

GOP Communicators Handbook



ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH CONGRESS

House Republican Conference
Jeb Hensarling, Chairman

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2011 House Republican Leadership Communicators

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Suggested Communications Actions in Session and during the Constituent Work Week

D.C. Work Week

MESSAGE- A strong, lasting message needs to be created for the upcoming week(s) to ensure the office and member stay on task and on point. Also, be sure to include how Republicans are keeping their [Pledge to America](http://pledge.GOP.gov) {pledge.GOP.gov}.

ACTION ITEMS

- Monday or Tuesday before votes, reach out to media in your district for a possible story on the issue(s) at hand and the efforts of House Republicans to resolve the problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- If your boss spoke on the floor, post it to your Website, YouTube channel, Facebook and Twitter. (Always cross post on all social media sites-multiple times)
 - If you were not able to tape your boss' floor speech, email gopclips@mail.house.gov with the following information. Conference will find the clip and send it to you.
 - Member's name
 - Date on the floor
 - TV Channel
 - Start time on the floor
 - Stop time on the floor
 - General topic of speech
- Have your boss tape a 1-2 minute video discussing how he/she and fellow House Republicans are working for his/her district and Americans across the country.
 - If you do not have a camera, or are looking for a high-quality recording, email visual.media@mail.house.gov to book a time to record a video in the new Conference studio. This service is free and is available anytime to Member offices
- Issue a press release the day of a vote or when significant legislation is passed by Republicans
 - Post the press release on your Facebook Page and Tweet a link to the release on your website
- Contact conferencepress@mail.house.gov to offer your boss for national media hits that week—especially if he/she has a bill on the Floor
- Prepare an op/ed piece, highlighting House Republican efforts to listen and work for the American people after taking the majority back (and moving forward). Work with a local newspaper for placement, then send to your entire press list.
- Book a satellite feed from the House Recording Studio (5-3941) for interviews with local television stations
- Host a Tele Town Hall to discuss issues directly affecting your boss' constituents and their businesses

- Send an e-newsletter after final votes summarizing the last week or two of House Republican efforts on issues and legislation at hand. Include any information on upcoming events for the Constituent Work Week
 - Schedule a media availability from your district for the weekend

- Prepare for the Constituent Work Week
 - Arrange for tours and meetings with local small businesses and constituents. Ask these businesses if they allow media in their facilities. If so, pitch a story to local media.
 - If they do not, arrange for interviews with local media outlets before and after these events

Constituent Work Week

- Meet with local reporters and/or editorial boards to update them as to what is happening in Washington and document your boss' activities during the Constituent Work Week.
 - Discuss other relevant activities in your Committees or legislation your boss has introduced
 - Making good on promises in the Pledge to America
 - Use charts, graphs, and other visuals distributed through Conference
- Meet with local Chamber of Commerce officials on job creation
- Reference dollar figure of how much Republicans have cut since taking over the Majority
- Schedule a drop-in on a local radio station during morning or evening drive time, work with the station to promote the drop-in
- Do a daily blog post on your website about the previous day's activities and cross-post on your social media outlets
- Issue a press release on Friday highlighting your activity from the week. Include photos from your events
 - Tape a 2-3 minute YouTube video from your District Office or other landmark from your district, summarizing your activities
 - Post the press release and video on your website and other social media outlets

Always cross post on social media sites, frequently, every day.

Be sure to keep track of a check list of previous votes and legislation benefitting constituents for talking points for your boss's media hits. **"As a recap, here's what we've done in the Majority since going to work on behalf of the American people"**

Creating Press Lists

When entering a new office, you either will be taking over old lists from the previous press secretary or be forced to create entirely new lists. List maintenance is a critical part of a press secretary's responsibilities.

Getting Started

It is important to figure out all the news outlets that are in your Member's district (print/TV/radio/internet/trade publications/political newsletters/blogs). Most likely someone has already created this list, or there is an orderable media directory that a company has created – a book that organizes all the media outlets by categories (counties, towns, dailies, non-dailies, weeklies, and monthly publications).

As you begin to create your distribution lists, keep these things in mind:

- Organize your contacts (counties, issues, etc.).
- Gather all essential contact info: phone number, address, email address, Web site, and fax number.
- Determine who at the news outlet should be getting your announcements. (political writers, editors, columnist etc.)
- Conclude what news outlets should be getting your announcements (highest readership, Democrat v. Republican, District v. D.C.)
- Keep in contact- Email every other week or so to check in and make sure your contact hasn't moved.

