

## The Senate Access Project

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### **Contents:**

Page:

2	Executive Summary
3	Methodology
8	Findings and Analysis
17	Conclusions

## Executive Summary

What would happen if an average citizen, a complete unknown, were to contact the office of every US Senator and ask for a meeting to discuss a certain Senate bill of interest? And then what would happen if that same unknown were to register as a federal lobbyist, contact each Senate office again, and request a meeting to discuss the same bill?

Inspired by the lackluster, and likely automated, responses he received to letters he had written to his own congressional delegation during the recent national healthcare debate, these are the questions Josh Brodbeck sought to answer. If, all else being equal, the only difference between a 'no-name' placing two meeting requests of each Senate office was his status – a citizen, then a lobbyist – what would happen?

From these questions, the *Senate Access Project* was born.

Separated by one month in the spring of 2010, Brodbeck twice contacted the office of each US Senator – in April as a private citizen, and again in May as an actual federally registered lobbyist – and requested a meeting to discuss a health care bill that was before the Senate at the time. A business consultant who regularly performs detailed studies of the operations of his corporate clients, Brodbeck applied the same scientific methodology he uses in his profession to the *Senate Access Project*.

For each meeting request, the study tracked more than 20 variables ranging anywhere from a Senator's tenure to how much campaign money a Senator accepts from the health care lobby, then referenced the data against whether or not a meeting was granted, and identified trends. And, of course, the study contrasts the differences between the request results as a citizen, and then as a lobbyist.

All of the data collected during the study has been independently verified by Prof. Dan Smith, a political science professor from the University of Florida.

Some of the findings are quite compelling. Highlights of the study include:

- Overall, the ratio of meetings granted to Brodbeck-the-lobbyist, versus Brodbeck-the-citizen, was almost 4:1 (3.86:1).
- As a citizen, the number of meeting requests that were rejected was more than 3.5 times the number of those that were granted (3.57:1). As a lobbyist, the number of meeting requests that were granted was nearly twice that of those that were rejected (1.8:1).

- The average salary of Senate staff members he was granted a meeting with as a lobbyist was 33% higher than staff members he was to meet with as a citizen; as a lobbyist, he would likely meet someone influential, but as a citizen, this was far less likely.
- Perhaps most interesting is that, for the most pertinent findings of the study, there was little significant difference in results between Democratic and Republican Senate offices – there was no significant correlation to political party that emerged anywhere within the study; as a group, the Senate offices of both major parties behaved the same way.

The methodology of the study, detailed analysis, and Brodbeck's conclusions follow.

## Methodology

Great care was taken in advance and during the course of the study to account for and/or control every conceivable variable to ensure that every private citizen contact and lobbyist contact to each US Senate office was as consistent as possible, in every way, with only one substantive difference; all else being equal, the first contact to each Senate office was made by a private citizen, while the second contact was made by a registered federal lobbyist.

In preparation for the study, two individuals were consulted to assist in the formation of the approach for the Senate office contacts, as well as to assist in identifying variables to be accounted for within the data collection period of the study. One individual is a veteran lobbyist who has represented clients from various industries and sectors for over 20 years. The second individual is a federal legislative analyst employed by an industry-funded non-profit organization who interacts with US Senate offices on a daily basis as part of his duties. For obvious reasons, both individuals asked not to be identified within the findings of this study; a request that will be honored. These individuals can be confidentially verified by request, if necessary.

The variables and/or the approaches for contending with each variable within this study are as follows:

### *Timing of Contacts*

The private citizen contacts (made on 4/9/10 and 4/12/10) to the Senate offices were made first, and were intentionally separated from the lobbyist contacts (made on 5/12, 5/13, and 5/14/10) by approximately one month for specific reasons:

