

2023

# HILL DAYS PARTICIPANT GUIDE

APPROPRIATIONS HILL DAYS



June 5-16, 2023

## **Dear America Forward Coalition members,**

Thank you for participating in America Forward's FY24 Appropriations Hill Days. We're so excited to have you join us!

Our Hill Days (June 5-16, 2023) provide a unique opportunity for America Forward Coalition members to be powerful advocates for our shared Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) priorities outlined in our [Coalition Appropriations Letter](#) that directly impact the more than 15,000 communities and 9.5 million individuals served by our network nationwide. Our Hill Days also offer a chance to promote the Coalition's collective policy priorities, deepen your organization's visibility and influence, and build stronger relationships with key decision-makers in Congress. In this critical moment in our national politics, our collective advocacy for our funding and policy priorities will strengthen our education and workforce systems; help meet the needs of this moment; and build a more equitable, just, and resilient future.

Following the release of President Biden's FY24 budget in March, Congress held a number of hearings and is now beginning to draft spending bills. As Congress works to make decisions on federal funding, hearing from America Forward Coalition members about the work you do and the impact you have on the ground in their districts will be a powerful step toward securing the inclusion of our priorities.

Whether this is your first time connecting with policymakers on Capitol Hill or you are a seasoned advocate, your engagement with decision-makers plays a crucial role in helping to build congressional support for America Forward's collective policy and advocacy priorities. In this guide, we provide you with all the information and tools that you and other members of your organization might need ahead of our Hill Days, including a review of the key elements of a Hill meeting; important points to cover when speaking with congressional offices; and additional background on America Forward for your reference. We hope you will find this to be a helpful resource as you prepare for your upcoming meetings!

Above all, thank you for prioritizing this effort and for recognizing the power that a collective, equity-driven, innovative, and evidence-based voice holds as we aim to transform local impact into national change. If you need assistance, please contact Anthony Covell at [anthony\\_covell@newprofit.org](mailto:anthony_covell@newprofit.org).

**In partnership,**

**The America Forward Team**

# AMERICA FORWARD'S FY24 APPROPRIATIONS HILL WEEK GOALS



America Forward's FY24 Appropriations Hill Days will take place from June 5, 2023 - June 16, 2023, with an in-person Hill Meeting Day on Tuesday, June 6.

## Goals for Congressional Meetings

**As you meet with congressional offices, we encourage you to keep in mind the following goals:**

- 1.** Introduce the congressional staffer to the America Forward Coalition, as represented by you and (if applicable) those you've brought along to the meeting.
- 2.** Present them with your "leave behind" materials including the America Forward FY24 Appropriations Letter.
- 3.** Educate the congressional staffer about the importance of the specific funding you are advocating for within the [America Forward Coalition's FY24 Appropriations Request Letter](#) through the lens of your organization and stories of impact from your organization's work.
- 4.** Build and deepen relationships with the congressional office.
- 5.** Ask the congressional office to support the funding request you have focused on in your meeting.

# FY24 APPROPRIATIONS HILL DAYS:

## PREPARATION

Leading up to and throughout our FY24 Appropriations Hill Days, America Forward will be hosting a training session and office hours, to ensure that all participating Coalition members are well prepared, equipped, and supported to execute successful congressional meetings.

See below, or check out America Forward's FY24 Appropriations Hill Days landing page, for training recordings and resources to support your Hill Days engagement.

### Important Dates to Remember

<p><b>Wednesday, May 24</b> <b>2:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)</b></p> <p><a href="#">America Forward Hill Days Training</a></p>	<p><b>In this training, we will provide:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A review of America Forward Coalition's FY24 Appropriations Priorities</li><li>• Updates on Other Policy Initiatives</li><li>• Tips for Requesting a Meeting</li><li>• Ways to Organize Your Meeting</li><li>• A Deep Dive on Storytelling</li></ul> <p>Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register for the training.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday, May 31</b> <b>2:00-3:00 p.m. (EDT)</b></p> <p>America Forward Hill Days Office Hour</p>	<p>During this hour, we will have America Forward staff available to answer any questions you might have heading into Hill Days. We are happy to do additional individual calls as needed.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday, June 6,</b> <b>All day</b></p> <p>America Forward In-person Hill Day</p>	<p>America Forward staff and Coalition members will be on Capitol Hill meeting in-person with Congressional offices and discussing our collective funding and policy priorities. America Forward staff will be set up in the Rayburn Cafeteria all day to answer any questions and talk with you about your meetings.</p>
<p><b>Tuesday, June 6,</b> <b>4:30 p.m</b></p> <p>Happy Hour</p>	<p>Join the America Forward team and other Coalition members at <a href="#">Bullfeathers</a> for a happy hour and celebration of our collective advocacy!</p>

## Scheduling Meetings with Congressional Offices

As you prepare for your meetings, we have developed several resources for getting organized, building your story, and helping us keep track of who you are meeting with:

- **[Key Congressional Targets](#)**: Use this spreadsheet to prioritize meetings with key members of the House and Senate.