Who and where to send your release:

- Find out how each media outlet likes to get their releases. Almost all reporters use email.
- Determine how specific the release is to your district (District vs. DC Release or both)
- Create issue-specific lists. There will be some monthly publications, coalition groups, or reporters in your district who are only interested in getting news on their issue of concern. This will allow you to communicate to your target audiences more efficiently.
- Keep track of what reporters in your district are writing about and contact them directly when your boss and he or she is working on a mutual issue.
- Don't forget social media publications and industry specific publications- Blogs, twitter, Facebook, online op-eds

Tips for Writing

Title- First messaging opportunity, what you want to resonate in your reader's mind. The best opportunity to frame the debate, on your side.

Summation-At the beginning, briefly provides a background of the talking points

Statistics and Polls- When cited correctly and originate from a credible source; they can strengthen your position. Always be sure to include sources to all facts, figures, data, polls etc.

Quotes-From experts in their field bring a human, relatable contact to the talking points.

Sound bites-Give an overall account of how your boss and Republicans have recently and will continue trying to rectify the problem. These are effective sound bites and quotes for media use.

Check List or Wrap Up- Specifically explain how your boss is proactively solving the problem/issue. Do not only point out the problem, but give details on how House Republicans are committed to resolving the problems . This is more of a checklist to ensure your boss touches all key messaging points.

Below are three timely “Messaging Theme” documents Conference has previously distributed. These are exemplary documents GOP Committees and the Conference have used for messaging on topics at a specific time.

1. [Increasing American Energy Production Will Lower Gasoline Prices, Create More Jobs. Courtesy of the House Natural Resources Committee and Energy and Commerce Committee](#)
2. [Talking Points on Jobs and Spending](#)
3. [Checklist on Jobs and Spending](#)

Textbook Press Releases

Below are various examples of well-planned, written, and executed press releases, statements and advisories. Please note the attention to:

- Short, engaging, and descriptive titles
- Quotes pertaining to the past, present and future with sourced data and facts.
- Taking a national or worldly issue and localizing it
- Use of social media to diversify and cross post
- Overall Republican messages and themes

Statements:

[McKeon Encourages Fiscal Responsibility on Second Anniversary of Failed Stimulus](#)

[Chairman Hastings Joins House Republican Leaders in Announcing the American Energy Initiative](#)

Constituent/District-Based Press Release

[McKinley Introduces Pair of Pro-West Virginia Jobs Amendments to Spending Cut Bill](#)

Press Release with follow-up Op-Ed and contributing article

[Congressman Paul Gosar on the President's FY 2012 Budget Proposal](#)

- [Opening up the Dialogue- The Hill](#)
- [Entitlements: We must Honor our Promises and Reform the Future- Politico's The Arena](#)

In Case You Missed It:

In Case You Missed It

Fox Business - [Rep. Kinzinger joins David Asman and Liz McDonald on Bulls and Bears to discuss the need to lift the de facto moratorium in order to drill in the Gulf.](#)

"We have to drill here for oil as we continue to explore other areas of energy production from nuclear to wind.....And it sends a message that we're committed to being energy secure."



Click [here](#) to watch video

Press Release with a floor speech:

Rep. Bilirakis Helps Job Creators, Repeals Burdensome 1099 Requirement

Washington, DC (March 3, 2011) – Rep. Bilirakis (FL-09) voted on Thursday to repeal the so-called 1099 provision, which unduly requires businesses to fill out excess IRS paperwork for every transaction over \$600 and is one of the many regulations included in the Democrats' health care overhaul.

"Repealing this requirement is a victory for America's small businesses, families and individuals," Bilirakis said. "This 1099 provision hampers small businesses with red tape and is one of the most out of touch ideas to come out of Washington in a long time."

Bilirakis cosponsored HR 4, the Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act of 2011, in order to help eliminate this enormous burden that takes time, energy and resources away from businesses. The bill passed with a 314-112 vote.

Watch Bilirakis discuss HR 4 on the House Floor here:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mNckAgAFkA>

Media Advisory:

*****Media Advisory*****

Congressman Boehner To Host 20th Annual 8th District Farm Forum

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman John Boehner (R-West Chester) will deliver remarks at the 20th Annual 8th District Farm Forum on Saturday, March 12th at 9:45 a.m. in Piqua, OH.

Each year, Congressman Boehner hosts Farm Forum to bring together experts from different sectors of the agriculture community for a discussion of ideas impacting the industry. This year's forum will feature a panel discussion of agriculture experts discussing EPA regulations and their effects on the agricultural sector. [Click here to read Congressman Boehner's column inviting Eighth District residents to participate in this year's Farm Forum.](#)

Please RSVP to Brittany.Bramell@mail.house.gov for credentialing purposes.

