



**Geosciences
Congressional
Visits Day**



Volunteers Needed to Help Mix Geology and Politics to Advocate for our Profession

Ken Neal

Member, Advocacy Committee; Co-Chair, Licensure Committee

The American Geosciences Institute, of which AEG is a member society, will again host the annual Geosciences Congressional Visit Days (CVDs) on Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 16 and 17, 2014. AGI co-sponsors these events along with other professional societies, during which attendees visit with members of Congress and their staff. During these visits, geologists have opportunities to communicate a message about the importance of investing in federal geoscience research and development, monitoring, and education, and to explain their work and its value at local, state, regional, national, and/or international levels.

Practicing geologists are the ideal advocates for our profession; they see first-hand the benefits of our profession to society, and are the best advocates to transmit our message to Congress and the staffers. Last year, **Brad Worley** (Carolinas Section), **Phyllis Steckel** (St. Louis Section), **Ken Neal** (Washington State Section), and **Becky Roland** (AEG COO) attended the Geoscience CVDs on behalf of AEG. An article by **Rick Kolb** (former AEG Advocacy Committee Co-Chair), entitled "Impressions from AGI's Geoscience Congressional Visit Days," was published in the December 2013 *AEG News*.

Participants spend the first day learning about how Congress works, the current state of the budget process, and how to conduct congressional visits. On the second day, they typically visit

members of their congressional delegation and their staff, and discuss national issues related to geology programs that specifically pertain to their state and region. In addition to the workshops and visits, participants will get to meet other geoscientists and representatives of federal geoscience agencies.

AEG has been underrepresented at this event and strongly encourages participation by members from various regions throughout the nation. AEG considers participation in CVDs to be so important that we will again assist participants with their travel expenses in order for them to attend. For additional information, refer to the December 2013 *AEG News* article, or contact **Phyllis Steckel**, Advocacy Committee Co-Chair (psteckel@charter.net or 636-239-4013), or **Ken Neal** (kengneal@aol.com or 360-280-6180). Additional information about the program is available on the AGI website at www.agiweb.org/gap/events/geocvd/index.html (at the time of this writing, the website has not yet been updated to describe this year's program).