- As the name and the individual that would be making both the private citizen and lobbyist requests (Josh Brodbeck) would remain the same in both instances (in an effort to eliminate intangible variables that could otherwise emerge between different individuals making the same request – telephone communication style, etc.), a significant period of time needed to elapse between the private citizen and lobbyist contacts to avoid misunderstandings and confusion that would otherwise occur if the same individual initiated contact as a private citizen and then as a lobbyist within a narrower timeframe.
- In addition, a significant period of time needed to elapse between the private citizen and lobbyist contacts to avoid the possibility that the two separate contacts to any one Senate office would be connected to one another; enough time needed to pass between contacts so that Senate staffers had a low likelihood of remembering the individual calling later as a lobbyist that also called earlier as a private citizen.
- Finally, the timing of the private citizen versus the lobbyist contacts was carefully chosen to eliminate the possibility that more and/or less meeting requests would be granted to a private citizen versus a lobbyist based upon the number of days the Senate would be in session (and thus, the amount of time a Senator would physically be in Washington, DC) during the stated period that the private citizen and/or the lobbyist would be visiting Washington, DC. As such, the number of days that the Senate was in session during the stated private citizen visit (May and June of 2010) was 38 days, and the number of days the Senate was in session during the stated lobbyist visit (June and July of 2010) was 35 days.

### *Scripts for Initial Contact*

The initial contacts for both the citizen and lobbyist contacts were all made via telephone and calls were placed to the publicly available, main 'switchboard' telephone number for each US Senate office. These contacts were scripted in advance, and were closely adhered to. The initial statements made once acquiring a Senate staffer on the phone were as follows:

As a private citizen:

"Hi, my name is Josh Brodbeck and I'm a private citizen calling from Denver. I'll be spending May and June of this year in D.C., and I wanted to arrange for 10 or 15 minutes to talk with the Senator about Senate Bill 702."

As a lobbyist:

"Hi, my name is Josh Brodbeck and I'm a federal lobbyist based out of Denver. I'll be in D.C. for all of June and July, and I wanted to arrange for 10 or 15 minutes to talk with the Senator about Senate Bill 702."

**Note:** It was understood throughout the study that, although meeting requests were made with actual Senators, if a meeting were to be granted, the meeting would in all likelihood be granted with a member of that given Senator's staff. However, based upon the input of the two individuals consulted in advance of this study, as well as a desire to adhere to the purity of the intent of this study (measuring the level of direct access to a Senator and/or a Senator's office based upon one's status – citizen vs. lobbyist), it was most appropriate for the meeting requests to be made with the Senators themselves, with this understanding that such requests would very likely be immediately turned over to Senate staff if they were granted.

In some instances (less than half of the contacts for both the private citizen and lobbyist contacts), the Senate staff member contacted posed additional questions before issuing specific instructions and/or initiating the process to grant a meeting request. All of these questions were anticipated in advance, and as such, answers to those questions were also scripted in advance. These questions and scripted answers are as follows:

As a private citizen:

If asked what Senate Bill 702 (hereafter S. 702) actually was, the response was:

"The Long-Term Care Affordability and Security Act of 2009"

If asked what the bill was about, the response was:

"It essentially includes long term care insurance as a benefit under tax exempt employee cafeteria plans and extends related consumer protections."

If asked why a request to meet about the bill was being made, the response was:

"I'm in favor of the bill, I'd like to express that to the Senator, give the Senator a chance to ask me questions about my position, and then encourage the Senator to vote for the bill."

As a lobbyist:

If asked what S. 702 actually was, the response was:

"The Long-Term Care Affordability and Security Act of 2009"

If asked what the bill was about, the response was:

"It essentially includes long term care insurance as a benefit under tax exempt employee cafeteria plans and extends related consumer protections."

If asked why a request to meet about the bill was being made, the response was:

“My client is in favor of the bill, they would like me to express that to the Senator, give the Senator a chance to ask me questions about their position, and then encourage the Senator to vote for the bill.”

If asked who the client being represented was, the response was:

“Company X, a customized underwriting software developer based in Denver that works in the insurance industry.”