WHAT: 20th Annual 8th District Farm Forum

WHO: **John Boehner**, Congressman, OH-08
Bob Stallman, President, American Farm Bureau Federation (Keynote Speaker)
Jim Zehringer, Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture (Panel Moderator)
Jay Vroom, President and CEO, CropLife America
Susan Bodine, Partner, Barnes & Thornburg; Counsel, Agricultural Nutrient Policy Council
Colin Woodall, Vice President of Government Relations, National Cattlemen's Beef Association
Scott Nally, Director, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

WHEN: **Saturday, March 12, 2011, 9:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**
(Doors open for registration at 9:00 a.m. Event begins with introductory remarks from Congressman Boehner at 9:45 a.m. Mr. Stallman will deliver keynote address at 11:45 a.m.)

WHERE: **Edison Community College**
1973 Edison Drive
Piqua, Ohio, 45356

Tips for Working with Reporters

Deadlines - Know and respect each publication's deadline. Reporters live and die by them.

Navigate the newsroom - Learn which reporters cover what issues and make your pitch to the reporter on that assignment. Going directly to the right reporter goes a long way toward building a solid working relationship and cuts the time in half.

Return any and all requests - Return phone calls and emails promptly, even if you can't give reporters the information they want right then. A late reply or no reply makes you look incompetent, unreliable and self-important and reporters will not reach out to you again.

"Off the record" - You and every reporter you deal with should review the basics of on record, off record, background, etc. before venturing into that territory. Make sure your boss understands these guidelines, too. Remember, nothing is ever really off the record.

Have all the information beforehand - Know the topic, premise, angle, other interviewees involved and ask as many questions as you need. The more answers you get, the better prepared your boss will be for the interview. Touch base with other delegation press secretaries if it is a statewide story and share information.

Prep your boss - Brief your Member on the interview topic prior to each interview. Provide him or her with talking points, background information, district/constituent anecdotes, visuals to show (if TV) for the interview.

Shape editorial board opinion - If it's right for your boss, do quarterly editorial board meetings. Brief him or her thoroughly on the paper's positions, recent editorials, and likely questions. Make sure your boss starts out with a confident, five-minute introduction on his/her priorities and positions. Your boss should be driving the message.

Encourage personal relationship - If it is something you boss can do well, encourage him or her to build working relationships with reporters. Some reporters are more generous about covering a politician if they get to know him or her. Have a monthly meet and greet with reporters to cover everyone at once.

Help your local reporters be the first to get the breaking news - Call district reporters as soon as you have newsworthy information and give them a heads up and let them know you will be getting back to them shortly with a statement. If you help them look good with their editors, it helps develop your relationship with the reporter.

Hostile News Stories - Remain professional and remember that it is a two-way street. You are a needed service of information and most professional reporters are hesitant to "burn" a valued relationship. Not every story is going to be favorable.

Pick your battles - Put some thought into deciding when to go to an editor over unfairness and inaccuracy. Consider it a measure of last resort.

Always tell the truth - When asked a question that you are unsure of the answer, don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, but I'll find out and get back with you." Do not over-promise or lead them on. If you embellish, mislead or lie to a reporter, not only will you destroy your credibility with that reporter, but your boss' and office's as well.

Not every story is for you - Not every story will advance your boss's agenda, nor will every story necessarily need your boss quoted in it. Carefully weigh whether your boss contributing to a certain story will accomplish your overall communications goals and if the answer is no, take a pass.

Be reliable and helpful - Once you come through with requests over a period of time, they will envision you as the 'go-to person.' This is a precious commodity that takes consistency and time to build.

Tips for Radio

Building Relationships with News Directors and Reporters

Make their job easier- Provide them with radio actualities, timely statements, and transcripts. Visual.media@mail.house.gov can assist with audio pre-taping to send an MP3 audio file to a station.

Understand their schedule- Avoid calling news directors or on-air personalities at the top or bottom of the hour. Directors and reporters have deadlines nearly every hour.

Understanding the Dynamics of Radio

Fast- The message must be simple and clear. You have to get your point across right the first time.

Drive Time- Get your boss on during peak listening hours in order to make the best impact with your message. Morning drive time: 7-10 a.m. Afternoon: 5-7 p.m.

Audience Size- Audience information provided by organizations will help you prioritize targeted stations for your message.

Station Ratings links to know:

<http://talkers.com/online/>

<http://www.radioringz.com/index.jsp>

<http://www.stationratings.com/>

Handling the Interview

Prepare sound bites for your boss to deliver.

Anticipate key questions and be sure your boss is prepared with an on-message response.

Listen-in beforehand- Brief your boss on the previous discussion along with the interviewer's style and subject matter. Opening the interview with a reference to what was broadcast a few minutes before is a great way to break the ice.

