOR'S OFFICE

## TELL THE LEGISLATOR ABOUT YOURSELF AND THE HOSPITAL

- A description of your position at the hospital
- Total number of hospital employees
- Total amount of taxes paid in the current year
- Current and future construction plans for the hospital
- Additional specific details about your hospital you believe are important to share
- The total amount of indigent care your hospital performs annually

## EXPLAIN WHAT THE GOOD GOVERNMENT GROUP IS

- The GGG is a nonpartisan employee organization that aims to keep employees informed and engaged with state and local political issues. The GGG follows all politics, but healthcare issues are our main focus.

## GIVE EXAMPLES OF WHAT THE GGG AND GGG CHAIRMEN DO

- Legislator meet-and-greets
- Hospital tours
- Inform other employees about elections and political issues

## HELPFUL HINTS

- Do not feel you need to meet with your legislator alone if you do not feel comfortable doing so. If you do not have anyone to go with you and you want someone for support, let the Director of Public Affairs know.
- Don't be nervous. Legislators are interested to meet you and to have the ability to access your members.
- Leave a business card with your contact information, including cell phone number.
- Bring and leave your hospital's community benefit report and a hospital fact sheet.

# ABOUT GOOD GOVERNMENT GROUP

## WHAT IS THE GOOD GOVERNMENT GROUP (GGG)?

GGG is a nonpartisan, independent group that operates in accordance with all relevant state and federal election laws. Members include administrators, physicians, volunteers, H2U members, and other staff. GGG provides a unique opportunity for all HCA Healthcare staff to become more informed about and engaged in local, state, and national political issues. It's a great way to have a voice in government policy and legislation.

## WHAT DO WE DO?

GGG facilitates meetings to discuss current local, state and national political issues, as well as hosts facility tours for candidates and elected officials. They get involved in legislative calls to action through email, telephone calls, or writing letters to elected officials on issues important to members. Members also participate in community and state-level advocacy and volunteer in political campaigns. Our members serve as the face of HCA Healthcare in their communities.

## WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?

*To be informed* — GGG members have access to the latest information on policy issues of importance to our industry via forums, regular email alerts, and news updates.

*Getting involved* — Participating gives you an opportunity to have a say in the political process by accessing tools and resources that help you to register to vote, contact and meet with elected officials, volunteer on campaigns, and more.

*To affect positive change* — Staying informed and getting involved are the best ways to increase your influence in the policy- and decision-making process.

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**Be informed. Get involved. Have a voice.**  
GoodGovernmentGroup.org

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# THE FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The chart below outlines the process of how a bill becomes a law. It is important to note that most bills never make it to the president's desk – in fact, that very rarely happens. Regardless, it is still important to understand the list of hurdles that a bill must overcome before becoming a law.

