



The New Member Experience

What to Expect for You, Your Staff, and Your Family

Wednesday, December 16, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

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This webinar made possible through the generous support of

AARP

Alzheimer's Association

General Motors Corporation

KnowWho

National Rural Letter Carriers' Association

Aflac

FMI-the Food Industry Association

International Paper

National Association of Counties

New Member Office Training

Congressional Operations

- Training, consulting, research to support a functioning Congress
- 1,000 staff from 300 offices

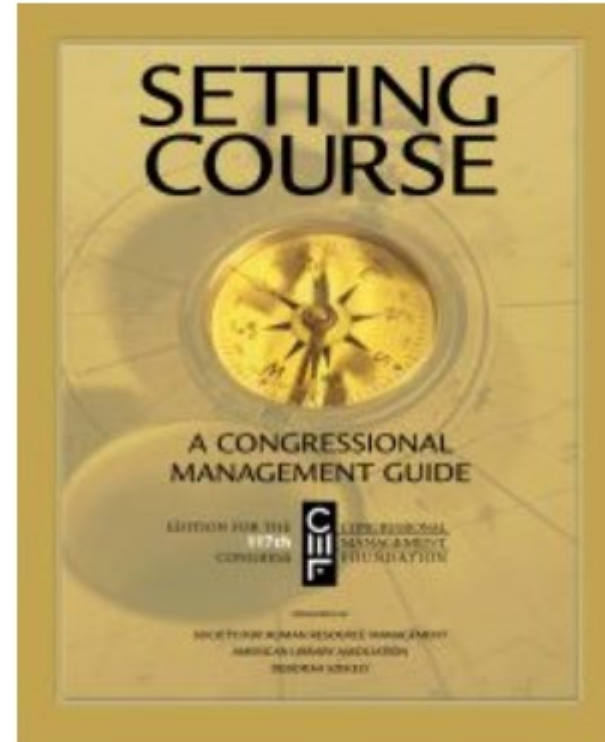
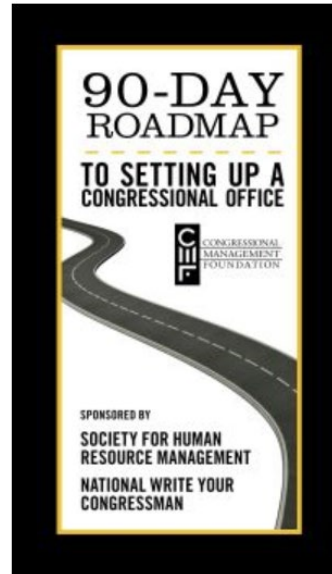
Citizen Engagement

- Unique studies, trainings, and resources for citizen advocates
- Connected to 90,000 Americans

- New Member Resource Center
 - Google: “CMF New Member Resource Center”
- New Member Training Series
 - December 2020 – June 2021
- Legislative Assistant Training
 - Government Affairs Institute at Georgetown University
- District-Based Guidance
 - *Keeping It Local*
 - Templates/Manuals
- Website Guidance
 - Gold Mouse Awards for Best Website



CONGRESSIONAL
MANAGEMENT
FOUNDATION



Coronavirus Resource Center for Congress

- Managing Congressional Staff Remotely
- WFH Guides
- Best Practices for Online and Tele-Town Halls
- Managing Stress in Constituents and Staff



Life in Congress:

The Member Perspective

*A Joint Research Report by the Congressional Management Foundation
and the Society for Human Resource Management*



JOB DESCRIPTION FOR A MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Written by
KATHY GOLDSCHMIDT, AUTHOR
and
BRADLEY JOSEPH SINKAUS, CO-AUTHOR



“There’s so much to learn and so many people giving you advice, it’s similar to inserting a garden hose in your mouth and turning on the spigot. These days, it’s more like standing under Niagara Falls.”

