

A Scientist's Guide to Staff Roles in the US Congress

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In 2008, I started my neuroscience PhD program in Washington, DC with the goal of becoming an AAAS Congressional fellow and working in Congress. Well, I never ended up completing my PhD program, and never got the chance to apply to the AAAS Fellowship (you need a PhD to do so), but I did end up working in Congress anyway – twice, actually.

If you have any background in science at all, know that your expertise and skills are sorely needed in our legislative branch, especially after the Supreme Court's Chevron Doctrine decision which takes away decision-making power from the executive branch, where the vast majority of federal scientists work. This guide is meant to be a primer for scientists wondering where they can plug into the federal legislative branch, and in doing so, help improve US legislative science capacity!



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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Different Types of Jobs in Congress.....	4
House vs. Senate vs. federal legislative branch agencies.....	4
Congressional DC Offices vs. District Offices.....	5
Working for a Member vs. a Committee.....	6
House Committees.....	6
Senate Committees.....	7
Roles of Congressional Staffers.....	8
Where do scientists fit into this hierarchy?.....	9
House and Senate Staffer Roles - DC-Based Offices.....	9
Member Offices.....	9
Chief of Staff.....	9
Legislative Director.....	10
Legislative Assistant.....	11
Legislative Correspondent.....	11
Communications Director/Press Secretary.....	11
Press Assistant.....	12
Counsel.....	12
Executive Assistant/Scheduler.....	12
Staff Assistant/Receptionist.....	12
A note about internships and fellowships for people with science backgrounds.....	12
Committee Offices.....	13
Staff Director.....	14
Policy Director.....	14
General Counsel.....	14
Communications Director.....	14
Clerks.....	14
Investigator.....	15
House and Senate Staffer Roles - District Offices.....	15
District/State Director.....	15
Constituent Services Representative/Caseworker.....	15
Field Representative.....	15
Grants/Projects Coordinator.....	15
Building Up Science Expertise in Congress is Crucial.....	16
About Fancy Comma, LLC.....	17

Introduction

Most scientists and students of science have never thought of their skills and experiences as translating to the policy world, but they have a unique skillset that includes these skills of great interest to Congressional offices who are seeking staff:

- Project management (juggling many different tasks independently)
- Research skills to quickly understand any topic by finding the most authoritative sources
- Deep expertise in science
- Strong oral and verbal communication skills to grapple with complex issues involving science
- Problem-solving and troubleshooting (trying to fix failed experiments translates to an actual real-world skill!)
- Interpersonal and organizational skills to work with others in a fast-paced environment
- Technological proficiency

Scientists and science students can contribute their unique skills as a civil servant working as a Congressional staffer – even if they are not trained to see it that way!

Working in the United States Congress can be very rewarding, though for scientists, the most typical roles are through very selective fellowships that require a PhD. You do not need a PhD to work in Congress, though!

I wrote this guide to help scientists and students of science understand different congressional staff roles so that they can be more confident applying these skills in Congress or in other realms outside of science that are not “traditional” scientist jobs. Reading this guide, you should have everything you need to know to get started applying to Congressional staff jobs in the federal legislative branch. While internships are not typically thought of as a “staff” job in Congress, you can also learn about those roles in this document, as specific interns (press interns, legislative interns, etc.) report to different staffers. For more about interning in Congress, check out this blog post:

<https://fancycomma.com/2020/04/19/how-to-get-an-internship-in-congress/>.

If you are not applying to jobs, this document provides a great overview of the structure of the US federal legislative branch and all of its different parts, so you may still find it valuable, for example, in science advocacy or just for your own understanding of where all the different pieces in the legislative branch go together.

Let's get into it!

Different Types of Jobs in Congress

Before you apply to any jobs, you will need to make a few decisions based on what you hope to gain from your work experience. Let's talk about the different flavors of Congressional jobs below to help you. You don't have to limit yourself to one vs. the other type of job in your job search, but you should at least be familiar with the differences.

