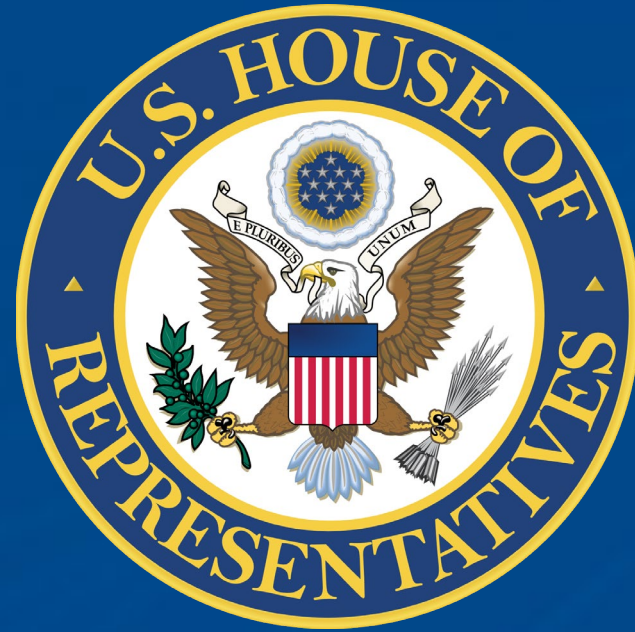


# Hill Meetings 101

Haley Smoot, Director of Public Policy  
Shelley Fuld Nasso, CEO





- **1 representative per district**
- **# based on population**
- **435 voting members**
- **6 non-voting members (e.g. DC, PR, etc.)**
- **2-year terms**



- **2 senators per state**
- **100 total**
- **6-year terms**
- **1/3 of seats up for election every two years**

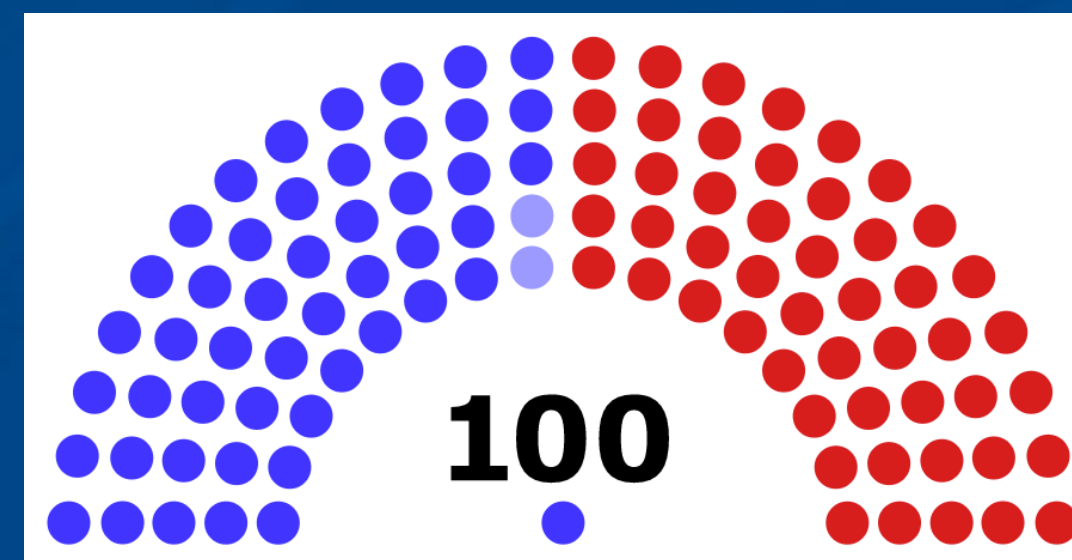
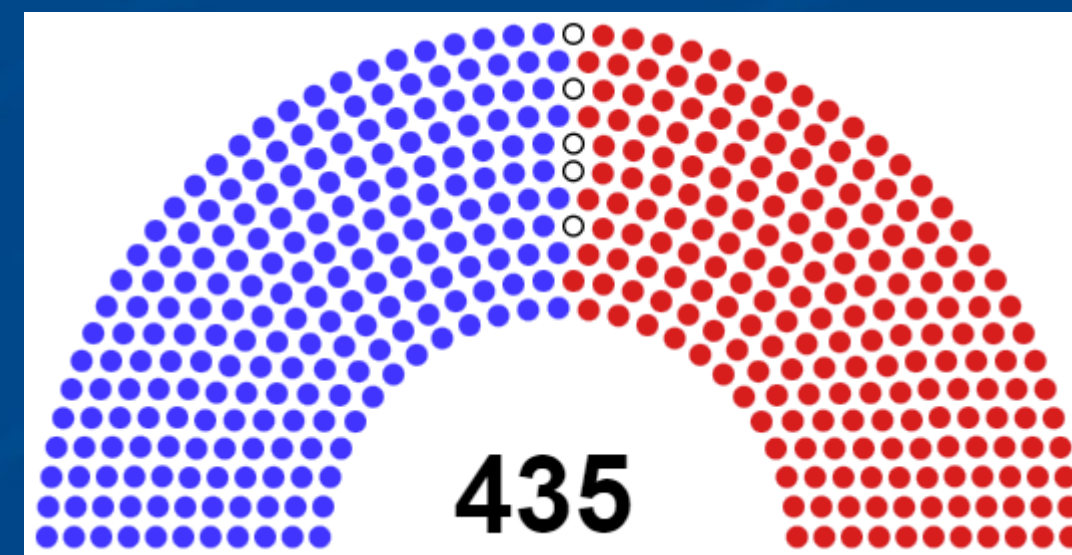
## ▶ 117<sup>th</sup> Congress