Personal anecdotes- (of your boss or his/her constituents) to illustrate and dramatize your message. They should be brief, but interesting and support your message.

Media- Give your constituent lists and friendly media a, "heads up" that your boss will be on air and ask everyone to, "Tune In". Feature the hit before and after on your social media networks and cross post.

Tips for Television

Who's Who in local television

- **General Manager-** Head boss of the station with direct supervision of the advertising and financial aspects of the operation
- **News Director-** Top editor in a TV newsroom-has the final say over which stories air
- **Assignment Editor-** Works with the news director to decide which events are covered and which aren't. They send employees to cover stories, deciding which reporter and photographers go where. Reporters "pitch" stories to them and if the assignment editor decides it's newsworthy, the reporter is assigned to the story.
- **Producer-** Manages the newsroom and newscast. If the show runs tight, the producer decides which stories are dropped.
- **Reporters-** "pitch" stories and come up with ideas, but their ideas generally need to be approved by the assignment editor and producers. Television reporters do the interviews, choose the sound bites and write the stories themselves.

The Basics of Television News

- **The local angle-** Television stations often want local reactions (small businesses, personal anecdotes, community work) to national stories.
- **Appealing Visuals-** Use compelling, eye-catching visuals (charts, graphs, blown up pictures, story boards, timelines) for your event and describe for an assignment editor when pitching a story.
- **B-Roll-** Encourage the station to shoot b-roll of your boss with different angles at the shoot. This can be used for future videos or commercials. ****Make sure your boss is aware that the camera is rolling AT ALL TIMES.**
- **Give assignment desks notice of an upcoming event-** Getting your boss's event on their radar screen early is critical to obtaining coverage. Remind assignment desks about your event the day before the event and the day of, before their morning planning meeting.
- **The don'ts of your boss's interview:**
 - Avoid pinstriped, houndstooth, fine lines, and very light-colored clothing with large patterns if your boss is going to be on TV-they are not "TV Safe". Make sure your boss is presentable and put together for an on-camera by always carrying a comb, make-up (men and women), lint roller, chap stick, tissues etc.

- Speak up and do not let your boss be interviewed in front of a bland backdrop. Politely suggest different backdrops, angles or settings to get a good, interesting shot.

Events in Your District

Know the issue - If discussing a national issue, have a strong tie-in with the district.

Example: If key issues at the moment are the debt, jobs, and taxes invite small business owners and families who would benefit from legislation to a roundtable. The more personal the application of the message, the more it will resonate where it really matters-in the district.

Location - Select a location as soon as possible and contact a back-up location if holding the event outside for bad weather. Choose a location relevant to the reason for the event and current issues. If you're discussing the debt and jobs hold the event at a local small business hurting from tough economic times. Find a way to hold your event in a place where your boss will be surrounded by the people he is trying to help. Set the backdrop for media hits, video and photographers. Envision how you want the picture in the paper and the story to be played and create it.

Ensure the location will provide quality audio at a podium, for round table discussions and audience Q&A.

DO NOT: Let your location take away from the event (i.e. loud traffic area, fire station, impossible crowd control areas)

Time Selection - Pick a time and location that will be convenient for the media. Morning events are easiest for the media to cover and you will get hits from it throughout the day. Weekends are also normally slow and can generate media.

Participants - The media may want to speak with someone other than your boss. Invite local experts on the issue to participate in the event. Be sure to thoroughly brief them on the issue at hand and make sure they agree with your boss' stance.

Handouts -

- **Constituents:** Have a one pager for constituents easily explaining the issues. Use charts, graphs, constituent quotes, information relative to the district and office contact information.
- **Media:** Have a press kit including a copy of the release, event information, background of the issue(s), quotes from your boss/other speakers and office contact information.

Promote the event - Send out a media advisory in advance and call news desks several hours before the event to ensure the story is being covered. Pitch the event, story, background and available expert panelists to interview. Update your social media sites and web page before, during and after the event.

DC event-Keep your district informed - Give your local media a heads up of the event or presser and schedule a local radio hit before it. Gather sound bites or quotes with your boss referring to his/her district to feature in the release. This sends a powerful message to your constituents that even though your boss is in Washington, he or she is working on their behalf.

Day of- Event Checklist

Media Advisory - Send out the day before and a REMINDER the day of the event to inform the press of the final details (A short who, what, when, where, why).

-If the event is in DC, the advisory should be sent to gallery staff, gallery reporters, select reports and press secretaries of other participating members.

<http://radiotv.house.gov/index.aspx>

All of the Above - Arrive early and be ready and willing to assist with ANYTHING. No job is too small to ensure the event runs smoothly.