First, identify members in both the House and Senate that serve on the Appropriations and Authorization Committees and then prioritize your outreach to those Members of Congress who represent the states and districts where your program operates.

The next tier would include Members who may serve on other Committees but who represent the states and districts where your program operates. *Please note this spreadsheet includes staff contact information to help you set up your meetings.*

- To find your members of Congress, input your zip code(s) using this [“Find Your Representative” tool](#) and this [“Contact Your Senators” tool](#). If they are not on the Appropriations or Authorizing Committees, visit their website or reach out to America Forward to gather contact information.
  - If you’re not sure which office to target for your outreach, let the America Forward team know and we would be happy to help guide you and assist in identifying appropriate offices.
- **[Meeting Request Template](#)**: Use this template to email Congressional staff members in the offices you are targeting for your outreach.
  - **[Meeting Organization Worksheet](#)**: This worksheet will help you and your team organize the structure and framing of your meeting. It includes questions to help you form your story and pitch and steps to make your meeting flow naturally.

## Suggested Meeting Structure

### Introductions:

- Introduce yourself and allow the rest of your team to introduce themselves.
- Ensure that you give the Congressional staffer an opportunity to introduce themselves.
- Introduce your organization and the America Forward Coalition.
- Frame the discussion and convey why you're here.
- Share the "leave-behinds" including the America Forward FY24 Appropriations Request Letter.

### Appropriations:

- Using the [America Forward FY24 Appropriations Request Letter](#), highlight the specific funding that you and those attending will want to focus on for this portion of your meeting.
- For each ask, hone the story and/or data used to illustrate the importance of the ask. Leverage the [meeting organization worksheet](#).
- Make sure you are highlighting your organization's impact, as well as stories and data. Try to tie it to the state/district of the congressional office you are meeting with, if possible.

### Policy (optional):

- If you'd like to take an opportunity to raise one of our joint policy priorities, you can do that here. Click on the topics below for more information on our current policy activities:
  - [America Forward's RENEW Act Initiative](#)
  - [WIOA Reauthorization](#)
  - [Short Term Pell Grants](#)
  - [ESRA Reauthorization/Innovation](#)
  - [SNAP E&T Reforms](#)
- If there are other policy priorities you are already pushing for, lift them. If you have one-pagers, policy briefs, or legislative text, you can share or leave behind for the staffer, this is a great opportunity to get your ideas and priorities in front of a congressional office.
- For each ask, hone the story and data used to illustrate the importance of the ask. Leverage the meeting organization worksheet.
- Make sure you highlight your organization's impact, stories, and data. Try to tie it to the state/district of the congressional office you are meeting with, if possible.

### Closing:

- Sum up your key points and reiterate your asks.
- Clarify any follow up that needs to be done.
- Thank the staffer for their time.

# POST- MEETING ACTION ITEMS



## **Document Meeting Outcomes:**

Record the results and outcomes from your meetings in this [form](#). Collective advocacy works best when we share information. We ask that all feedback be submitted by Wednesday, June 21st.

## **Share on Social Media!**

See page 9 for information and tips for sharing on social media.

## **Send Relevant Follow-up:**

Please offer to provide any follow-up information or materials that might be needed after your meeting(s) (e.g., reports, data, resources, answers to questions you needed to double-check, etc.), and flag for America Forward.

## **Send a Thank you Email to the Office:**

A primary goal of this effort is to establish and/or strengthen relationships between congressional offices and your organization. We ask that you please keep the relationship warm after the meeting, both immediately after and as you move forward in your work.

# ABOUT AMERICA FORWARD



- America Forward is the nonpartisan policy initiative of New Profit, a national nonprofit venture philanthropy fund that seeks to break down barriers between all people and opportunity in America.
- America Forward unites social entrepreneurs with policymakers and advances a public policy agenda that fosters innovation, rewards results, catalyzes cross-sector partnerships, advances equity, and translates local impact into national change.
- America Forward leads the America Forward Coalition, a network of over 100 social innovation organizations that champion innovative, effective, and efficient solutions to our country's most pressing social problems.