### House of Representatives

- 435 representatives
  - 220 Democrats
  - 210 Republicans
  - 5 vacant seats
  - 6 non-voting members (e.g. PR, DC)

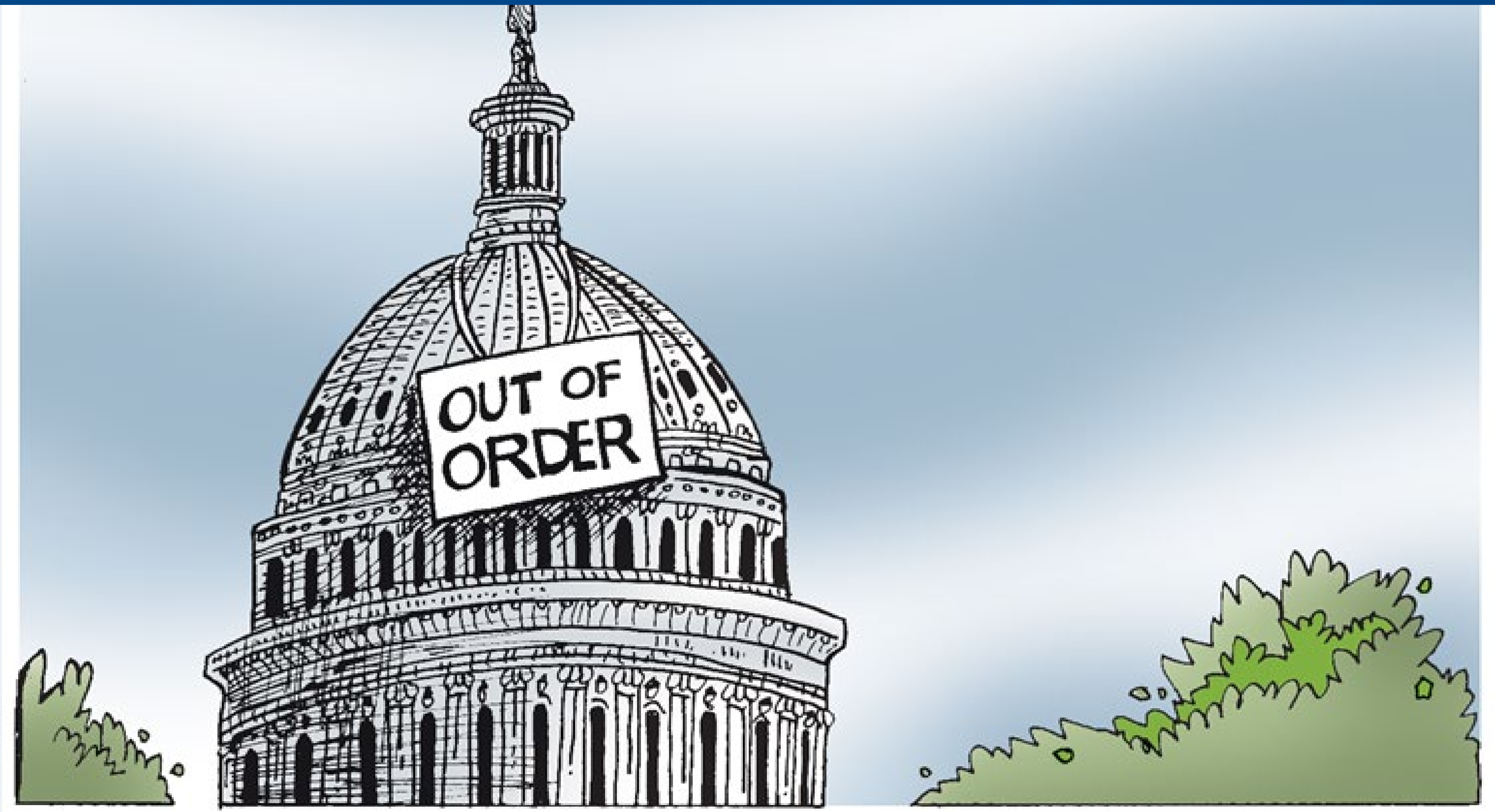
### Senate

- 100 senators
  - 48 Democrats
  - 2 Independents (caucus with Ds)
  - 50 Republicans
  - VP Harris casts tie-breaking votes



