

RIVER BEND  
FOOD BANK

MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING**  
AMERICA

# CONTACTING YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

## TIMING, TACTICS, TOOLS, TIPS

*Introduce yourselves in the chat box!*



# Agenda

- Timing
- Tactics
- LTEs and Op Eds
- Contacting EOs
- Meeting your EOs
- Tools / Tips



# Timing - Congress

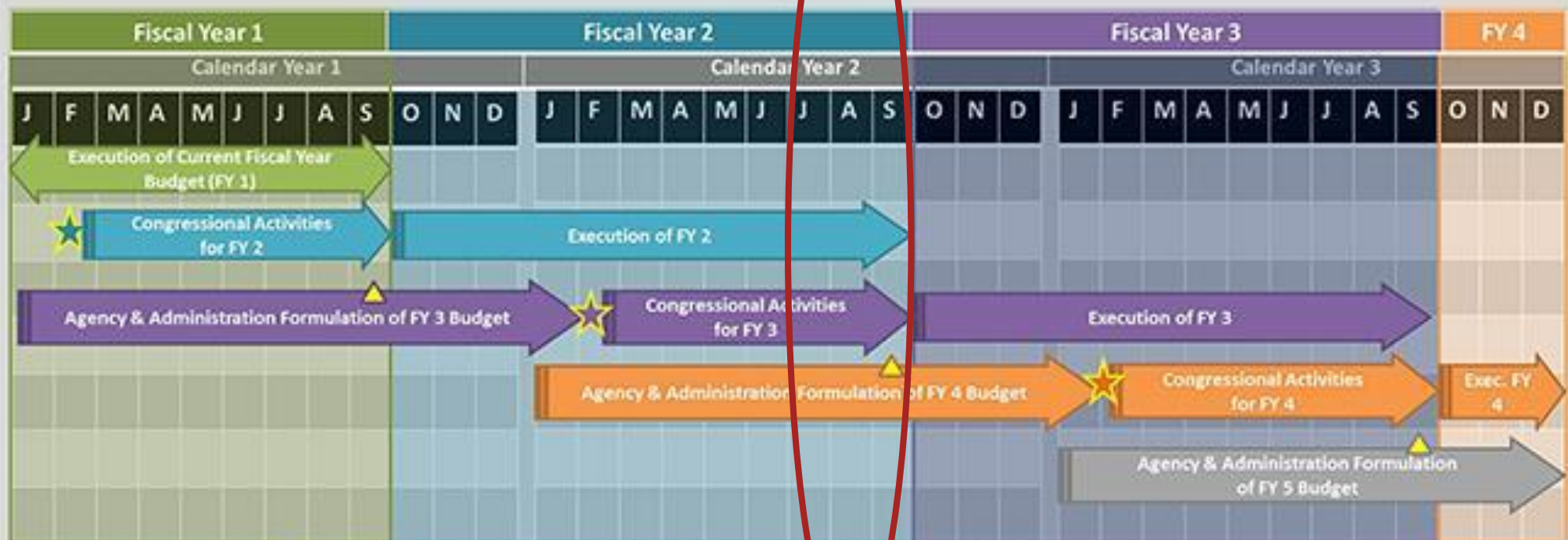
Jan 3

Convene

Jan 4 - Jan 5

State Work Period

## NOAA Research Budget Process Timeline



★ The President's Budget Request for the coming fiscal year (FY 2) is delivered to Congress in February.

▲ Typically, the Department of Commerce submits its budget proposal to the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) in early Fall.

NOTE: The above timeline shows the budget formulation, congressional presentation, and execution of the budgets in theory. This timeline is an estimate. The timing of the budget process can be influenced by many driers, and Congress rarely enacts a budget before the start of the Fiscal Year on October 1.

Dec 13 - Dec 31

State Work Period

# Timing - State

## Iowa

January – April

- End-January - deadline for bill introduction

## Illinois

January – May/June

- Mid-February - deadline for bill introduction

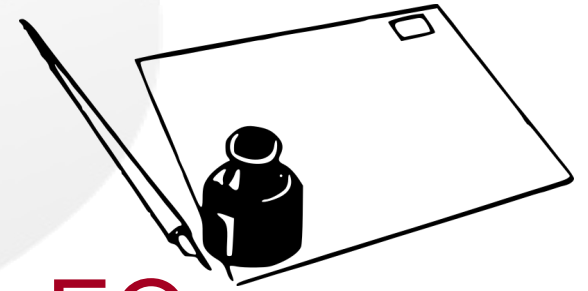
Veto session in fall



# Advocacy Tactics

Tactic	Associated Superpowers	Time required
Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Depends on person</li></ul>
Staying Current on Policy Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 15+ minutes a week</li></ul>
Championing Anti-Hunger Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion</li><li>• People / Friends</li><li>• Social Media or other outlet</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 15+ minutes a week</li></ul>
Writing Letters to the Editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion</li><li>• Persuasion</li><li>• Free online grammar checker</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 30+ minutes per letter</li></ul>
Contacting Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion</li><li>• Persuasion</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 15+ minutes a week</li></ul>
Meeting with your Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Passion</li><li>• Persuasion</li><li>• Public Speaking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3-4 hours in prep time, meeting time, and sending thank yous.</li></ul>