**Note:** An actual company granted permission for their corporate name to be used within the study. Soliciting an actual corporation to agree to be named if necessary for the lobbyist contacts, versus fabricating a fictitious corporation, was an intentional decision made in an effort to avoid potential criticism of the credibility of the study and its findings after completion. Also of note is the primary reason for the particular company that was selected for the study is that it was a business that would have a logical interest in S. 702. For obvious reasons, this company has also requested that it not be identified; a request that will be honored. However, the company can be confidentially verified upon request, if necessary.

If asked to provide a Senate Lobbyist and Registrant/Client ID #, the response would have been:

“Josh Brodbeck, representing Company X and my registration number is XXXXXXXXXX-XX.”

**Note:** The lobbyist registration number has been redacted from these findings, as that number can be used in concert with a federal lobbyist database, a publicly accessible database managed by congressional staff, to reveal the identity of the actual company named in the lobbyist contacts. This number can be confidentially verified upon request, if necessary. Of interest, however, is that although a request to provide identifying information to verify official federal lobbyist registration was conceived as a possibility within the study, not once during the study did a Senate office actively request such identifying information.

If asked what the client’s interest in that particular state is, the response was:

“As many of Company X’s customers are national companies, they indirectly have a presence in all 50 states.”

**Note:** As this question was clearly only applicable to the lobbyist contacts, and it was indeed asked in relatively few instances, the response was intentionally crafted so as not to give the impression that the lobbyist’s client, who is presumably impacted by and has an interest in S. 702, has any more or less of an interest in a given Senator’s state than a private citizen, who is also presumably impacted by and has an interest in the bill, would have. Never was it stated, nor was the impression given, that Company X had a specific interest in a given Senator’s state (the corporation was an employer in a given state, had

facilities in a given state, etc.) other than gaining that Senator's support for S. 702; which was equal to the interest in that bill that the private citizen also impacted by this bill and making the same request would have. Put differently, the answer to this question was crafted in a manner that would ensure that what the lobbyist wanted from a given Senator – a 'yes' vote on S. 702 – was the same as what the citizen wanted, and that the particular interest the lobbyist's client had in a given Senator's state was comparatively equal to that of a citizen also interested in the same bill.

### *Reason for Contact -- S. 702*

To eliminate every conceivable reason that a Senator's office would reject a meeting request to discuss a certain bill out-of-hand based on the actual bill a Senate office was being contacted about, the selection of the bill used as the basis for the meeting request was very carefully considered. As such, the criteria for the bill that was selected were as follows:

- **Timeliness of Topic:** The policy issue that the selected bill is related to needed to be a topic that was receiving considerable public attention and scrutiny during the course of the study. The bill needed to contend with an issue that no Senate office could claim a legitimate disinterest in.
- **Bi-Partisan Sponsorship:** To eliminate the possibility that a Senate office would have a diminished interest in discussing a bill based upon sponsorship solely from the majority or minority party, whichever would apply, the bill needed to have bi-partisan sponsorship from roughly an equal number of Senators from both the majority and minority parties. Additionally, Senate bills possessing strong bi-partisan sponsorship have a higher likelihood of eventually being voted upon on the Senate floor, thus greatly diminishing the possibility that a given Senate office would be disinterested in discussing such a bill for the belief that it will never be voted upon.
- **Committee Status:** To greatly reduce the possibility that a bill would emerge from committee and be voted upon during the course of the study, thus negating the entire effort, the bill needed to have been assigned to a committee that has been considering the bill for some time (more than ~6 months). This would suggest that, given 2010 is an election year, there was a low likelihood that such a bill would be voted upon before the 2010 general election.

S. 702 fit all of these criteria, and thus, it was selected as the subject bill for this study.

### *Post-Contact*

After making initial contact with each Senate office, the process that was required to make a formal meeting request of that Senator/Senate office varied widely from Senate office to Senate office. Some offices allowed the request to be submitted by phone and would forward that request to an applicable party within that Senate office, others required the request to be submitted via e-mail, others required the request to be submitted via facsimile, while others featured a web interface on that Senate office's official website that allowed for meeting requests to be submitted. For the purposes of this study, a meeting request was considered to be complete once the full process and all requirements to submit a formal meeting request, per the requirements of each Senate office, had been fully satisfied.

