



Town Hall Meetings: Tips for Civil Engineers

Town Hall Meetings are the very essence of democracy. They present a chance for citizens to directly confront those elected to represent them in government. The hope is that all involved will treat others with respect, but unfortunately this is not always the case. However, even in the face of potentially frustrating circumstances, civil engineers and engaged citizens know to cherish the opportunity to make their voices heard.

In short, **citizens and lawmakers should not shy away from these opportunities for engagement!**

A few tips to help you get something out of your next Town Hall Meeting:

- **Arrive early** to get a seat and possibly meet with an elected official's staff on hand for the event, or maybe even the elected official himself/herself.
- **Always treat elected officials and staff with respect for their position and the office**, even if you don't agree with the opinions and actions of the individual that currently holds office.
- **Don't hesitate** to bring up a subject not listed on the agenda.
- Even if you're not comfortable speaking in front of the group, you can still **interact with elected officials and staff before and after the program**.
- **Keep your remarks brief**, whether addressing the assembled group or in one-on-one interactions before and after. If the topic demands more than a few minutes of discussion, ask to set up a meeting in the lawmaker's district office at a later date.
- **Download briefing information in advance** from the ASCE Government Relations webpage at <http://www.asce.org/govrel> and the "Click and Connect" with Congress advocacy website to learn background on the issues to share with your lawmakers and their staff.
- **Provide feedback to ASCE** through the grassroots activity form at <http://www.asce.org/keycontacts>

Thanks for being an ASCE Key Contact!

If you have any further questions on this or other grassroots activities, contact ASCE Government Relations at govwash@asce.org or 202-789-7850.