## What We Do

- **Lead Collective Advocacy:** The America Forward Coalition pursues collective policy agendas in the areas of early learning, K-12 education, higher education, whole-learner, economic mobility, social innovation and evidence-based policy, poverty alleviation, and national service.
- **Build Capacity for Sustainable Policy Work:** America Forward partners with Coalition organizations and New Profit portfolio and network organizations to help build their advocacy, policy, and systems change capacities and foster cross-sector collaborative learning opportunities.
- **Amplify the Voice of Social Innovation:** America Forward supports strategies that spread the reach of social innovation policy through thought leadership, events and external engagement, communications, and public education materials.

## America Forward Facts

- America Forward was founded in 2007
- More than 100 social innovation organizations make up the America Forward Coalition
- America Forward has leveraged \$1.9 billion for social innovation
- America Forward Coalition members are achieving measurable outcomes in more than 15,000 communities nationwide
- America Forward Coalition members touch the lives of 9.5 million Americans each year

## Members of the America Forward Coalition

10,000 Degrees | Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors | Acelero Learning/Shine Early Learning | Aliento | Alternative Staffing Alliance | American Student Assistance | America's Promise Alliance | AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation | Aurora Institute | Bard Early Colleges | BellXcel | Beyond 12 | Big Thought | Bottom Line | Braven | CASEL | CEEMI | Children's Aid | Children's Literacy Initiative | Citizen Schools | City Year | CoGenerate | College Advising Corps | College Possible | Corporation for Supportive Housing | CURYJ | Diverse Charter Schools Coalition | Educators for Excellence | EdLoC | Enlearn | Enterprise Community Partners | Envision Education | Equal Opportunity Schools | Eskolta School Research and Design | exalt | Eye to Eye | First 72+ | Freedom Project | FUSE Corps | FutureFit AI | Generation Citizen | Genesys Works | GreenLight Fund | Highlander Institute | Imblaze by Big Picture Learning | iMentor | Institute for Child Success | Jumpstart for Young Children | KIPP | Latinos For Education | Leading Educators | LEAP Innovations | LIFT | Local Initiatives Support Corporation | Maycomb Capital | Millennial Action Project | Mindright | Mortar | National Math and Science Initiative | New Classrooms Innovation Partners | New Politics Leadership Academy | New Teacher Center | Nurse-Family Partnership | Opportunity@Work | Our Voice Nuestra Voz | P.S. 305 | Parents Amplifying Voices in Education | Peace First | Peer Forward | Peer Health Exchange | Per Scholas | Pillars | POWER | PowerMyLearning | Project Evident | Project QUEST | Propel America | Public Allies | Push Black | Reading Partners | REDF | Saga Education | Service Year Alliance | Single Stop | Social Finance US | Social Impact Architects | Springboard Collaborative | Station1 | Stockton Service Corps | Teach For America | Tech Goes Home | The Farmlink Project | The F.I.N.D. Design | The Learning Accelerator | The Michelson 20MM Foundation | The Opportunity Network | The People | The Urban Association of Forestry and Fire Professionals | Think of Us | Third Sector Capital Partners | Transcend, Inc. | Turnaround for Children | uAspire | UF Lastinger Center for Learning | UnboundEd | UpTogether | Valor Collegiate Academies | Voice for Adoption | Wyman Center | Year Up | YouthBuild USA | Zearn

**Learn more about America Forward [here](#).**

# HILL DAYS

## SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Thank you for participating in America Forward’s Appropriations Hill Days! We hope that you’ll take the opportunity this week to highlight your advocacy efforts and share our Coalition’s [FY 24 Appropriations Request Letter](#) to build critical momentum for investments that will benefit all of our communities.

To help with that effort, we’ve put together this social media guide, including relevant hashtags and handles, best practices, and sample posts. If you have not already, please also make sure to follow America Forward on Twitter and Facebook, where we will post about activities during this year’s Hill Days. Don’t forget to tag **America Forward (@America\_Forward)** in your posts and use the hashtag **#AmericaForwardFY24HillDays** so we can track and amplify social media activity from June 5-16.