Whatever the required process of each Senate office, that process was completed in full to the exact specifications of each Senate office twice (once for the private citizen requests, and again for the lobbyist requests) for all 100 Senate offices, with no exceptions; 200 formal requests were submitted per the requirements of each office. In all instances, the manner in which information was conveyed to each Senate office in submitting the actual meeting request to each office, per the requirements of each office, was completely consistent with all information conveyed in the initial contact to each office. Put simply, although meeting requests were submitted in various formats, the information contained in each request was completely consistent from request to request.

Finally, in an effort not to skew any post-request results, after the request process associated with each Senate office was completed per each office's specifications, any and all follow-up and/or additional interaction with any Senate office was completely passive in nature; all additional interaction post-request, but before a definitive response to the request was given, would have needed to be initiated by a Senate office only. In other words, no more or less effort was devoted to eliciting a definitive response from any one Senate office than from any other.

## **Findings and Analysis**

### *Meetings Granted*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Meetings granted with a Senator	0	2
Meetings granted with a staff member	7	25
<b>Total meetings granted</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>27</b>



**Key Finding:** Essentially, an individual identifying him/herself as a lobbyist is 3.86, or nearly 4 times, more likely to obtain a meeting with a Senator and/or a Senate staff member than when the same individual identifies him/herself as a private citizen.

*Political Affiliation*

Following are the meetings granted broken out by political affiliation:

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Republican Senate Offices	3	13
Democratic Senate Offices	4	13
Independent Senate Offices	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>27</b>

**Key Finding:** Clearly there is no correlation between political party of a Senate office and one's likelihood to be granted a meeting, whether a private citizen or a lobbyist, by that Senate office.

*Meeting Overlap*

Of the 7 Senate offices that granted a meeting in response to a citizen request, 4 (3 Dem, 1 Rep) of them also granted a meeting request in response to the lobbyist request.

*Sponsorship*

There are a total of 8 sponsors for S. 702; 5 Republicans and 3 Democrats.

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Meeting requests granted	0	3 (1 Dem, 2 Rep)
Meeting requests rejected	2 (1 Dem, 1 Rep)	1 (1 Rep)
No response to meeting request	6 (2 Dem, 4 Rep)	4 (2 Dem, 2 Rep)

**Key Findings:**

- For Citizen requests, there does not appear to be a significant correlation between whether a Senator is a sponsor of S. 702 (or perhaps any bill) and whether or not a meeting request is granted, as no meetings were granted.
- For Lobbyist requests, there is a clear correlation between sponsors of S. 702 and their desire to grant a meeting request to a lobbyist with an interest in the bill.

*Response Rate*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Total meeting request responses	32 (19 Dem, 13 Rep)	42 (24 Dem, 2 Ind, 16 Rep)
...requests granted	7 (3 Dem, 4 Rep)	27 (13 Dem, 1 Ind, 13 Rep)

...requests rejected	25 (15 Dem, 10 Rep)	15 (10 Dem, 1 Ind, 4 Rep)
No response to meeting request	68 (38 Dem, 2 Ind, 28 Rep)	58 (33 Dem, 25 Rep)

Note: For the purposes of this study, a 'response' was defined as a definitive answer in the affirmative or negative to the meeting request; in some cases, there were multiple contacts with a given Senate office before a definitive response to the meeting request was received. Most Senate offices with which multiple contacts were made also definitively responded at some point, and conversely, most Senate offices that never responded to a meeting request usually involved only one instance of contact.

**Key Findings:**

- A meeting request from an unknown citizen (to Senate offices) has a 32% chance of receiving a response, while a meeting request from an unknown lobbyist has a 42% chance of receiving a response.
- There is a much higher likelihood that a response to a lobbyist will be in the affirmative (64% of responses to lobbyists were to grant a meeting) than a response to a citizen will be in the affirmative (22% of responses to a citizen were to grant a meeting).