- Freshman Member of Congress

Agenda

- Part 1: Members and Spouse
- Part 2: Chiefs of Staff
- Part 3: CMF Research on What to Expect

Part 1 – Members of Congress & Spouse

Part 2: Chiefs of Staff

What to Expect – Year 1

Timeline for Year 1 for Freshman

- November to January: Learn how to be a Member of Congress
- January 3, 12:00 pm: Swear in
- January 3, 12:01 pm: Get keys to office
- January 3, 12:02 pm: Meet ALL constituents' expectations
- January 3, 2:00 pm: Skeleton staff shows you thousands of letters waiting for your review
- January 4, 1:00 am: Finish your first day of work

Timeline for Year 1 for Freshman

- Late January: Get committee assignments
- March: Complete set up of district & state offices
- March: Finalize staff hires
- March: Set up constituent correspondence system
- April: Launch new website
- May: Begin asking the question: *“What was I thinking?”*
- June 30: Filing deadline for FEC report
- July: Senators – move into permanent office

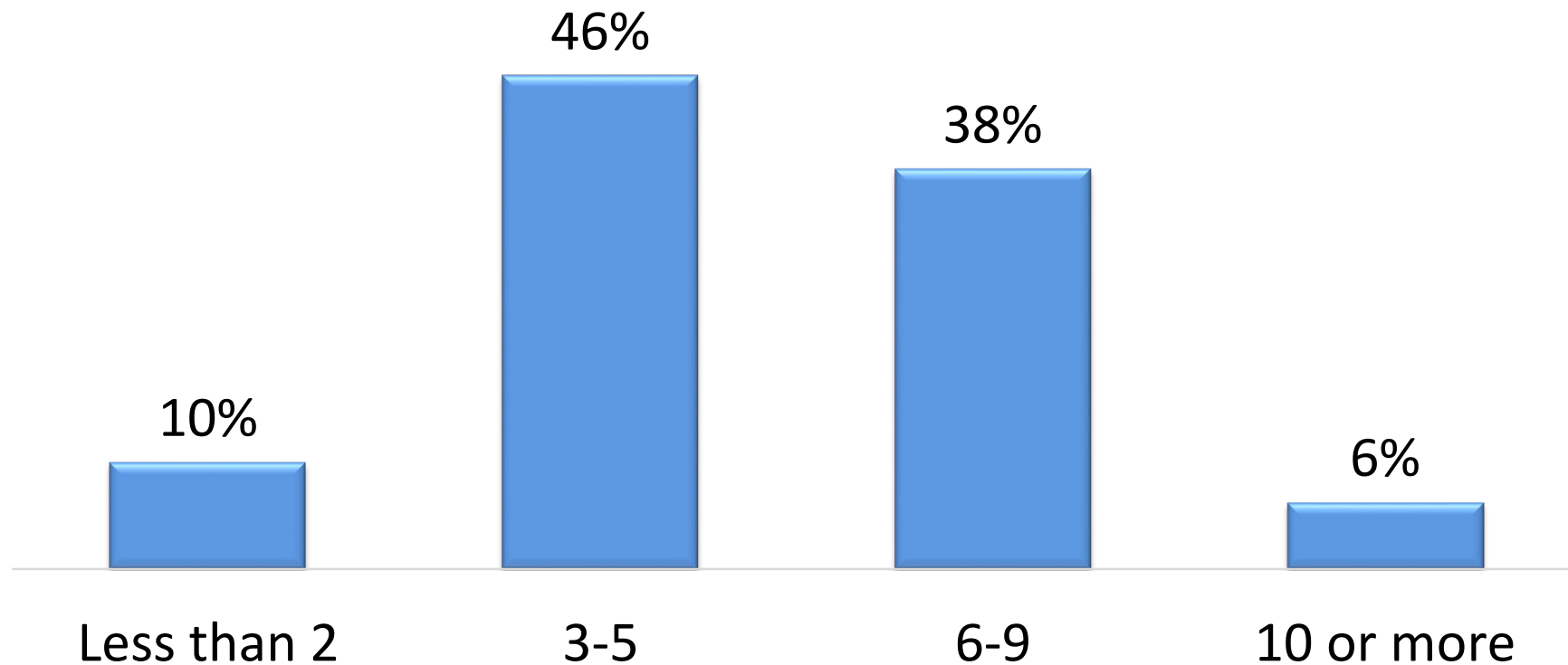




Congressional Staff Survey Question

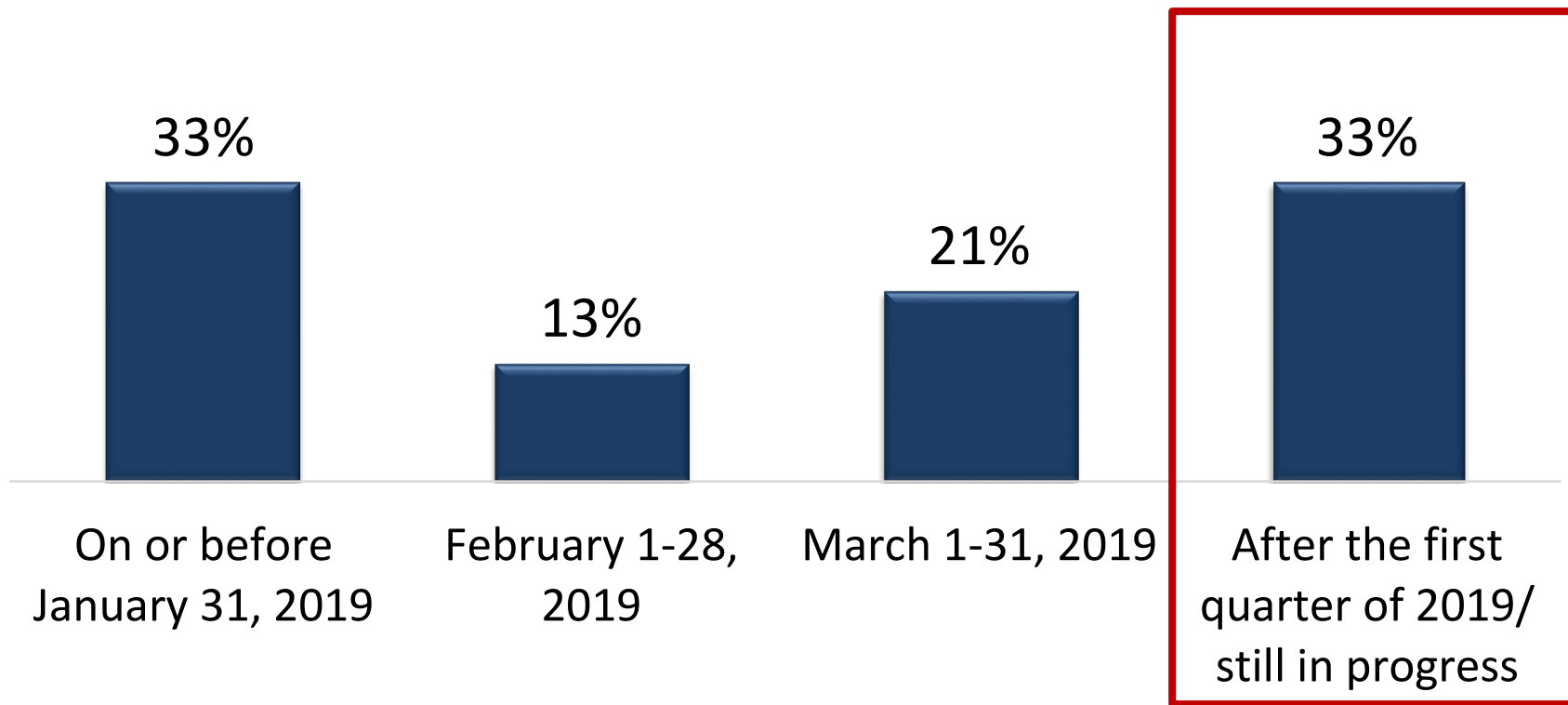
How many of your current staff has previous experience working for a Member of Congress?

