

NCUIH Releases New Toolkit to Help Urban Indian Organizations Engage Members of Congress

Category: Policy Blog

written by Mary Jomia | October 23, 2025

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) has released a new resource to support Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) in strengthening relationships with policymakers: *A How-To Toolkit for Inviting Members of Congress to Visit Your Urban Indian Organization*.

CHECKLIST | For Inviting Members of Congress to Visit Your UIO

Before the Visit

Scheduling & Outreach

- ☐ Review Congressional recess dates (*House and Senate*)
- ☐ Propose 2-3 possible visit dates that work for clinic leadership and board
- ☐ Identify your Members of Congress via congress.gov
- ☐ Locate district office contact info
- ☐ Call to get scheduler's email address
- ☐ Send invitation email (*customized template*)
- ☐ Follow up within 1 week if no response

Internal Coordination

- ☐ Inform leadership, board, and relevant staff about the potential visit
- ☐ Assign a staff lead to coordinate logistics
- ☐ Schedule a planning meeting with internal team
- ☐ Create or update clinic fact sheet and talking points

During the Visit

Hosting Logistics

- ☐ Prepare an agenda and share it with the Congressional staff in advance
- ☐ Assign roles (e.g., greeter, tour guide, story sharer, photographer)
- ☐ Set up signage and seating in advance

Message Delivery

- ☐ Share clinic mission and key data points (*patients served, services offered*)
- ☐ Share 1-2 stories that highlight your community's needs and successes
- ☐ Highlight at least one specific policy ask or funding concern
- ☐ Offer to serve as a resource on future legislation

Documentation

- ☐ Take photos (*with permission*) of the Member interacting with staff and patients
- ☐ Collect quotes or reactions (*with consent*) for social media or internal reports

After the Visit

Follow-Up Communication

- ☐ Send a thank-you email to scheduler and any attending staffers
- ☐ Recap key conversations or questions raised during the visit
- ☐ Offer to send additional information or materials

Internal Debrief

- ☐ Hold a short staff debrief to evaluate what went well and what could be improved
- ☐ Collect feedback from participants (*clinic and Congressional team, if possible*)
- ☐ Store materials used (*agendas, handouts, photos*) for future visits

Visibility & Reporting

- ☐ Post approved photos to social media, tagging the Member (*if appropriate*)
- ☐ Share a short summary with your board or funders
- ☐ Send NCUIH a short recap for tracking and support at policy@ncuih.org



This new toolkit provides step-by-step guidance for UIOs to invite and host Members of Congress, which provides an opportunity to showcase services provided to American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) people living in urban areas, share community impact, raise awareness of urban Indian health needs, and highlight the importance of federal support for UIOs.

Developed by NCUIH in collaboration with the Global Health Advocacy Incubator, the toolkit includes:

- Step-by-step instructions and best practices for scheduling a congressional visit.
- Template email language to help connect with congressional schedulers.

- Tips for highlighting the impact of UIOs and issues facing Native communities in urban areas.