*Response Overlap*

	# of Senate Offices
Responded to Citizen Request, but not to Lobbyist Request	15 (7 Dem, 8 Rep)
Responded to Lobbyist Request, but not to Citizen Request	26 (12 Dem, 2 Ind, 12 Rep)
Responded to both Requests	17 (12 Dem, 5 Rep)
Responded to neither Request	42 (26 Dem, 16 Rep)

Note: For the purposes of this study, a 'response' was defined as a definitive answer in the affirmative or negative to the meeting request; in some cases, there were multiple contacts with a given Senate office before a definitive response to the meeting request was received. Most Senate offices with which multiple contacts were made also definitively responded at some point, and conversely, most Senate offices that never responded to a meeting request usually involved only one instance of contact.

*Response Time*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Average response time for Senators whose offices granted request.	16.14 days	12.15 days

Average response time for Senators whose offices rejected request.	6.68 days	10.93 days
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Note: For the purposes of this study, a 'response' was defined as a definitive answer in the affirmative or negative to the meeting request; in some cases, there were multiple contacts with a given Senate office before a definitive response to the meeting request was received. Most Senate offices with which multiple contacts were made also definitively responded at some point, and conversely, most Senate offices that never responded to a meeting request usually involved only one instance of contact. So in this instance, response time was calculated as the number of days that elapsed between the original request and a response to the request as defined above.

*Tenure*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Senators whose offices granted request that are in their 1 <sup>st</sup> term and/or are serving a partial term (appointments, etc.).	4 (3 Dem, 1 Rep)	11 (6 Dem, 1 Ind, 4 Rep)
Senators whose offices granted request that are in their 2 <sup>nd</sup> term.	1 (Dem)	5 (1 Dem, 4 Rep)
Senators whose offices granted a request that are in their 3 <sup>rd</sup> or more terms.	2 (2 Rep)	11 (7 Dem, 4 Rep)

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Senators whose offices rejected request that are in their 1 <sup>st</sup> term and/or are serving a partial term (appointments, etc.).	9 (7 Dem, 2 Rep)	3 (3 Dem)
Senators whose offices rejected request that are in their 2 <sup>nd</sup> term.	5 (2 Dem, 3 Rep)	5 (3 Dem, 2 Rep)
Senators whose offices rejected request that are in their 3 <sup>rd</sup> or more terms.	11 (6 Dem, 5 Rep)	7 (4 Dem, 1 Ind, 2 Rep)

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Senators whose offices did not	23 (12 Dem, 1 Ind, 10)	21 (12 Dem, 9 Rep)

respond that are in their 1 <sup>st</sup> term and/or are serving a partial term(appointments, etc.).	Rep)	
Senators whose offices did not respond that are in their 2 <sup>nd</sup> term.	14 (8 Dem, 6 Rep)	11 (8 Dem, 3 Rep)
Senators whose offices did not respond that are in their 3 <sup>rd</sup> or more terms.	31 (18 Dem, 1 Ind, 12 Rep)	26 (13 Dem, 13 Rep)

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Average tenure of Senators whose offices granted request.	6.14 years	10.33 years
Average tenure of Senators whose offices rejected request.	12.0 years	14.40 years
Average tenure of Senators whose offices did not respond.	13.25 years	12.92 years

Average tenure of all US Senators: 12.45 years

**Key Findings:**

- Data suggests that, for citizens making a request, as a Senator's tenure increases, there is a declining likelihood that a citizen will be granted a meeting request, or receive any response at all.
- Data also suggests that a lobbyist is more likely than a citizen to be granted a meeting and/or receive a response to a meeting request as a Senator's tenure increases.

*Proximity to Re-Election: Senate Offices that Granted a Meeting*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Next Election in 2010	4 (3 Dem, 1 Rep)	9 (4 Dem, 5 Rep)
Next Election in 2012	0	9 (4 Dem, 1 Ind, 4 Rep)
Next Election in 2014	3 (1 Dem, 2 Rep)	9 (6 Dem, 3 Rep)

**Key Finding:** For those meetings granted to lobbyists, there is no correlation between the timing of a Senator's next election and granting a lobbyist's meeting request; these appear to be consistent practices.