House vs. Senate vs. federal legislative branch agencies

The US Congress has two chambers: the Senate and the House of Representatives. The US Constitution's [Article I](#) talks about how the lawmakers for each governing body are elected. Each state has two Senators, and some number of House members based on the state's population.

The House and Senate are, in culture and in practice, two very different chambers. They have different roles in the government and run differently. Each also has their own different system and means for applying to jobs. There is no centralized location to apply for jobs across Congress – the Senate has its own jobs website (<https://www.senate.gov/employment/po/positions.htm>), as does the House (<https://www.house.gov/employment>).

That's not to mention additional jobs in the federal legislative branch in various supervisory, oversight, and advisory roles. If you are interested in working in the federal legislative branch as a nonpartisan advisor to Congress, consider jobs in the Congressional Research Service, which is in the federal legislative branch as part of the Library of Congress. CRS compiles research reports to inform Congress on various topics. There's also the Government Accountability Office, an independent, nonpartisan government agency, which is known as the Congressional watchdog, and does a variety of auditing and accountability activities in addition to advising Congress on various issues. There's also the Congressional Budget office or CBO, which performs nonpartisan advising to Congress on budget issues. Read more about legislative branch agencies, as well as the two other branches of government, at the [House of Representatives website](#). You can typically apply to legislative branch agency jobs at USAJobs: www.usajobs.gov. **NOTE: The rest of this document deals with jobs in the US House and Senate, but it is important to note that scientists can work in legislative agency branch jobs as well.**

The House and Senate are culturally very different places. There are [435 members in the House](#), who serve for two-year terms, and [100 in the Senate](#), who serve for six-year terms. Working in the House is fast-paced and chaotic due to the volume of legislation (DC office) and constituent services (district offices) required. The work can also differ greatly in the House:

positions such as Legislative Assistants focus on specific policy areas, while district Caseworkers handle constituent issues directly related to federal agencies. The House also has more strict rules about debate and scheduling, which helps the legislative body work faster, but it can create challenges. The Senate rules allow for more open debate with fewer restrictions, which leads to longer discussions but enables members of political minorities to be heard.

Because there are fewer Senators than House members, but more people are represented per Member of Congress in the Senate vs. the House, Senate staff offices are larger. [House offices are limited to 18 staffers each](#), plus a few extra for part-time, temporary, and shared workers. Senate offices, on the other hand, can have much larger numbers of staff: anywhere from [20-60 people](#).

Senate staffers often take on broader roles compared to their House counterparts. Senate staffers may cover multiple policy areas or responsibilities within their positions. For example, a Legislative Assistant in the Senate might manage several issues rather than focusing on one specific area, as a House Legislative Assistant might.

There are some other areas where the Senate differs from the House in terms of specialization of staff roles. For example, while a House member may have a press secretary that also serves as communications director, a Senator has a [more dedicated communications director](#) that deals specifically with how the Senator positions themselves strategically. While a Senate office may have a deputy Chief of Staff, a House office may just have a Chief of Staff without an assistant, and rely on other staff to help fulfill the role of an assistant Chief of Staff.

In summary, the House's larger size leads to a more structured and specialized staffing model, whereas the Senate's smaller size allows for a more flexible approach with broader responsibilities among its staff.

Congressional DC Offices vs. District Offices

Beyond weighing working in the House vs. Senate (vs. external to Congress), you will also need to consider location. You can either work in Washington, DC, at the Capitol Hill complex, or you can work in a district office in the member of Congress's district.

Not everyone wants to move to Washington, DC to work in policy, nor do you have to – especially in our era of remote work. Even many DC jobs are hybrid in-person in DC and remote, so you don't have to exclusively work in the office. However, I found working in Capitol Hill exciting and fulfilling, so I can highly recommend it.

When it comes to finding a Congress office near where you live: most Senators have a few district locations, so there is likely one where you live; the same goes for many House members' offices. The work and responsibilities can vary between the Washington, DC and district offices. Working in DC, you can expect to work more on the lawmaker's political endeavors, such as

fielding calls from constituents, helping inform their policy stances, assisting them with making statements, and so on, while working in-district, you will be working more one-on-one with constituents to help them with various issues.