We also encourage you to take photos of your team engaging during the Hill Days. Feel free to ask to take photos with member offices and tag the members of Congress and offices you meet with in any social posts. Please note, that some offices do not allow staff to pose for pictures with constituents so please be sure to ask what each office’s policy is before taking and sharing photos. **If you would like to share your photos with our team for inclusion in internal and external communications, please email them to [America\\_Forward@newprofit.org](mailto:America_Forward@newprofit.org).**

Please contact America Forward Field Leadership Partner, Jessica Crawford, at [Jessica\\_Crawford@newprofit.org](mailto:Jessica_Crawford@newprofit.org) with any additional questions, and thank you again for your partnership and support!

### # Relevant Hashtags

**#AmericaForwardFY24HillDays**  
**#AmericaForward**  
**#EarlyLearning**  
**#K12Education**  
**#WholeLearner**  
**#HigherEd**

**#WorkforceDevelopment**  
**#EconomicMobility**  
**#SocialInnovation**  
**#EvidenceBased**  
**#NationalService**



## Relevant Twitter Handles

<b>America Forward</b>	@America_Forward
<b>Senate Appropriations Full Committee Chairs</b>	Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) - @PattyMurray Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) - @SenatorCollins
<b>Senate LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee Committee Chairs</b>	Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) - @SenatorBaldwin Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) - @SenCapito
<b>House Appropriations Full Committee Chairs</b>	Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) - @rosadelauro Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX) - @RepKayGranger
<b>House Appropriations LHHS Subcommittee Chairs</b>	Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) - @rosadelauro Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL) - @Robert_Aderholt

*If you would like help with the Twitter handles of members of Congress who are in your organization's footprint, please reach out to us at [America\\_Forward@newprofit.org](mailto:America_Forward@newprofit.org).*

## Social Media Best Practices

- Include photos in your posts to make them more engaging;
- Use hashtags to flag specific topics so that other users interested in the same topic are able to find your tweet;
- Post a 'thank you' tweet after each meeting with a member or staff member. Include a photo/screenshot where possible;
- Tag policymakers and staff members in thank you tweets to increase the likelihood of engagement;
- Follow, retweet, and like other Coalition organizations on Twitter and Facebook who are advocating for our collective funding priorities.

## Sample Social Media Posts

### Twitter:

"We are so excited to join @America\_Forward this week for #AmericaForwardFY24HillDays to advocate for critical funding priorities to support our work & our communities: <https://bit.ly/3BlxeMs>"

"@SENATOR/REP, our org depends on [PROGRAM/FUNDING SOURCE HERE] to serve our [students, families, educators, & communities]. #LetsMoveAmericaForward by supporting & increasing \$\$ for [PROGRAM/FUNDING SOURCE HERE]! #AmericaForwardFY24HillDays"

"We must invest in federal programs that advance equity, innovation, results, and partnerships to propel #AmericaForward. During #AmericaForwardFY24HillDays, we're sharing our story and advocating for [#ISSUE]"

"The @America\_Forward Coalition understands the critical role federal education, workforce, social innovation, & national service programs play in supporting communities. Investing in these programs moves #AmericaForward. See our approps letter here: <https://bit.ly/3BlxeMs> #AmericaForwardFY24HillDays

Thank you [@MEMBER OF CONGRESS] for meeting with @America\_Forward today to discuss the importance of funding the America Forward Coalition's [#ISSUE] priorities! #AmericaForwardFY24HillDays"

### Facebook:

"[ORGANIZATION]'s work [in EDUCATION/CRIMINAL JUSTICE/WORKFORCE/NATIONAL SERVICE/ISSUE] is critical to creating healthier, more equitable, and more resilient communities, and would not be possible without support from[INSERT PROGRAM/FUNDING HERE]. We urge [SENATOR/REP] to support our communities by continuing and expanding federal investments in [INSERT PROGRAM/FUNDING HERE]."

"SENATOR/REP, #LetsMoveAmericaForward by investing in key programs that support our communities. Our Coalition understands the critical role that federal education, workforce development, and national service programs play in the lives and futures of the people we serve. Show us that you do too by supporting our appropriations priorities: <https://bit.ly/3BlxeMs>



# THANK YOU



**Website**

[www.americaforward.org](http://www.americaforward.org)



**Boston Office Address**

99 Bedford St., Suite 500  
Boston, MA 02111



**Email Address**

[america\\_forward@newprofit.org](mailto:america_forward@newprofit.org)



**DC Office Address**

1400 I St. NW, Suite 900  
Washington, DC 20005