CRA’s Leadership in Science Policy Institute
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Having the Conversation -
Getting Ready; The Execution;
The Follow Up

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Know Something About The Federal Budget Environment for Research

Administration's Ten Year Plan for Defense and Non-defense Discretionary Spending FY 2020-FY 2029 ($ in billions)

Spending Caps in Current Law vs Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019

Select Science & Tech Programs in FY 2020 Appropriations So Far

Estimated percentage change from FY 2019, nominal dollars

FY 2020 Request

House

Senate

*Includes renewables, nuclear, fossil, grid research, cybersecurity, ARPA-E, LABS
**Includes ARS, NIFA, ERS, NASS.

Senate figures (except NIH) refer to committee-approved funding. Most House figures have been approved on House floor.
The Message

- What is your message?
- Who is your audience for that message?
- What do you want them to do once delivering your message?
- Refine & continue delivering of your message without “wearing out your welcome”
The Congressional Audience

- Public Policy Oriented Individuals
- Probably Young and Overworked
- Definitely Smart and Underpaid
- Committee Staff or Personal Office Staff?
- House Staff or Senate Staff
Widder’s Do’s and Don’ts
Deliver the Message & Establish a Relationship

• Know Your Audience; Establish Yourself as a resource for them
• Know something about the role they play in the legislative process
• Introductions and get to the point: “Jobs, jobs, and jobs”
• How much time will you have - 30 minutes if you are lucky
• Expect the meeting environment to be chaotic
• Don’t ask “Do You Know About .....
• Don’t kill them with your acronyms, “inside baseball” or “paper”
• “Localize” the message
• “Internationalize” the message
• Data vs Anecdotes
What Kind of Reactions Can You Expect During Your Meetings?

• We are big supporters of computing research. In fact my boss is a strong supporter of the America COMPETES bill and cybersecurity legislation.
• What is this “Internet of Things”
• Are we falling behind our international competitors in artificial intelligence?
• Do the Chinese still have the fastest supercomputers in the world? What are we doing about that?
• My boss is fully supportive of funding science but we are facing record setting deficits and we have to hold the line on spending.
• Is the funding authorized for the computing research and education your are advocating? You know that funding has to be authorized before it can be appropriated.
• With respect to NSF, do you think the Congress should specify funding for the CISE directorate?
Homework - Prep for a 30 Min Meeting with Congressional and/or Exec Branch Staff (OMB)

- Develop a message that you (as a team) can deliver in 15 minutes
- Prepare for audiences with different degrees of familiarity or points of view in re computing research and education issues
- Practice as a team/group - who takes the lead in which meeting and why
- Use of "props and docs"
- Run through your talk with your colleagues this evening
- You will get a chance to try it out on a variety of the personalities you are likely to meet
- Real time feedback to be provided by role players
Thank You

Questions?

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