Media and Constituent Sign-In Sheet - Have a media and constituent sign-in area and sheet as each enters the event. It aids in building your press list and makes follow-ups easier. A quick “Thank You” to people who attend never hurts.

Speaking Order - If there are multiple speakers have a sheet with the speaking order in the “green room” and at the podium

DOCUMENTATION- Use your video camera, camera, audio recorder, and any other method of documentation. Follow up the event by sending pictures and video to social media sites, use in a release, e-newsletter, and to update your web site. Pictures and video will go a long way with getting your message out and scheduling post-interviews. Send “Thank You notes” to the constituents who attended with pictures and statements from the event.

Please be sure read the below link to the United States Capitol Police “Guide to Security Awareness.” It is a guide to keep you, your boss and your office safe at the Capitol and in the district.

<http://saa.house.gov/forms/31010secawareness.pdf>

Op-Ed Submission Guidelines for Major Dailies

Chicago Tribune:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/chi-manuscriptemail,0,7050649.customform>

Dallas Morning News:

<http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/how-to-get-published/>

Los Angeles Times:

<http://www.latimes.com/oe-howtosubmitoped,0,4524067.story>

USA Today:

http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/2005-08-10-guidelines_x.htm

New York Times:

<http://www.nytimes.com/content/help/site/editorial/op-ed/op-ed.html>
<http://www.nytimes.com/content/help/site/editorial/op-ed/op-ed.html>

Wall Street Journal:

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB126841622758561059.html>

Washington Examiner:

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/op-eds/2009/01/editorial-guidelines-op-ed-contributors-0>

Washington Post:

<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/opeds/submit/> Send directly to Op-Ed editor:
(Autumn Brewington- brewingtwna@washpost.com 202-334-5120)

Washington Times:

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/contact-us/>

House Radio/Television Correspondence Gallery:

House Radio/Television Correspondence Gallery- <http://radiotv.house.gov/index.aspx>

*If you're scheduling a D.C. press event or have a reporter coming in from the district, the Gallery should be your first point of contact.

Correspondents who work out of the Capitol Gallery- <http://radiotv.house.gov/gallery-use/regulars.shtml>

Washington News Orgs & Numbers

<http://www.c-span.org/Resources/Media-Organizations/>

Blogs: <http://www.c-span.org/Resources/Blogs/>

Policy: <http://www.c-span.org/Resources/Policy-Organizations/>

News Organizations and Contacts

AP Bureaus

<http://www.ap.org/pages/contact/contact.html>

Gannett News Service

<http://www.gannett.com/about/map/address.htm>

Reuters

http://thomsonreuters.com/news_ideas/media_contacts/#media

C-SPAN Media Guide

<http://capwiz.com/c-span/dbq/media/>

One-Minute Speeches

Point of Contact: House Republican Conference (202) 225-5107

What is a one minute?

A period is set aside each day following the Pledge of Allegiance for Members to make short speeches, limited to 60 seconds or approximately 150 words. One-minute speeches are at the discretion of the Speaker and may be limited or cancelled if the business of the House is pressing.

During one-minute speeches at the beginning of the day, if a request is made to extend the speech beyond the 300 words or to add something at the end of the speech, that speech and the added material will be moved and inserted in the Congressional Record right before Special Orders begin.

Members wishing to give a one-minute speech must be present on the House Floor at the appointed time by the Speaker each day. There is no “sign-up” for these speeches. Members sit in the front row of seats on the Republican side of the aisle. The Speaker will recognize Members starting with the majority Member sitting closest to the center aisle then alternating between majority and minority Members.

When recognized, the Member must address the Chair and say: “Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for one minute and to revise and extend my remarks.” The Chair will respond by saying: “Without objection, so ordered.” The Member should proceed to the podium on the Republican side of the Well and give their speech. The Chair will inform the Member when time has expired.

For more information, see: <http://repcloakroom.house.gov/>

How to Write a One Minute Speech

A one-minute speech can address any theme or topic of the Member’s choosing. However, an effective speech will address an ongoing debate and articulate the Member’s particular stance without dwelling on “the nitty-gritty.” It conveys the most basic and accessible reasoning behind any given issue, large or small. It is essentially a 60-second talking point. It is not used to give a mini-lecture or introduce a brand new concept, nor does it get carried away listing and deciphering a myriad of various statistics. Instead, it is a prime opportunity to talk about the “big picture” of an issue in a memorable and, yes, quotable way.

No matter the topic your Member wishes to discuss, a one-minute should be comprised of short, sound-bite worthy sentences and factoids. It should begin and end with a powerful line to distinguish itself from other one-minutes, although it does not necessarily need to be wholly original. In fact, it is an excellent chance for a Member to rehash, reuse, and restate a favorite talking point that he or she wished to “keep in the air.”