Working for a Member vs. a Committee

Working in the House or Senate, you can work for a member of one of these chambers, or you can [staff a committee](#). There are a number of committees in the House and Senate, and even a few joint committees that involve both chambers. You can find a full list of committees in Congress here: <https://www.congress.gov/committees>. Each committee has Democratic members and Republican members; depending on the House majority, the leadership may differ. For example, when the House is under Republican control, the committees are all led (or chaired) by Republican members, with a Democratic Ranking Member (a term for the most senior committee member from the minority party); however, the roles are flipped when Democrats hold the House majority.

“Standing” committees exist all the time, while “special” or “select” committees are convened for specific purposes from time to time.

House committees are crucial for legislation in the House. In the House, bills are introduced into “the hopper” and referred to committees by the Speaker of the House. In the Senate, however, bills can be introduced directly onto the floor without going to committee, so they are less crucial for developing legislation.

House Committees

Committees act as powerful gatekeepers in the House, deciding the fate of bills and influencing the writing and rewriting of legislation. House committees are centralized and highly specialized, with strong leadership that plays a large role in a bill’s future. Expertise in science and technology issues is therefore a huge asset to House committees. The Speaker of the House is also free to create any committees ad-hoc.

House committees streamline the legislative process by allowing members to specialize in specific policy areas so they can thoroughly examine bills before they go up for a general vote by the whole House. Key functions of [House committees](#) include:

- **Legislative consideration** – reviewing bills and issues within their ‘wheelhouse,’ refining and improving bills before the full House considers them
- **Oversight** – monitoring agencies, programs, and activities, as well as the executive branch
- **Funding** – making recommendations for funding levels for things in their ‘wheelhouse’

- **Information-gathering** – holding hearings where they call in experts and stakeholders to talk about various issues relevant to their ‘wheelhouse
- **Policy development** – identifying policy problems, proposing solutions, and drafting legislation to get things done

Here are a few committees in the House and what they do:

- **House Ways and Means Committee**: Ways and Means, as it is often abbreviated, is the most prestigious and powerful committee due to its dealings with how the government fundraises. The phrase “ways and means” concerns the ways and means that the government raises funds to use. Ways and Means therefore has jurisdiction over taxation, tariffs, revenue-raising measures, Social Security, unemployment benefits, Medicare, and various social programs. A significant chunk of bills introduced in Congress make a stop at Ways and Means before being considered by the House.
- **House Appropriations Committee**: This committee controls federal spending and helps shape the federal budget as it is allocated, or appropriated, every year. The Appropriations Committee helps set funding for government science and technology agencies that fund US science, such as the National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation.
- **House Energy and Commerce Committee**: This committee has broad jurisdiction over healthcare, energy policy, telecommunications, consumer protections, and commerce between states. It typically deals with legislation that has significant economic and social impacts.
- **House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology**: Founded in 1958 amidst the “Space Race,” this committee oversees non-defense federal scientific research and development, including agencies like NASA and the National Science Foundation, as well as the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. It operates through subcommittees that focus on specific areas such as energy, environment, and research oversight. The committee plays a vital role in shaping science and technology policy in the U.S., recommending legislation and funding to overcome key science and technology challenges.

While there is a dedicated “science” committee, other committees, such as Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Education and the Workforce may also deal with science and science-related issues. Therefore, science expertise can play an important role in pretty much all of the House committees, helping ensure that high-quality science is being included in bills under each ‘wheelhouse.’

Senate Committees

Senate committees are fewer compared to the House, so they deal with more general issues than each House committee does. In the Senate, Senators can introduce bills directly on the Senate floor, and then can be referred to committee by the Majority Leader. No ad hoc

committees are created in the Senate. The Senate's procedures facilitate deliberation and input from the political minority, while the House is structured for faster decision-making.

In the Senate, some influential committees include [Appropriations](#), [Finance](#), [Foreign Relations](#) (shaping US foreign policy), [Judiciary](#) (which handles judicial nominations and legal issues), and [Armed Services](#) (influencing defense and national security matters).