*Proximity to Re-Election: Senate Offices that Rejected a Meeting Request*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Next Election in 2010	6 (3 Dem, 3 Rep)	2 (1 Dem, 1 Rep)

Next Election in 2012	4 (3 Dem, 1 Rep)	6 (4 Dem, 1 Ind, 1 Rep)
Next Election in 2014	15 (9 Dem, 6 Rep)	7 (5 Dem, 2 Rep)

**Key Finding:** For citizen requests, there is a clear correlation between those Senators up for re-election in 2014 and rejecting a citizen meeting request; those Senators up for re-election in 2014 will reject a citizen meeting request by an approximate margin of 3:1 versus those Senators up for re-election in 2010 or 2012.

*Proximity to Re-Election: Senate Offices that Did Not Respond to a Meeting Request*

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Next Election in 2010	24 (10 Dem, 14 Rep)	23 (11 Dem, 12 Rep)
Next Election in 2012	29 (18 Dem, 2 Ind, 9 Rep)	18 (13 Dem, 5 Rep)
Next Election in 2014	15 (10 Dem, 5 Rep)	17 (9 Dem, 8 Rep)

*Relevance of Constituency/Interest of the Individual Making Meeting Request in a Given Senator's State*

It was suggested by more than one individual consulted in advance of this study that, as lobbyists can and often do represent clients with interests in multiple US states, this factor alone could be a driver for an increased likelihood of a Senate office to respond to and/or grant a meeting request from a lobbyist representing a particular client. Conversely, as a citizen is obviously a constituent of only one state, this factor could similarly be a driver for a decreased likelihood of a Senate office other than one representing that citizen to respond to and/or grant a meeting request to such a citizen.

Although it can be argued as to whether or not the constituency of a citizen versus that of a client being represented by a lobbyist should be a driver of responsiveness to and/or granting meeting requests to citizens vs. lobbyists, this is nonetheless a valid point. As such, if this factor were a driver for one or more Senate offices related to meeting requests, then it is appropriate to expect a Senate office considering granting a meeting request to a lobbyist to confirm whether or not the client a lobbyist is making a meeting request on behalf of has a legitimate interest in that particular Senator's state. Whether or not a Senate office confirmed that a lobbyist's client had a legitimate interest in that Senator's state was tracked and quantified as a part of this study.

	# of Senate Offices
Confirmed legitimacy of client interest in that Senator's state when granting a meeting.	4 (2 Dem, 2 Rep) of 27 meetings granted.
Confirmed legitimacy of client interest in that Senator's state when rejecting a meeting request.	1 (Dem) of 15 requests rejected.
Confirmed legitimacy of client interest in that Senator's state and did not respond to a meeting request.	3 (2 Dem, 1 Rep) of 58 non-responses.

**Key Finding:** As only 5 of 42 Senate offices that responded to a meeting request (27 granted a meeting, 15 did not) actually inquired into the interest that a lobbyist's client had in the states of those respective offices, it is clear that whether or not a lobbyist's client has a legitimate interest in a Senator's state is not a driving factor for the US Senate offices as a whole when considering whether or not to grant a meeting to that lobbyist.

### *Level of Influence of Meeting Participants*

In all but 2 instances, meetings that were granted both in response to citizen and lobbyist requests were scheduled with Senate staffers; a common practice. In the aforementioned 2 instances, those were meetings that were scheduled with actual US Senators, and both meetings were with the lobbyist (although it is understood that the eventual meeting had a high likelihood of occurring with a Senate staffer, as previously mentioned in this report). As organizational structures, chains of command, and naming conventions for job titles relative to rank can vary from one Senator's office to another, using job titles to gauge the extent to which a meeting was set with a Senate staffer who had influence and was of consequence within that office is not a reliable metric. However, the salaries of Senate staffers can indeed be considered a reliable metric; presumably the higher a staffer's salary, the more seniority and influence that staffer possesses within that Senator's office.