Other important information

Prepared speeches are written each week to correspond to the themes of the week. If your boss would like to give a speech but is unprepared, they can come to the floor and pick out one they want to read. A Republican Conference staffer will be present with the draft speeches each day.

Press from One Minutes

Effective One Minute speeches are ideal for local media, especially if the district is mentioned. Post speech releases, "In Case You Missed It" to all local media and cross post the video on all social media networks. If you were not able to tape your boss' floor speech, email gopclips@mail.house.gov with the following information. Conference will find the clip and send it to you.

- Member's name
- Date on the floor
- TV Channel
- Start time on the floor
- Stop time on the floor
- General topic of speech

Special Orders

Point of Contact: Republican Conference 202-225-5107

What are special orders?

There are three types of special orders—Five Minutes Speeches, 30-minute special order speeches, and hour long “leadership hour” special order speeches.

“**Five Minutes**” are speeches given by Members, alternating Republican and Democrat, for five minutes every day. They are scheduled as follows:

- First legislative day of the week: 12:00-2:00 PM
- Middle days of the week: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- Last legislative day of the week: none

“**30-minute Special Orders**” are speeches given by Members, alternating Republican and Democrat, after legislative business has concluded in the House. They are scheduled at the end of every day and cannot go beyond 10:00 PM. There can be two 30-minute speeches per side, for a total of four every night.

“**Leadership Hour Special Orders**” are speeches scheduled by the House Republican Conference every day at the end of legislative business in the House. There is only one “leadership hour” for Republicans every day, and they cannot go beyond 10:00 PM either. The leadership hour happens before the 30-minute speeches.

Five minute special order

Point of Contact: House Republican Cloakroom: 225-7350

Members may address the House on any topic they wish for five minutes. Members must sign up with the Republican Cloakroom and be placed on a list, which is read aloud at the beginning of five minute speeches. Members may sign up in person with the cloakroom or over the phone. There is no limit to how many members may give five minute speeches on a given day.

Leadership Special Order

At the conclusion of legislative business, Members may address the House in “One Minute Speeches”. Immediately following the conclusion of those speeches, the Leadership Special Orders begin. A Member may address the House for one full hour, although Members who host hour blocks often elect to do so in groups that will share the time.

The Republican Conference coordinates the Leadership Hour to coincide with the weekly message of the conference. Please contact the Conference at 202-225-5107 if you are interested in hosting one.

30-Minute Special Orders

Point of Contact: House Republican Cloakroom: 225-7350

After the Leadership Hour, if it is not beyond 10:00 PM, the House will recognize up to 4 Members (2 Republicans and 2 Democrats) who have signed up in their respective cloakrooms for 30-minute special orders.

Services provided by the House Republican Conference with Special Orders:

- **Talking Points** – The Conference can provide Members and staff with talking points, and help Member offices research for quotes and material to use during floor debate, special order speeches, or in their press releases.
- **Posters** – Members who wish to have posters printed for use on the House floor during floor debate or special order speeches may e-mail the image they would like printed on the poster to visual.media@mail.house.gov . Most requests can be processed in 24 hours or less.
- **Promotion and coordination** – The Conference staff can assist Members hosting one hour special orders who would like to solicit other Members of the Conference to participate in their hour.
- **Video of Member's floor speech** – Many Members post video of statements they make on the floor on their websites and social media platforms. If you would have a clip of your boss's floor speech email GOPClips@mail.house.gov at Conference with the following information:
Member's Name
Date on floor
TV Channel
Start time on the floor
Stop time on the floor

Visual.Media@mail.house.gov can also record internal channels (committee hearings) if given proper advance notice.

On February 1st, 2011 the House implemented the following legislative procedures for Special Orders:

Before legislative business:

The first legislative day of the week:

- 12:00 – 2:00 pm - Five minute morning-hour speeches.
- 2:00 pm (after prayer and pledge) - One minute speeches.

The middle days of the week:

- 10:00 – 12:00 pm - Five minute morning-hour speeches.
- 12:00 pm (after prayer and pledge) - One minute speeches.
- No votes before 1:00 pm.

The last legislative day of the week:

- No morning hour
- 9:00 am (after prayer and pledge) - Five one minutes per side.

Every day, after legislative business, not beyond 10:00 pm:

- One Minute speeches.
- One hour long special order per side.
- Two thirty minute special orders per side.

New Media Basics

Blogs:

- **Blog Events**-Hold blogger-only Conference Calls with state and local bloggers providing an intimate forum for your boss to directly communicate with specific blogs.
- **Blogs in Your State and District**- Townhall.com or RedCounty.com to find blogs listed by state. Take time to go through each blog to see which ones are most frequently updated and drive the most traffic and reach out to them.