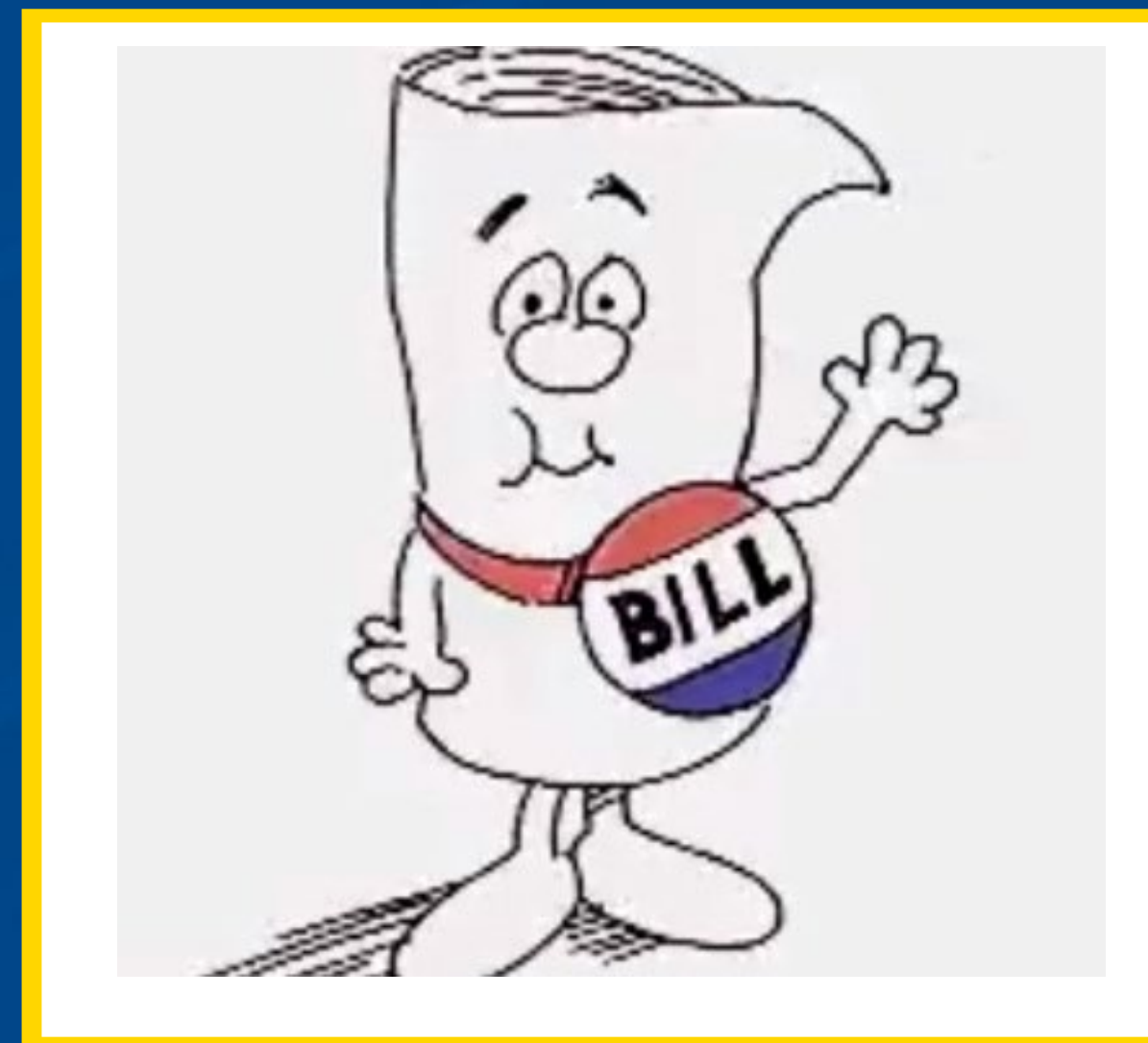
# ▶ How Congress Works





## ▶ How a Bill (Usually) Becomes a Law

1. Bill is introduced in committee
2. Committee\* hearings
  - Expert testimony
3. Committee\* mark-up
  - Amendments
4. Committee\* votes
5. Full chamber for floor vote



\*or subcommittee

# ▶ What Role Do Advocates Play?



## **DOs for Hill Meetings**

- Be prepared
- Be on time
- Be flexible
- Be respectful
- Be concise
- Share the spotlight
- Be responsive
- Be appreciative
- Use social media
- Follow up





## **DON'Ts for Hill Meetings**

- Overload the Hill visit with too many issues
- Expect your legislator or staffer to be an expert on the issue
- Be afraid to say “I don’t know”
- Be offended if your legislator is unable to meet with you
- Confront, threaten, or pressure

# ▶ The Meeting

- **Brief introductions**
  - Share your name, city, connection to cancer, and that you're an NCCS advocate
- **State the purpose of the meeting**
  - Share what you're advocating for
- **Share your story**
- **Make the ask**
  - OR thank them if they already support what you're advocating for



**Telling Your Story: A Step-by-Step Worksheet**

People have been telling stories since human beings first sat around campfires. We are hard-wired to take in new information through stories.

Statistics reach people in the head. Stories hit people in the heart. Sharing your personal experience is a powerful way to establish a connection and drive your listener to action. Your audience (e.g., elected officials, donors, the media, other volunteers) may disagree with your facts or arguments, but they cannot argue with your unique personal experience.

\*\*\*\*\*

The below steps are based on research in effective storytelling, but you should tailor them to your own circumstances.

**1. Hi. I'm name from place.**  
*If meeting with a Congress Member, identify yourself as living in their district.*

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**2. My life changed when [describe your diagnosis or a loved one's.]**  
*Example: A free mammography screening van came to my work one day.*  
*Example: My sister was having headaches and didn't know why. It turned out to be a brain tumor.*