There are a number of places science fits into the policy world, but Senate committees dealing specifically with science and technology include:

- [Commerce, Science, and Transportation](#): Oversees NASA, National Science Foundation, NOAA, NIST, and White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Various subcommittees also deal with more specific topics, such as Space and Science, and Oceans, Fisheries, Climate Change, and Manufacturing.
- [Energy and Natural Resources](#): This Senate committee deals with energy research and technology.
- [Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions](#): HELP, as it is called, tackles aspects of scientific research related to health and education, as well as dealing with the healthcare setting.

In summary, working in a House or Senate committee involves more structured, topic-focused work compared to working with specific members of Congress. Committees are focused on specific policy areas, which enable members to develop expertise; working with individual members may expose staffers to a broader range of topics. Committees are more powerful than individual members in shaping legislation, holding hearings, and conducting oversight, and the committee actions and hearings often get more limelight than the activities of individual members. The decision-making authority and procedural influence can also be much greater in committees, especially for House committees.

Roles of Congressional Staffers

Scientists can contribute their unique skills across various congressional staff roles, enhancing the quality of legislative work and constituent services.

DC staff can work with a member of Congress or a committee, while district staff work only with a member of Congress. Other differences include that DC staff primarily engage with legislative processes and policy development, while district staff concentrate on constituent services and community engagement. DC roles are often more formal and involve strategic planning for legislation; district roles are more hands-on with direct interaction with constituents. DC offices also have a higher number of specialized staff compared to district offices.

In general, staffers are organized as a hierarchy, with the member of Congress or the committee at the top, as well as a management and advisory position such as a Chief of Staff (or multiple), and dedicated different positions dealing with policy, law, communications, and more. In general, one must work their way up the hierarchy, either starting as an intern or being hired onto a lower

staff position then working their way up. The secret to advancing in Congress is networking, making connections, and remaining curious about opportunities while thinking about ways their specific expertise can provide value in these different roles.

Where do scientists fit into this hierarchy?

Any person with a science background can apply to internships and work their way up the ladder. Internships can be in DC or locally in district offices. A typical Congressional internship can last three months, and can qualify one for many staff roles; however, a person with science experience can also plug into the hierarchy a bit higher as a legislative assistant, for example. A scientist with science communication experience may be a useful asset to a committee or member of Congress who deals heavily with science and technology, or related fields such as health, education, agriculture, energy, or other science-informed topics.

Even if you are not looking to apply to jobs in Congress, it may benefit you to know about these different roles as someone interested in participating in science policy and science advocacy.

Below, I provide an overview of ways scientists can apply their expertise in different congressional staff positions, both in Washington, D.C. and district offices.

House and Senate Staffer Roles - DC-Based Offices

The below roles are meant to be vague guidelines of various positions that you might encounter over the course of a Congressional job search. The actual titles and roles may vary depending on the House or Senate office's needs.

You can check the House employment (<https://www.house.gov/employment>) and Senate employment (<https://www.senate.gov/employment/po/positions.htm>) websites for information on what specific positions are currently hiring.

Member Offices

Member offices in DC are led by a Chief of Staff to whom report staffers who are working on communications, press, legislative, staff managerial, and other domains.

Chief of Staff

The Chief of Staff is the most senior member of the office staff. In Senate offices, there may be a deputy Chief of Staff, but in House offices, this is not typical. The Chief of Staff oversees office operations, manages staff, and advises on political matters. It is not uncommon for a member of Congress to ask their Chief of Staff how they should vote on an issue. Scientists can use their

project management skills to streamline office operations and their critical thinking skills to critically evaluate evidence proposed by legislative staff to evaluate the political outcomes of such proposals.

Legislative Director

The Legislative Director or LD establishes a legislative agenda and directs legislative staff. Scientists can leverage their expertise in analyzing complex data to inform policy decisions and prioritize legislative initiatives based on evidence-based approaches.

The LD typically manages the office's overall legislative activities and supervises the legislative staff. They also monitor the legislative schedule and make recommendations on policy issues and pending legislation. In addition to managing the LCs and LAs, they also often handle one or two specific issue areas themselves.