Caution: Bloggers are sometimes not as experienced as reporters. Be sure to specify “off the record” very clearly.

YouTube

YouTube is an excellent way for your boss to have, “face-to-face” contact in the new media age. Short, succinct videos allow a member to connect with numerous constituents for virtually no cost. Please make sure you have a Government official account before uploading and sharing videos.

The Conference has an in-house studio where you can record a message or announcement and have it posted on YouTube in no time. To book the Studio, call Visual Media at 6-7860 or email visual.media@mail.house.gov **Cross posting on all social media sites is the most effective way to share your message on new media.**

Please contact PatrickBell@mail.house.gov in the Conference Vice Chair’s office for any questions regarding YouTube.

Facebook

Part of the appeal of social networking is creating a sense of a personal connection with the Member. Make sure to set up a Government Official page and keep it updated with fresh content through RSS feeds, updating the status automatically and add videos, photos and linking to your Website. Do your best to respond to wall postings and emails. It can only benefit your boss to talk directly to the people in this way. **Cross posting on all social media sites is the most effective way to share your message on new media.**

Please contact PatrickBell@mail.house.gov in the Conference Vice Chair’s office for any questions regarding Facebook.

Twitter

Twitter is one of the best ways communicate directly with constituents in real time and it's free. While Republicans have dominated Twitter, not every office finds it is for them. But, if nothing else, you can use it as an information distribution tool to link to press releases,

news stories, YouTube, and Facebook. As always, be sure your account is a verified Government Official account. **Cross posting on all social media sites is the most effective way to share your message on new media.**

Please contact PatrickBell@mail.house.gov in the Conference Vice Chair's office for any questions regarding Twitter.

While Social Media is a fast and effective way of reaching Constituents and media, please be sure to run through the necessary checks and approval process as you would any other form of media. This will ensure timely release of your communication, and maintain the level of accuracy and integrity your office is expected to uphold.

Conference Services

Member Services & Events Department

We are the liaison between the House Republican Conference Leadership Office and Members of Congress, serving as principle point-of-contact for 241 Members and their staff for overall day-to-day needs. The Conference is Responsible for coordinating logistics for the Annual Member Retreat, in cooperation with the Congressional Institute, working closely with all the other Leadership offices to put together a successful 3 day agenda that best suit the Members needs and interest for the annual event.

This Department heads up Member Services University (MSU) a new program being offered by the House Republican Conference for all Members and their staff. This new initiative consists of courses in the areas of Communications, Constituent Relations, Policy, Parliamentary Procedure, Ethics, and much more. The Courses provide the fundamentals for offices to help start, improve, and strengthen day-to-day operations in all of those fields. to Freshman Members and their staff should be attending all of the courses, and returning Members and their staff are encouraged to attend courses as well.

As part of MSU we have started a program to give schedulers in freshman offices and new schedulers in established offices the tools they need to successfully navigate a weekly congressional schedule. The program includes monthly briefings, a mentor program with established schedulers, and periodic informal meetings with the group to discuss new ideas and solutions. We have also created a series of one-pagers designed to help schedulers with typical tasks that they are assigned within their office.

We work closely with District Staff across the country on event ideas and act as the primary leadership point of contact for these staff. We head up the Annual District Director Fly-in, a three-day event that provides an opportunity for staff based in congressional districts to interact with Capitol Hill-based staff, Members of House Leadership, and other experts who provide guidance and insight. District staff are briefed on the political landscape, and provided with concrete examples as to how to improve their office operations. We manage an internal District Director secure website where offices share best practices and get district related updates. We also host Conference calls with District staff and Leadership around big issue areas.

Some of the other big events and meetings we work on are the House Republican Annual Chiefs of Staff Retreat, Monthly Chief of Staff Meeting, Radio and Blog Row Events, and Special Member-Only Meetings

Operations Department

The Operations Department is charged with the planning and execution of weekly Conference meetings, special Conference meetings, bipartisan or bicameral briefings, and Member conference calls. The weekly Conference meetings should be a priority on your Member's calendar. They provide an opportunity for Members to hear directly from the Leadership regarding legislative action, messaging plans, and special initiatives. They also provide a forum where Members can ask direct questions of the Leadership, and it is often out of these discussions that the Conference press and policy teams get marching orders for resources that Members and staff need to be effective legislators and communicators.

All meetings and calls organized by the Operations Department are for Members only. However, that does not mean that the Conference can't give materials or information from those meetings to staff. If you ever have a question about the content of a meeting, please don't hesitate to contact the Deputy Chief of Staff, Emily Seidel, or the Director of Member Services and Events, Katie Patru.

