Tips for Congressional Meetings Related to the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA)

PRIOR TO THE MEETING
• Review the member profile for the legislator whose office you are meeting with.
• Make your points salient by explaining how programs established in the HEA that UC supports can help keep higher education affordable and accessible.
• If possible, discuss the issue from a personal perspective – share your own experience or that of a family member or friend who has experience with federal financial aid, student consumer protections or other issues addressed in the HEA.

DURING THE MEETING
• Be concise and make your point clearly.
• Engage the member of Congress/staff by sharing your experiences.
• Leave time for questions from the office.
• If you are meeting with staff, remember they are responsible for briefing the member of Congress and recommend actions.
• Work to establish long-term relationships with staff. Try to arrange for follow-ups.
• Remember to thank the member and staff for their time before you leave.

AFTER THE MEETING
• Media—social, print and digital—are excellent ways of engaging further with an office. All congressional offices track where and when the legislator appears in media, and reports on this daily, so a well-placed op-ed or social media post that identifies the member and/or staff can lead to change. Multiple mentions from different constituencies are very likely to get noticed.

You can reach your campus federal relations representative for more information and assistance at http://bit.ly/UCFederal.