Staff Previous Hill Experience



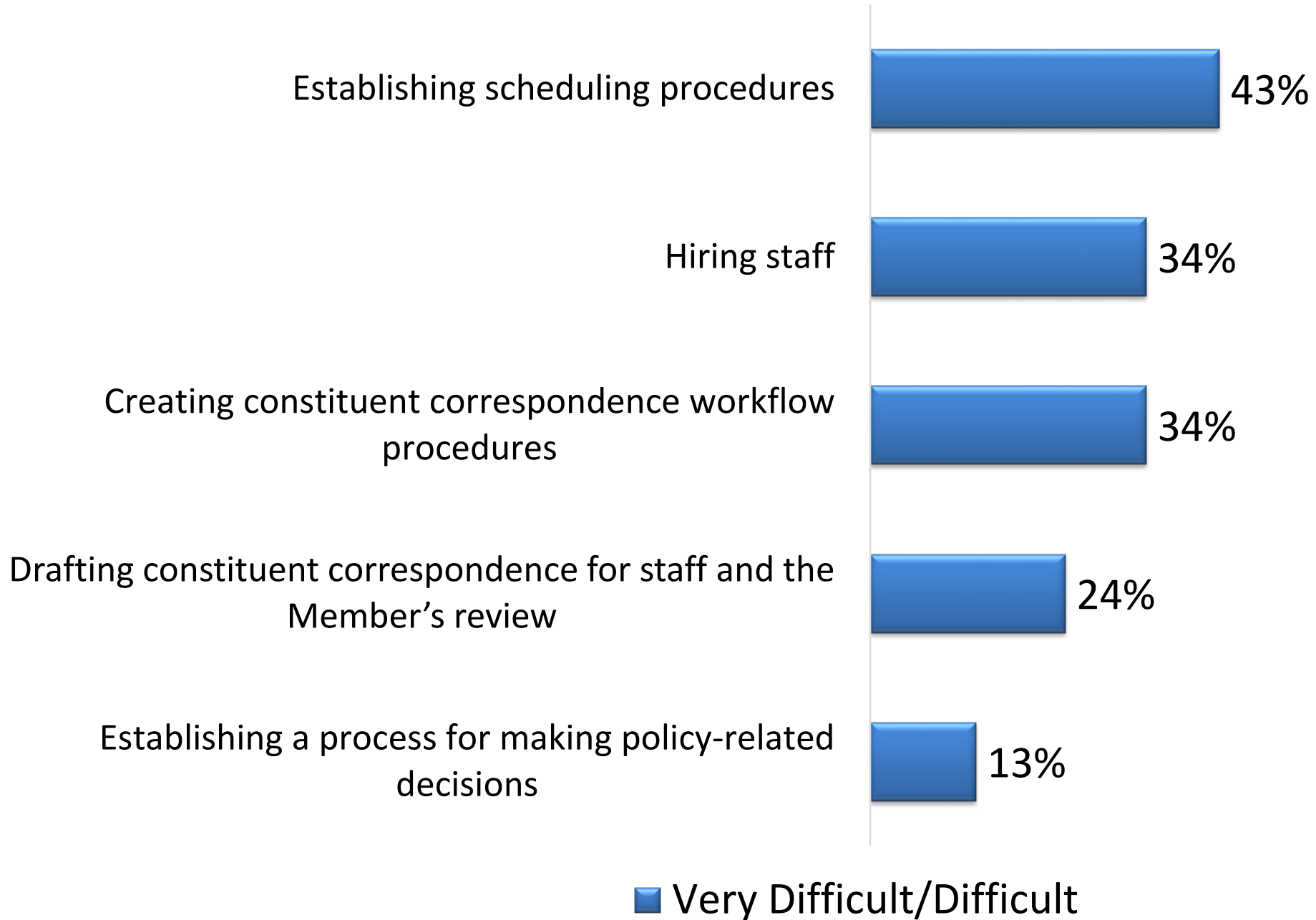
Congressional Staff Survey Question

When was your office fully staffed?