Their responsibilities include:

- Managing legislative activities and supervising legislative staff
- Establishing the legislative agenda
- Maintaining expertise in specific policy areas
- Monitoring the legislative schedule
- Making recommendations on policy issues

LDs face unique challenges, including:

- Managing a broad range of policy areas
- Working with limited resources
- Balancing policy work with constituent concerns
- Rapidly responding to changing political landscapes
- Aligning work with the Member's specific priorities

The lack of technical expertise can significantly impact LDs, leading to difficulties in evaluating complex issues, over-reliance on external sources, challenges in oversight, and potential vulnerability to industry influence.

The lack of technical expertise significantly impacts legislative directors (LDs) in personal offices in several ways:

1. [Limited ability to evaluate complex issues](#): LDs without technical expertise may struggle to fully understand and assess the implications of technology-related policies or legislation.
2. Reliance on external sources because of a lack of expertise, rather than trusting internal experts.
3. Difficulty in oversight: LDs lacking technical knowledge may find it challenging to effectively oversee and question tech companies or agencies during hearings.

4. Ineffective bill drafting: Without proper technical understanding, LDs may contribute to the creation of legislation that is ill-fitting or fails to address the core issues at hand.
5. Vulnerability to industry influence: LDs without technical expertise may be more susceptible to biased information from industry lobbyists, potentially compromising the integrity of policy decisions.

These challenges can be addressed by hiring LDs with science backgrounds, or by hiring Legislative Assistants and Legislative Correspondents, which are discussed next, with science backgrounds. This enables more informed decision-making and improves the overall quality of legislation and oversight in issues involving science and technology.

Legislative Assistant

Legislative Assistants, or LAs, are tasked with handling specific policy areas, conducting research, and preparing briefs. LAs report to the LD, and may oversee Legislative Correspondents, discussed below. Scientists across disciplines can contribute as an LA by providing in-depth knowledge on specific issues such as environment and energy (physical sciences), healthcare (life sciences), or technology policy (computer science).

Legislative Correspondent

The Legislative Correspondent or LC researches and writes legislative correspondence – for example, replying to people of a district who wrote to the lawmaker on a given issue. Though a relatively low-paying entry-level position, this is a great place where scientists can enter the legislative branch as a paid staffer to work their way up the ranks. Scientists and people with a science background can apply their technical writing skills to explain complex scientific concepts in accessible language for constituents. This may also include writing or fact-checking press releases, or explaining an aspect of science to the LD or an LA to help inform policy. Science communication is therefore essential for the LC. The LC reports to the LD.

Communications Director/Press Secretary

Communicating to the public on behalf of the office and managing relationships with media are the two specific main priorities of the Communications Director and Press Secretary roles, respectively. The Communications Director and Press Secretary roles may be combined (as is the case in the House) or different roles (as is the case in the Senate). The Communications Director manages public-facing communications, for example, with media. In most House and Senate offices, reaching out to lawmakers for comment requires going through the Communications Director and/or Press Secretary. This is a great role for someone with science communication and strategic communication experience, such as someone who has experience in science journalism.

Especially in offices dealing with science issues such as health, policy, agriculture, environment, and artificial intelligence, scientists can play an important role in driving fact-based media and public narratives. Scientists can help translate complex scientific issues into clear, engaging content for the public, enhancing the office's ability to communicate on technical matters.

Press Assistant

The press assistant helps the Communications Director/Press Secretary manage the day-to-day communications of the office. They may draft social media posts, keep tabs on media coverage, and so on. There are also dedicated press interns who aid with the press and communications aspects of the member's office.

Counsel

A law degree is required for this position, which provides legal advice and ensures compliance with laws and regulations. Scientists with legal backgrounds can offer unique insights on science-related legislation, particularly in areas like biotechnology or environmental law. In the House, it is not uncommon for a person in another role, such as a legislative correspondent, to also have a legal background, who can take on the role of counsel.