	Citizen Meetings	Lobbyist Meetings
Average annual staff member salaries* of staffers with which meetings were granted.	\$58,067.77	\$77,368.93

\*: Salary figures were acquired from [www.legistorm.com](http://www.legistorm.com).

### **Key Findings:**

- The average salary of staff members with which meetings were granted resulting from a lobbyist request was 33% higher than for meetings resulting from a citizen request.
- 13 (of a total of 27) meetings granted resulting from a lobbyist request were with staffers making over \$75,000/year.

- 2 (of a total of 7) meetings granted resulting from a citizen request were with staffers making over \$75,000/year.

*Relationship Between Meeting Request Responses/Non-Responses and Contributions Received from Health Related Organizations and Their Lobbyists*

As S.702 is a health care related bill, it is useful to examine the amount of financial campaign contributions received by Senators from health organizations and their lobbyists with relation to the meeting requests as part of this study.

The Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) recently completed a compilation of members of Congress who received campaign contributions from at least one health or health insurance organization and 10 of their outside lobbyists between January 2007 and June 2009. The results can be found at the following link: [http://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/lm\\_health.php?type=M](http://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/lm_health.php?type=M) .

The following data is a result of the data from the CRP study being cross referenced to the findings of this study.

Average total contribution per qualifying Senator: \$92,276.90

Number of Total Qualifying Senators: 40

	Citizen Meetings	Lobbyist Meetings
<i>Meeting Requests Granted</i>		
# of Senators who received contributions from at least 1 health organization and 10 outside lobbyists from 1/07-6/09	4 (2 Dem, 2 Rep) of 7 meetings granted.	9 (5 Dem, 4 Rep) Of 27 meetings granted.
Average total contribution amount per qualifying Senator.	\$39,177.50	\$103,226.22
<i>Meeting Requests Rejected</i>		
# of Senators who received contributions from at least 1 health organization and 10 outside lobbyists from 1/07-6/09	14 (7 Dem, 7 Rep) of 25 meetings rejected.	9 (6 Dem, 3 Rep) Of 15 meetings rejected.
Average total contribution amount per qualifying Senator.	\$154,807.21	\$133,970.00
<i>Meeting Requests with No Response</i>		
# of Senators who received contributions from at least 1 health	22 (15 Dem, 7 Rep) Of 68 non-responses.	22 (13 Dem, 9 Rep) Of 58 non-responses.

organization and 10 outside lobbyists from 1/07-6/09		
Average total contribution amount per qualifying Senator.	\$69,412.05	\$78,014.09

**Key Findings:** The data clearly suggests that a citizen desiring to discuss a particular bill with a Senator/Senate office that has received an above average amount of campaign contributions from an industry and/or related lobbyists whom have an interest in that same bill is much less likely than a lobbyist to be granted a meeting.

*Constituent Population\**

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
Average constituent population of Senators whose offices granted request.	6,032,412	6,943,702
Average constituent population of Senators whose offices rejected request.	5,225,124	5,244,355
Average constituent population of Senators whose offices did not respond.	6,469,983	5,977,043

\*: Figures based on 7/1/09 US Census Estimates

Average US population per State: 6,128,138

**Key Finding:** The population of a constituency that a Senator represents does not appear to be correlated to whether or not a meeting was granted, or if the request was responded to.

*Difficulty of Submitting Request*

Soon after the inception of the study, it became clear that the manner in which meeting requests were handled varied from Senate office to Senate office. However, despite this variance between offices, there were three objective variables that immediately emerged when submitting meeting requests that were tracked as a part of the study:

1. Whether or not a meeting request was required to be submitted in writing;
2. Whether or not additional contact was required with a Senate office after the initial meeting request was submitted (citizen/lobbyist was asked to call again, referred to other staff members, etc.), and;



3. Whether or not the citizen/lobbyist submitting the request was immediately, or quickly, connected to a staff member that possessed decision making authority over granting a meeting or not (Senate scheduler, etc.).