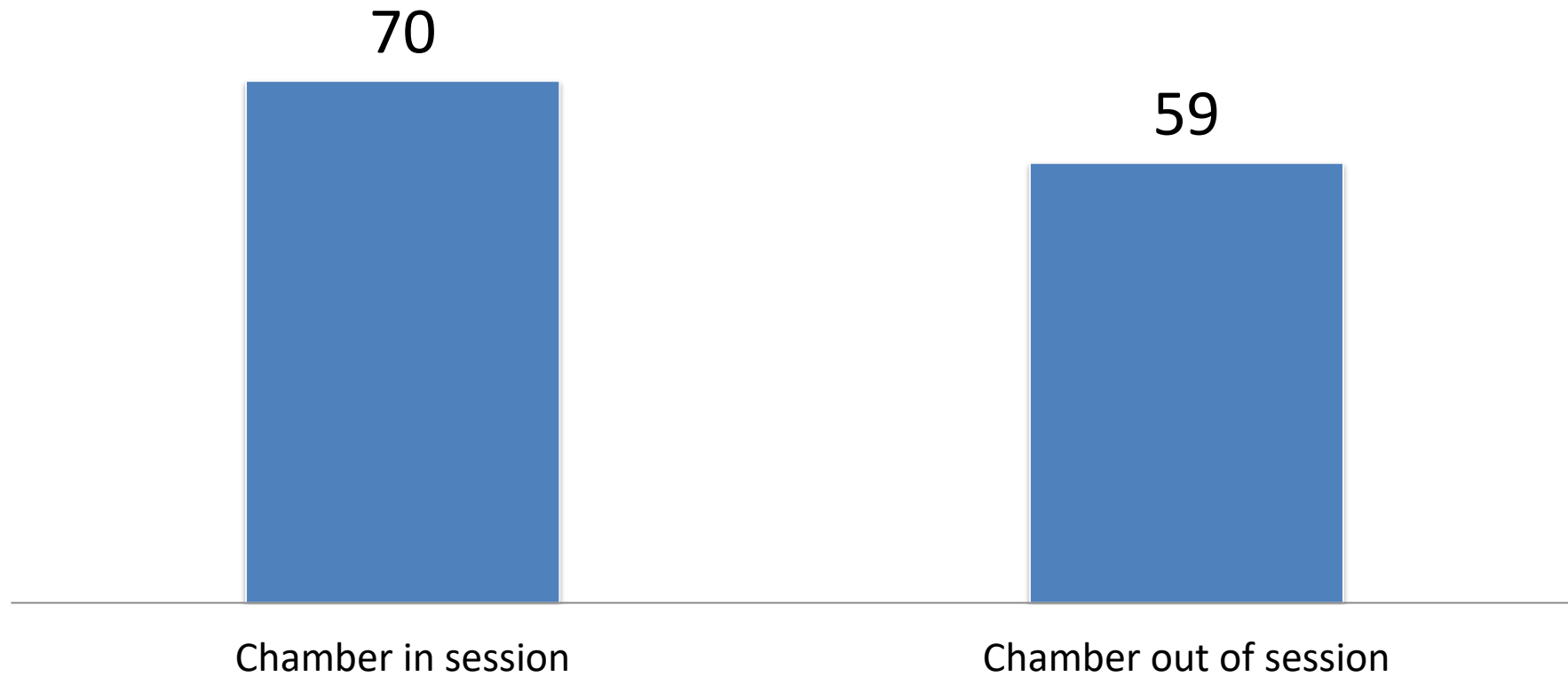


Congressional Staff Survey Question

Below is a list of various tasks associated with setting up a freshman congressional office. Please rate how difficult each task was.



Average Hours Per Week Worked by Members



Sample House Member Schedule—March 6

8:00 AM-9:00 AM EVENT – Committee Chair Fundraiser – Party HQ

9:00 AM–9:30 AM SPEECH - National Women, Infants, and Children’s Association

10:00 AM–12:00 PM HEARING - Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Hearing

10:30 AM–12:00 PM BRIEFING - Bipartisan Classified National Security Briefing

12:00 PM–1:00 PM MEETING - Caucus/Conference Meeting with Democratic/Republican Colleagues

12:45 PM–1:15 PM MEETING - Edie Smith, Local County WIC (Women, Infant, Children) Program Manager

1:15 PM–1:45 PM MEETING - Representatives from The American Public Affairs Committee (APAC)

1:30 PM–2:00 PM MEETING - Kevin Jones, Local County Supervisor

2:00 PM–2:30 PM MEETING - Bob Ellis, Solutions for Progress Nonprofit

Congressional Staff Survey Question

Before your constituent correspondence system was operational, which of these best characterizes how you managed constituent correspondence?

We did not respond to messages sent before our mail system was working.