Executive Assistant/Scheduler

The Executive Assistant/Scheduler can be one role or two roles; broadly, this person manages and plans out where the lawmaker will spend their time and what they will be doing, managing the many different competing demands of the office. This can include managing and working with staff, fielding event requests from constituents, and ensuring the lawmaker can make it to their Congressional duties. The scheduler books travel, and makes plans on behalf of the lawmaker to do everything they need to do their job. Executive assistants primarily manage the day-to-day aspects of running the office. Scientists and students of science who enjoy managing and working with people and who are analytical and good at time management may enjoy this role.

Staff Assistant/Receptionist

The Staff Assistant/Receptionist is the person who manages the interns in the office and serves as a gatekeeper to more senior staff. They are usually the person that greets you when you walk into the office, performing receptionist duties. The Staff Assistant also deals with general requests to the office, as well as day-to-day duties the office may have, such as mail or dealing with [flag requests](#). This is often an entry-level staff position, so this can be a good place to start for people with science backgrounds seeking to work on the Hill.

A note about internships and fellowships for people with science backgrounds

Working one's way up the ranks is the most common way to get a job in Congress – starting out as an intern (often unpaid) or as a staff assistant or legislative correspondent (paid). It is possible to be hired to the other positions as an outsider to Congress, but you typically will need some type of government or policy experience.

Interns are at the bottom of the office food chain, but I found that the skills I gained in my internship were the perfect complement to my science experience, even if I did not directly help write any laws. Just working in Congress for 2.5 months gave me the competitive edge I needed to participate more in science policy and gave me a new perspective into the way lawmakers deal with science in the US legislative branch. There is a great need for people with science backgrounds to plug into Congress at any level to help make better science-informed decisions, as there is no official science advisory body that advises Congress specifically on science and technology policy issues. Therefore, even being an intern as someone with a science degree or science background is incredibly valuable for Congress and science-involved policymaking.

When I was an intern, I did not get paid, but these days there are paid intern positions. Interns can work with legislative, press, or other aspects of the office. Read more about applying to Congress internships at the Fancy Comma Blog:

<https://fancycomma.com/2020/04/19/how-to-get-an-internship-in-congress/>.

Without internship experience, it's more difficult to get a job on Capitol Hill, unless you are selected for a prestigious Congressional science policy fellowship — which is a relatively rare occurrence for PhD-level scientists. This is the other main way to get into Congress – you become a science legislative assistant in a program like the [AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellowships](#). Getting a fellowship requires a Ph.D. or other advanced degree and the selection process for these programs is very competitive. Legislative fellows are typically placed in a Member of Congress or Committee office and serve as the Member or Committee's science advisor.

Committee Offices

Pay ranges and work hours for committee staff positions can vary widely depending on the specific committee, the staff member's experience, and the current political climate. However, these positions often require long hours, especially when the committee is actively working on legislation or conducting hearings.

Scientists can contribute significantly to committee staff positions by:

- Providing expert knowledge in specialized fields relevant to the committee's work.
- Offering data-driven insights to inform policy decisions.
- Assisting in the evaluation of scientific evidence during hearings and investigations.
- Helping to translate complex scientific concepts into accessible language for committee members and the public.

By serving on committee staff, scientists can directly influence the legislative process and ensure that scientific perspectives are considered in policymaking across various domains.

Below are a few common staff positions in committee offices in Congress.

Staff Director

The Staff Director in a committee is analogous to the Chief of Staff in a member office. The Staff Director manages the committee's operations, oversees staff, coordinates legislative activities, and advises committee members. They are the top policy and political advisor to the Committee Chair and party members. Both the Republicans and Democrats on a given committee have a Staff Director, but it is important for policy directors to be able to work across political lines.

Policy Director

The Policy Director in a committee is analogous to the role of Legislative Director in a member's office: they coordinate policy matters for the committee. The Policy Director works on a broad range of issues within the committee's jurisdiction. They may have more specialized expertise in the committee's subject area and work more closely with outside groups, other members of Congress, and executive branch officials. It is important for policy directors to work across political lines since the committee has members from both political parties.

