Science and Politics

Erika Hamden
July 24\textsuperscript{th}, 2017
Carnegie Observatories
Why does any of this matter?
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NASA wanted to talk about science. A congressman wanted to ask about Martian civilizations.
Why does any of this matter?

NOTE: Because of rounding, detail may not add to total. Includes all institutions reporting at least $150,000 in R&D expenditures in the fiscal years shown. Prior to FY 2003, totals did not include R&D expenditures in non-science and engineering fields.

Why does any of this matter?

The Congressional Research Service notes that the vast majority of Members (95 percent) had an academic degree:

- 168 Representatives and 57 Senators had a law degree. Of these, five (three Representative and two Senators) also hold a Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree.
- 83 Representatives and 16 Senators earned a master's degree — often a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) — as their highest educational degree.
- 27 Representatives and one Senator (Mark Begich) have no educational degree beyond a high school diploma.
- 23 Representatives (but no Senators) have a PhD.
- 17 Representatives and three Senators have a medical degree (this number includes one Senator with a veterinary medicine degree and one Representative with a dental degree).
- Five Representatives (but no Senators) have an associate's degree as their highest degree. One House Member has a licensed practical nurse (L.P.N.) degree.
Pop Quiz!

1. Are you registered to vote?
Pop Quiz!

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2. Who is your congressperson? What district do you vote in?
Pop Quiz!

1. Are you registered to vote?
2. Who is your congressperson? What district do you vote in?
3. Who are your senators?
Pop Quiz!

1. Are you registered to vote?
2. Who is your congressperson? What district do you vote in?
3. Who are your senators?
4. Who represents you at the state level? On your town council?
Political action for citizens

• Know who your reps are and contact them on a regular basis. Every day, every week.
• https://whoaremyrepresentatives.org/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donald J. Trump</td>
<td>President of the United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mike Pence</td>
<td>Vice-President of the United States</td>
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<td>Dianne Feinstein</td>
<td>United States Senate</td>
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<td>Kamala D. Harris</td>
<td>United States Senate</td>
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<td>Judy Chu</td>
<td>United States House of Representatives CA-27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edmund G. Brown Jr.</td>
<td>Governor</td>
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<td>Gavin Newsom</td>
<td>Lieutenant Governor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony J. Portantino</td>
<td>CA State Senate District 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris R. Holden</td>
<td>CA State Assembly District 41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jim McDonnell</td>
<td>Sheriff</td>
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<td>Jeffrey Prang</td>
<td>Assessor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackie Lacey</td>
<td>District Attorney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim J. Nguyen</td>
<td>Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Judy Chu  United States House of Representatives CA-27

Edmund G. Brown Jr.  Governor

Gavin Newsom  Lieutenant Governor

Anthony J. Portantino  CA State Senate District 25

Party: Democratic
(916) 651-4025
senator.portantino@

Submit Correction or Addition

Chris R. Holden  CA State Assembly District 41

Jim McDonnell  Sheriff

Jeffrey Prang  Assessor

Jackie Lacey  District Attorney

Kim L. Nguyen  Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge

Efrain Matthew Aceves  Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge

Susan Jung Townsend  Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge
Contacting elected officials

• YOUR OPINION MATTERS! You have a voice.
• You can visit the office too!!
• Call about 1 issue at a time.
• Make a request, ask for an action.
• Calls are tallied and provided to the Member
• Local and state offices get hardly any calls!
• Call even if your representative agrees with you!
• How to know what request to make?
What to ask about

• You don’t have to have an answer.
• Organizations like: https://5calls.org/
• Or https://www.ourstates.org/
• Provide scripts based on issue
• But think of your own issues! What do you care about and want to see made better?
• AIP has a weekly newsletter called FYI, about science policy, which is very informative.
• You can also provide comments to departments and agencies during their public comment period
Being a scientist in the world

- You have a responsibility to speak out—either through outreach events, writing articles/letters to the editor, interacting with regular people.
- The rise of “fake news”, denial-ism of various kinds, a retreat from fact driven policy, is a crisis that scientists can fight against.
- Know the rhetorical devices used to derail a conversation: The Gish Gallop, gaslighting, whataboutism, and others
- As with many things, Carl Sagan wrote about this in “The Demon Haunted World”, in a chapter called “The Fine Art of Baloney Detection”
Tell a story
Public Narrative

• Developed by Marshall Ganz - organizer for United Farm Workers, now at Harvard.

• Appeals to action via emotion, not necessarily facts.

• Summarized as: Story of self, story of us, story of now.
Public Narrative: Creating a story of self

• What is the change you want to make in the world: your story of now?
• Why are you called to make that change: What specific experiences have shaped your story of self?
• What personal story can you tell that will help others understand why you want to make that change? Structure it with Challenge, Choice, Outcome.
Public Narrative: Expand to story of us

• “I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story.” –Barack Obama, 2004 DNC speech

• “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself alone, what am I? If not now, when?” –Rabbi Hillel, quoted by Marshall Ganz
Public Narrative: Story of now

**ACTION INHIBITORS**
- inertia
- apathy
- fear
- isolation
- self-doubt

**ACTION MOTIVATORS**
- urgency
- anger
- hope
- solidarity
- Y.C.M.A.D.

**story of self**
- call to leadership

**story of now**
- strategy & action

**story of us**
- shared values & shared experience

**Purpose**
- community
- urgency
Stand on the shoulders of giants

• There are many successful movements you can learn from- study what others have done and use their lessons to craft your own message.

• Join up with groups that already exist or are newly formed.

• Take up space in the world- be as loud as the people who would oppose you.
No one wants to be against Science

• Pick a topic you care about and focus on it
• Sign up for AAS congressional visit days and other congressional visit opportunities
• Invite staffers to visit your campus and labs, develop professional relationships with them if possible.
• Contact your office of Government Relations and see how you can work with them for better results
• Personal stories are more persuasive than facts alone!
Run for office!

• Every person in this room should consider running for public office.
• There are a bunch of groups that exist to help you!