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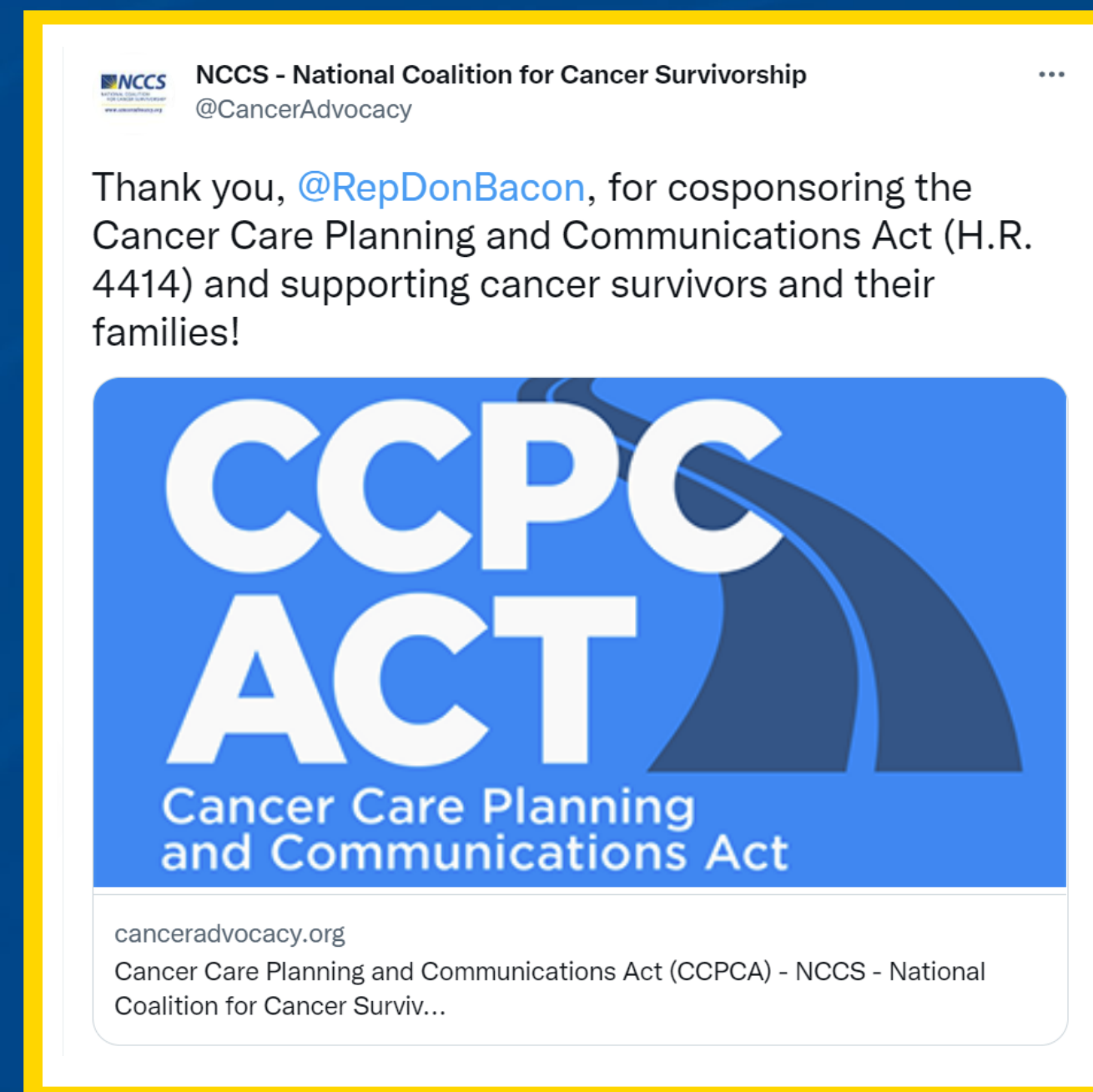
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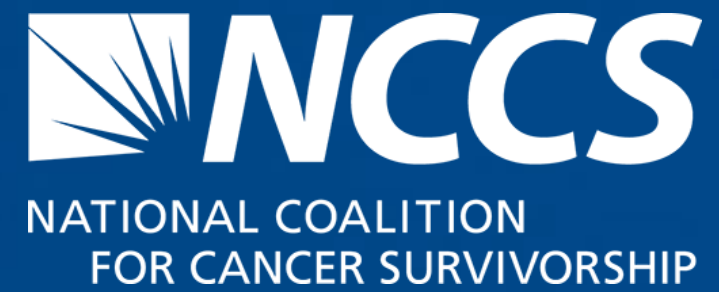
## ▶ After the Meeting

- Tweet to thank your legislator for the meeting and restate the ask
- Send thank you emails with responses to any outstanding questions
- Follow up with staff on action items, if any
- If your Member takes action, thank them and their staff



## ► **Maintaining Relationships – Stay Engaged!**

- Subscribe to the legislator's email list and follow on social media
- Don't be afraid to check in with staff regularly
- Serve as a resource on cancer issues
- Invite your Member to local cancer community events in your hometown
- Thank them for co-sponsoring legislation
- Schedule in-district meetings
- Attend town hall meetings



# Questions?

Email [hsmoot@canceradvocacy.org](mailto:hsmoot@canceradvocacy.org)