Additionally, on a day-to-day basis, the Conference operations team strives to be a one-stop resource for Members and staff. Whether it's reserving our Cannon conference room for a large constituent meeting, or ending your runaround by finding an answer you've been looking for, the operations team aims to never say "sorry, we don't know or we can't help you."

Lastly, the operations team maintains the Member and staff contact information database for all of leadership. Whenever you have a personnel change in your office, or your Member changes his or her contact information, please contact the Conference immediately.

Policy Department

Our team aims to be a resource to members and their staff, with expertise in all legislative areas—from health care and budget, to tax and financial services, to national security and social policy.

We put together and distribute a number of informational products such as: the Legislative Digest, which is a summary of the legislative text of all bills being considered on the House floor for a vote. We also create One Pagers, which are short, succinct pieces on an issue; or Policy Briefs, which are a bit longer, broader in scope or more analytical.

At the end of every legislative week the Policy team puts together the Boarding Pass, which is a short re-cap of the week's major legislative actions and a quick look at the upcoming week's issues to be considered on the House floor.

All of these products are distributed via gop.gov and via email, and the Policy team is always available to answer questions. Because we sit at the nexus of House Leadership, committee staff, and personal offices, Conference Policy is able channel knowledge and keep Republicans well-informed on the issues that come before the House.

Press Department

The House Republican Conference Press Shop is always available to assist you with any needs you may have in your daily and unique duties. We have a number of best practices on talking points, town hall events, new/social media, Websites, e-newsletters, your boss's media presence, setting up and editing press lists, etc.

The Press Shop offers guidance on where and how to execute a successful press conference or press event in your district and Washington, D.C. We are in constant coordination with the House Radio-TV Gallery and can guide your office through their rules and procedures.

In order to help with placing your op-eds or other media we can provide specific contacts for national publications, wire services, and regional bureaus. We are contacted daily from national media outlets to book members on television, radio and to receive statements. Please let us know if you would like to be contacted for national media hits. If your boss is dropping a bill or is more comfortable with certain issues, please let us know that information, too.

Our staff can capture your boss's floor speech and send you a link to download for social media and press releases. Please email GOPClips@mail.house.gov with the following information: Boss' name, date, start time, stop time, channel, and general topic of speech.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the Conference Press Shop at 6-9000 or ConferencePress@mail.house.gov if you have any questions.

Visual Media Department

The Visual Media Department is House Republicans' resource for assistance with graphics, posters and videos. They have a free in-house recording studio for Members' official use that includes a high-definition video camera, professional set and lighting, and a Teleprompter. The studio is frequently used for official announcements, videos for a Member's Congressional website or YouTube channel, and video messages to local organizations back home. The Visual Media Department is also in charge of recording the weekly Republican address.

The office prints all posters for Members' use on the House floor in a standard 30"x40" format, and creates customized graphics for a variety of media (i.e., e-mail template headers, town hall banners, YouTube channel graphics). They also manage the Conference's social media presence and official website, GOP.gov. This office is a great resource for any digital communications questions, and can give advice on such topics as

off-site video recordings and high-quality audio recordings. Please let us know how we can help you: visual.media@mail.house.gov.

Web sites to know:

House Net: <https://housenet.house.gov/portal/server.pt/community/home/201>

GOP.gov: <http://www.gop.gov/>

112th Congressional Transition Member Facebook: <http://www.gop.gov/transition>

Office of the Clerk: <http://clerk.house.gov/index.html>

House Radio-Television Correspondents' Gallery: <http://radiotv.house.gov/index.aspx>

Policy

Majority Leader—Floor Schedule: <http://republicanleader.house.gov/Floor/>

Rules Committee: <http://rules.house.gov/>

GOP.gov Legislative Digest: <http://www.gop.gov/legdigest>

Library of Congress Bill Summary & Status: <http://lis.gov/>

Current national and public debt levels from Treasury
<http://www.treasurydirect.gov/NP/BPDLogin?application=np>

Quick link to U.S. Deb: <http://www.usdebtclock.org/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics unemployment data: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/>

Current population numbers from Census to figure out what debt and deficits are per family: <http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>

Current household numbers from Census to figure out what debt and deficits are per household: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2010pubs/p60-238.pdf>

Bureau of Economic Analysis with GDP and other economic data:
<http://www.bea.gov/national/index.htm#gdp>

Office of Management and Budget historical tables showing debt, deficits, spending, and tax revenue, etc. : <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/Historicals>

SBA small business data: <http://www.sba.gov/advocacy/7495/8420>

Treasury monthly spending statements: <http://www.fms.treas.gov/mts/index.html>