# LTEs and Op-Eds



Educate community and show EOs people care about an issue.

- Focus on your local papers
- Understand guidelines (250 words)
- Stick to only 1 topic, stress why you care, fact check
- Proofread
- Include your contact information

If your LTE gets published, share widely on social!



# Contacting EOs

- Writing letters / emails
- Phone calls
- In-person meetings / Zooms

Double check your rep!

<https://myreps.datamade.us/>

- Enter address
- Get Local, State, National EOs

# Common Elements for Any EO Contact

- Establish that you are a constituent
- Intro / summary of why you are calling
  - Personal Experience
  - Expertise
- Specific details about why support/oppose
  - Threes
  - Bill #s
- Clear “Ask”



# Sample

Hi, my name is XXX, and I live in Rep. XXXXXX district. I am contacting the office to ask that the Congressman does all he can to ensure that the upcoming Child Nutrition Bill is passed and includes provisions to strengthen summer meal programs. As a volunteer at the River Bend Food Bank, I think it is as important to pass anti-hunger legislation to provide healthy food to families experiencing hunger.

A strong Child Nutrition Bill will include provisions for:

- A Summer electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card for low-income families with children during the summer months and when schools are not in session so families can supplement their household food budgets,
- Allow kids to consume meals off-site, which would enable communities to adopt innovative program models to reach children who lack access to a summer feeding site, and
- Align the area eligibility requirement for summer feeding and educational programs to allow more learning programs to offer meals in the summer

I ask that the Congressmen support the upcoming Child Nutrition Bill so that our community can be sure that summertime does not mean that more students are going hungry.

Thank you for your attention and support in this matter.

Sincerely,

NAME

ADDRESS

# Tools and Tips

- Letter, EO Website, Email, Organization Tool?
- Resistbot
  - <https://resist.bot>
  - Text the word resist to [50409](https://resist.bot)
  - FB DM
- Take an organizational letter and send personally

## SEND QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Hearing from Iowans is essential to helping me represent you in Congress. Complete the following form to share your views.

### Your Information

TO SHARE YOUR VIEWS WITH SENATOR GRASSLEY, PLEASE FILL IN THE INFORMATION BELOW.

**Ask your Member of Congress to visit a food bank**

The best way to help legislators understand the scope of hunger in America is to invite them to see it for themselves. Help us urge Members of Congress to visit a food bank in their district to see how these programs are making an impact in your community.

**SEND MESSAGE**

**Recipients**

- Your Senators
- Your Representatives

**Contact**

\* Required fields

\* Title:

\* First Name:

\* Last Name:

\* Your Email:

\* Address 1:

Address 2:

**For security**

**SUBMIT**

Hi, I'm Resistbot! What would you like to write to Congress?

Congress needs to pass H.R.1 now. It will increase voting access and has strong bipartisan support.

Sounds great! I'll deliver that to Senators Brown and Portman, and Representative Beatty. 🙌🇺🇸

# Meeting you EO

- Set up your meeting
- Prepare
  - Agenda
  - If group, who says what
  - Prep a “leave behind”
- Attend your meeting
  - Dress professionally
  - Get there early
  - Follow agenda
  - Be respectful
  - Don’t forget the “leave behind”
  - Leave on time
- Send a Thank You
- Report Back





Anti-Hunger Advocacy Guide  
other resources on Agency Zone  
Forms and Resources

[advocacy@riverbendfoodbank.org](mailto:advocacy@riverbendfoodbank.org)



# River Bend Food Bank's Advocacy Guidelines

- Never supporting a party or candidate
- Always nonpartisan
- Always directly related to hunger relief
- Message around issues whenever possible, focus on specific legislation only if it is anti-hunger

# THANK YOU!

1. Reach out to Becky at [bgruhl@riverbendfoodbank.org](mailto:bgruhl@riverbendfoodbank.org) or 563-345-6490, ext. 217
2. Check out the Agency Zone on our website for forms, resources, and helpful materials
3. Stay tuned for more webinars in the future!