These three factors, combined or individually, serve as a reliable indicator as to the level of difficulty involved with submitting and/or receiving a response to a meeting request.

	Citizen Requests	Lobbyist Requests
# of Senate offices that required a meeting request to be submitted in writing.	79 (44 Dem, 2 Ind, 34 Rep)	77 (45 Dem, 2 Ind, 30 Rep)
# of Senate offices where multiple contacts were necessary before request could be considered submitted.	22 (13 Dem, 9 Rep)	15 (7 Dem, 8 Rep)
# of Senate offices that immediately put requestor in contact with a meeting decision maker.	35 (14 Dem, 21 Rep)	69 (37 Dem, 1 Ind, 31 Rep)

**Key Finding:** There is a clear correlation between a lobbyist submitting a meeting request and the chances of that person being quickly placed in contact with a Senate staffer that has influence over granting meetings; at almost twice the rate of the citizen requests, a lobbyist was quickly placed in contact with such an individual. Put simply, a lobbyist simply has an easier time contacting a Senate office and quickly being put in touch with someone who can materially assist him/her.

## Conclusions

Before an articulation of any conclusions from this study can be stated, the type of study that the *Senate Access Project* essentially amounts to should be noted. The *Senate Access Project* is what can be characterized as a study of organizational function. In this case, the function studied was that of requesting a meeting, or by extension, requesting access, to a Senator or Senate office followed by the various processes, interactions, and events that resulted from each initial request. Likewise, the organization within which this function was examined was the U.S. Senate as a whole, and more specifically all 100 Senate offices; each of which have this function in common to varying degrees.

As such, one undeniable conclusion of this study is that, from a purely operational perspective, gaining meaningful access (i.e. a face-to-face meeting to

discuss pending legislation, etc.) to a U.S. Senator/Senate office is clearly correlated to the status (citizen vs. lobbyist) of the party requesting access. Based on this study's findings, a generically unknown citizen requesting such access can expect:

- a 68% probability that s/he will receive no response at all,
- of the responses s/he does receive, a 78% probability that the request will be rejected, and
- of the actual access/meetings that are granted, a 71% probability that those meetings will be arranged with a Senate staff member of little or no influence within any given Senate office.

Conversely, a generically unknown lobbyist requesting the same access can expect:

- a 42% probability that his/her request will receive a response,
- a 64% probability that a responding Senate office will grant such access, and
- a 48% probability that any access/meeting that is granted will be scheduled with a Senate staff member(or, in two cases, an actual Senator) who is of consequence within any given Senate office.

In any organization and group of sub-organizations, such as the U.S. Senate, a single operational function that is practiced as predictably as this function is, as demonstrated in this study, suggests that such a practice is systemic and cultural. It's simply part of the culture of the U.S. Senate and each of its Senate offices to 'handle' citizens and lobbyists differently, even though they may be seeking the same thing. In addition to the objective data collected in the study, countless vignettes can also be recounted to substantiate a clear conclusion: Far more often than not, a lobbyist contacting a Senate office will have a more responsive, streamlined, and professional experience – with a much higher likelihood of receiving the desired result – than a citizen will likely have.

As to the underlying root causes of this dynamic, this is open to interpretation.

- Some might suggest that it is about money; lobbyists and their clients contribute far more of it to members of Congress than true individual citizens do.
- Others would suggest it is a matter of timing; citizens receive the focus and attention of their U.S. Senators during campaign season, while the remainder of their time and attention devoted to external interaction is given to lobbyists and their clients.
- Yet others would suggest that, as federal lobbyists already have an enhanced opportunity for access to Senators by virtue of their full time presence in Washington and existing relationships with Senate staff, to whatever extent voters become more and more turned off by their

members of Congress, and thus stop paying attention to their behavior, this window of opportunity for the full-time Washington lobby only expands.

- And finally, some would say that this is simply a perpetual symptom of the dysfunction of Washington, D.C.; that 'it's just the way the system works.'

Each of these points of view may indeed be valid, and there is ample data within this study to substantiate each one.