General Counsel

The General Counsel is a legal position requiring a law degree. They provide legal expertise and guidance on legislative matters, overseeing compliance with legal requirements, and advising the committee on legal issues. They are tasked with the committee's legislative, oversight, and investigative activities.

Communications Director

This role leads the committee's communication strategy, shaping its public image through messaging, media relations, and outreach efforts. Science communication can be a valuable skill for communications directors working on science-related policy issues.

Clerks

Clerks handle administrative tasks such as maintaining records, organizing meetings, and facilitating communication within the committee.

Investigator

Investigators perform oversight functions by examining documents and interviewing potential witnesses on matters of legislative interest.

House and Senate Staffer Roles - District Offices

Member offices in district offices are more constituent-focused than the policy- and communications-oriented DC offices. In district offices, there is a district director at the top, to whom report field representatives, and specialized staff. District staffers help constituents with projects such as helping Veterans gain disability benefits or helping small businesses and organizations get grants.

District/State Director

The director oversees district office operations and represents the member locally. Scientists can use their analytical skills to assess local issues and provide evidence-based recommendations for addressing constituent concerns.

Constituent Services Representative/Caseworker

The caseworker assists constituents with issues involving federal agencies. This is a great way to do people-facing science policy! Scientists interested in science policy can apply problem-solving skills to navigate complex bureaucratic processes and explain technical aspects of government programs to constituents. It may also help to have various science backgrounds helping people gain access to grants, federal benefits, and so on.

Field Representative

The field representative attends local events and gathers community feedback. Scientists can offer expertise at community events, particularly those focused on environmental, health, or technology issues, providing credible information to constituents.

Grants/Projects Coordinator

The Grants/Projects Coordinator assists in obtaining federal and private funding for constituents. Scientists familiar with grant writing and research funding can help local organizations secure resources for scientific and technological projects.

For more about Congressional staff roles, visit:

- “Congressional Staff: Duties and Functions of Selected Positions” from the Congressional Research Service:
<https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RL/RL34545/7>.
- “Job Descriptions: House Office Sample” from Congressional Management Foundation:
<https://www.congressfoundation.org/component/content/article/85/136-job-descriptions-house-office-sample>.

Building Up Science Expertise in Congress is Crucial

Given that the Congress, unlike the Executive Branch, does not have a dedicated science advisory board, building up science expertise in Congress is crucial, and this can happen in fields all across STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), including the social sciences:

- Life Sciences: Biologists, medical researchers, and environmental scientists can contribute to health policy, biotechnology regulations, and ecological conservation efforts.
- Physical Sciences: Physicists, chemists, and geologists can inform energy policy, materials science innovations, and natural resource management.
- Computer Sciences: Data scientists and IT specialists can enhance cybersecurity measures, improve data analysis for policy-making, and advise on technology regulations.
- Social Sciences: Psychologists, economists, and sociologists can provide insights on behavioral aspects of policy implementation and social impact assessments.
- Engineering: Various engineering disciplines can contribute to infrastructure planning, technological innovation policies, and STEM education initiatives.

In both the House and Senate, scientists and people with science backgrounds can:

- Enhance the rigor of policy analysis by applying scientific methodologies.
- Improve communication of complex issues to both colleagues and constituents.
- Provide expert testimony or briefings on scientific matters.
- Help offices respond more effectively to science-related constituent inquiries.
- Contribute to the development of evidence-based legislation.

Scientists and people with a science background who work in the legislative branch ensure that congressional offices can make more informed decisions, communicate more effectively with constituents, and develop policies grounded in scientific evidence. This integration is valuable in both chambers and at both the national and local levels, ensuring that scientific perspectives inform the legislative process at all stages.

By engaging in these roles, scientists, science students, and people with a science background working in related fields such as policy and law can significantly contribute to the integration of

scientific knowledge into legislative processes, enhancing the development of evidence-based policies across various domains.

About Fancy Comma, LLC

Fancy Comma, LLC is a science communications, marketing, and policy firm. Check out our other free, helpful resources at www.fancycomma.com/learn.