



# NADO on the Hill Preparation Webinar

National Association of Development Organizations

February 7, 2013

# About **Craig Whitham**, NADO's New Director of Government Relations and Legislative Affairs

- Serves as Director of Government Relations and Legislative Affairs, where he is responsible for managing NADO's advocacy efforts, and is the chief point of contact with Congress and the Administration.
- Before joining NADO, Craig served as Senior Appropriations Advisor for Congressman Frank Wolf. In that role, he handled a legislative portfolio of transportation, defense, homeland security, financial services, and housing issues.
- Whitham holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy from George Mason University and Bachelor's Degree from Elon University.



# Presentation Overview

- ✓ Conference Preview
- ✓ Reasons for the new conference changes
- ✓ Benefits of the new conference changes
- ✓ How to effectively set up and conduct Hill meetings
- ✓ How NADO Staff can help you

# Conference Preview

## Day 1

### MONDAY, MARCH 11

8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Registration

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

The Future of EDA

10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Communicating with Congress in DC and Back Home: Successful Models from NADO Members

12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.

NADO Executive Committee Meeting (Executive Committee Only)

1:15 p.m. – 2:20 p.m.

NADO Federal Legislative and Policy Overview

2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Advocacy 201 with Brad Fitch  
Congressional Management Foundation

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Federal Agency Roundtable Networking Session  
Network one-on-one with representatives from federal agencies and programs  
(Co-sponsored by DDAA)



# Featured Speaker: Day 1

## Advocacy 201 with Brad Fitch

**Presenter:** Bradford Fitch is President and CEO of the Congressional Management Foundation. Fitch is a former radio and television reporter and worked on Capitol Hill for 13 years as press secretary, legislative director, and chief of staff.



Participants in Advocacy 201 will learn:

- The most effective tactics and strategies for influencing Congress
- Who lawmakers listen to and why
- What are the most effective tactics and strategies to use in the district or state
- How constituents build long-term relationships with lawmakers and their staff and use those ties at crucial points in the legislative decision-making process

# Conference Preview

## Day 2

### TUESDAY, MARCH 12

- 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.      **Registration**
- 8:00 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.      **NADO Regional Membership Caucus Meetings**
- 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.      **The Regional Development Agenda:**  
A Preview of the Administration’s FY2014 Policy and Budget Priorities *(Co-sponsored by DDAA)*
- 10:40 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.      **Congressional Leadership Outlook:**  
Impact on Federal Regional Development Budgets and Policies  
*(Co-sponsored by DDAA)*
- 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.      **Luncheon Keynote Address:**  
**NADO Champions on the Hill**  
*Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) Invited*  
*Rep. Mike Michaud (D-ME) Invited*



1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

#### **NADO ON THE HILL**

Join us as we build and strengthen relationships with members of Congress and their staff!

**(Transportation provided)**



5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

**Reception on the Hill with members of Congress and their staff**

# Conference Preview

## Day 3

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

- 8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.**                      **2013 NADO Legislator of the Year Award (Breakfast)**
- 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**                      **NADO Member Forum: Discuss Results of Your Hill Visits**
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**                      **NADO Board of Directors Meeting**  
*(Open to all conference attendees)*





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# Reasons for the Change

- The 113<sup>th</sup> Congress is unlikely to produce major policy changes with EDA or any of the other federal programs utilized by NADO members
- In the absence of major policy changes, NADO believes the Washington Policy Conference is the perfect opportunity to start and expand on relationships with Members of Congress and their staff
- Having a solid working relationship with your Member of Congress will pay dividends in future years when new policy is being formulated
- NADO on the Hill is designed to educate our members on the importance of advocacy and to assist in this process



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# Benefits of the Change

- Learn the importance of having a relationship with Members of Congress and staff
- Learn how to initiate contact and how to establish and maintain these important relationships
- Learn how these relationships can help lead to positive policy changes that benefit local development districts
- NADO on the Hill is designed to make our members comfortable with what may be a new process for many and dispel some of the myths surrounding Hill advocacy



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# Setting Up Meetings

- Call your Representative's Washington, DC office. This information can be found at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) or by calling NADO legislative staff
- State that you have a meeting request and ask for the Representative's scheduler or executive assistant
- Most offices have set procedures for scheduling requests which you will have to follow
- If asked to submit a written request (likely), this should be a short email or letter stating your group's name, a brief description of what you do, a list of who will be attending and the date and time you are requesting
- Your request should clearly state that you would like to meet with the Representative, but that legislative staff would also be acceptable if the Representative is not available
- **Most importantly, make it clear that merely want to meet the Member or staff to talk about the work your organization is performing in their district**



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# Who You Will Meet

- If available, you will meet with your Member of Congress
- For NADO members not familiar with their Representative, read the biography on their website. If you cannot find this, NADO legislative staff will be happy to provide one
- If your Representative is not available, you will likely meet with legislative staff (either the Chief of Staff, Legislative Director, or a Legislative Assistant). All of these individuals will be able to discuss the work your organizations perform
- Congressional staff are often from the Representative's home district and have a working knowledge of local issues
- **Congressional staffers are young. You will likely be meeting someone between the ages of 26 and 32. Do not be intimidated...they are there to help you!**



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# Emphasize Relationship Building

- The Objective of NADO on the Hill is for you to build a working relationship with your Representative and their staff
- Emphasize that your goal is to let them know what work you are performing in their district
- Some of you will meet with newly elected members. This is the perfect opportunity to introduce them to your work!
- **Invite your Representative and staff to tour a project you are performing in their district**



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# No Hard Ask

- Congressional offices often expect people they meet with to ask them to take some specific action on your behalf, such as signing a letter or voting for or against a specific piece of legislation
- **This is not the purpose of your meetings!**
- Representatives and staff are used to being barraged with requests, so an informational meeting in which they can learn about things happening back home are valued
- **You do not have to discuss detailed policies or legislative issues**
- Your goal is for your Representative and their staff to know what work you are doing in their district
- If asked for your opinion on a topic with which you are familiar, give your honest answer
- If asked about a topic with which you are not familiar, tell them that issue isn't one your work with frequently



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# What NADO Staff Will Do to Help

- Identify your Member of Congress
- Provide background on your Member of Congress
- Determine how to submit a meeting request
- Schedule meeting request
- Tell you how to get to the correct office on Capitol Hill
- Attend your meeting with you if that would make you more comfortable with the process!



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# Summary

- NADO on the Hill is an exciting new opportunity for our members
- Establishing relationships with your Member of Congress will provide many long-term benefits for your organization
- Inviting your Member of Congress to tour a project in their district will give them a positive picture of your organization
- NADO Legislative staff are here to provide information and support throughout the Washington Policy Conference and your meetings on Capitol Hill



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## **National Association of Development Organizations (NADO)**

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