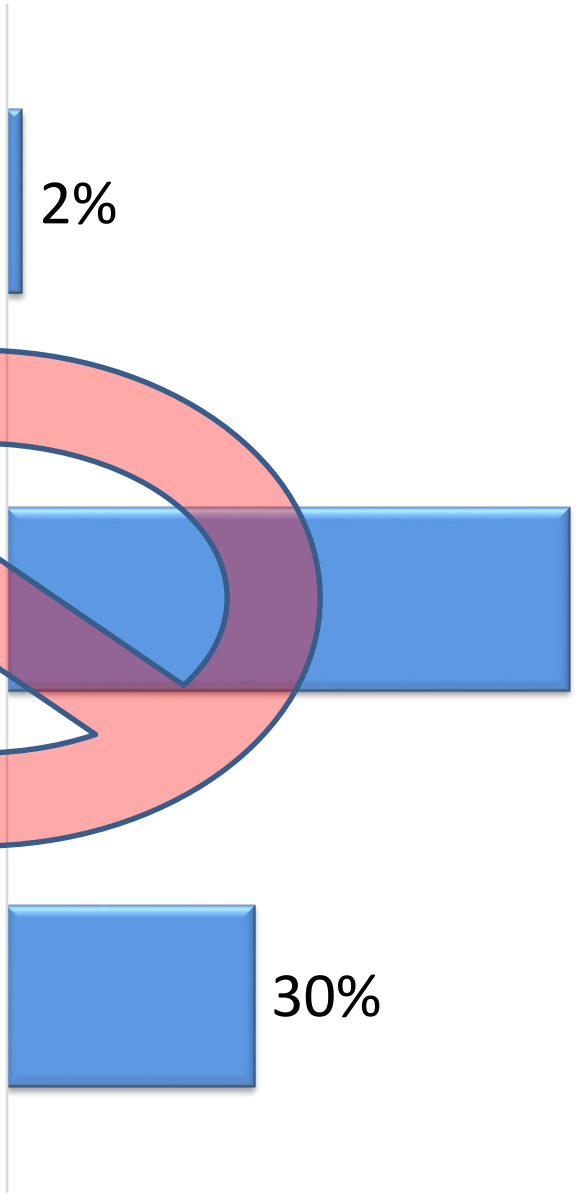
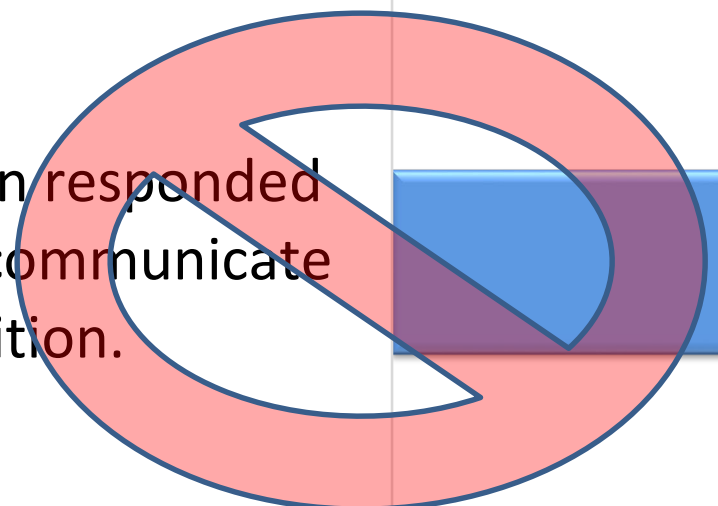
2%

We waited, then responded once we could communicate our position.

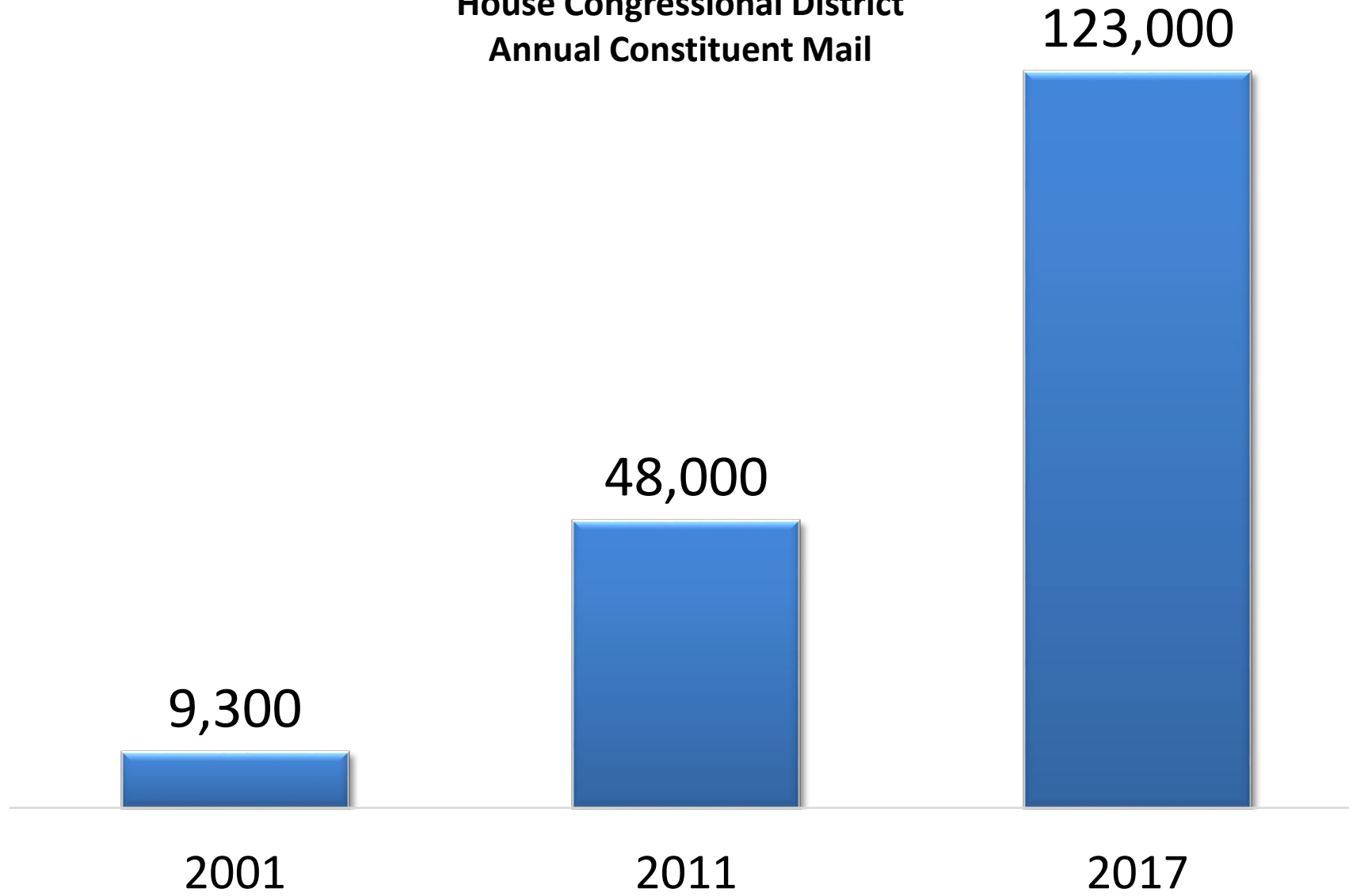
68%

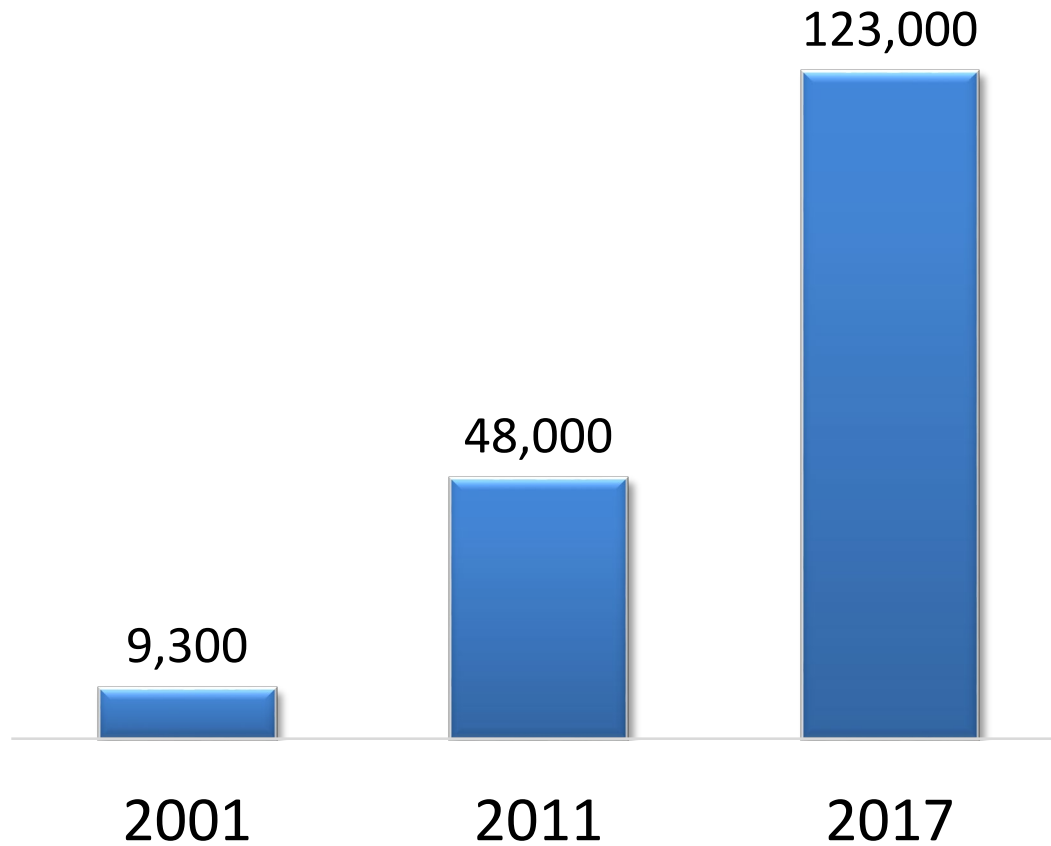
We sent generic responses thanking constituents for sharing their views.

30%



**House Congressional District
Annual Constituent Mail**

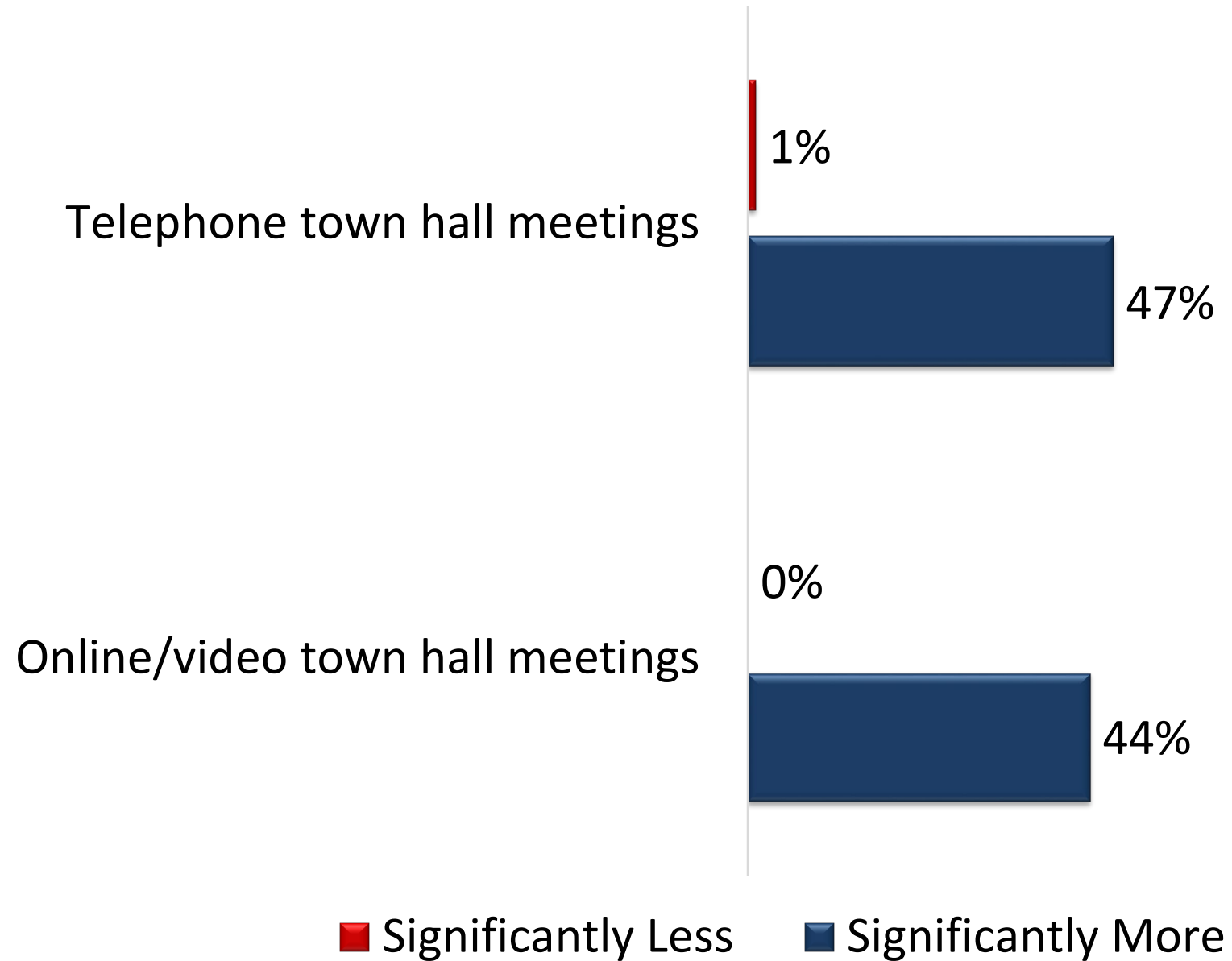




***If you hold your mail, you
could have 50,000
unanswered emails by
July 4, 2021!***

Congressional Staff Survey

Compared to the months prior to the COVID-19 crisis, has your Senator/Representative done more of, less of, or about the same number of the following activities in the past two months?



Video conferences with constituents



65%

Telephone conference calls with constituents



57%

75%



Facility/site visits in the district/state

88%



In-person meetings with constituents



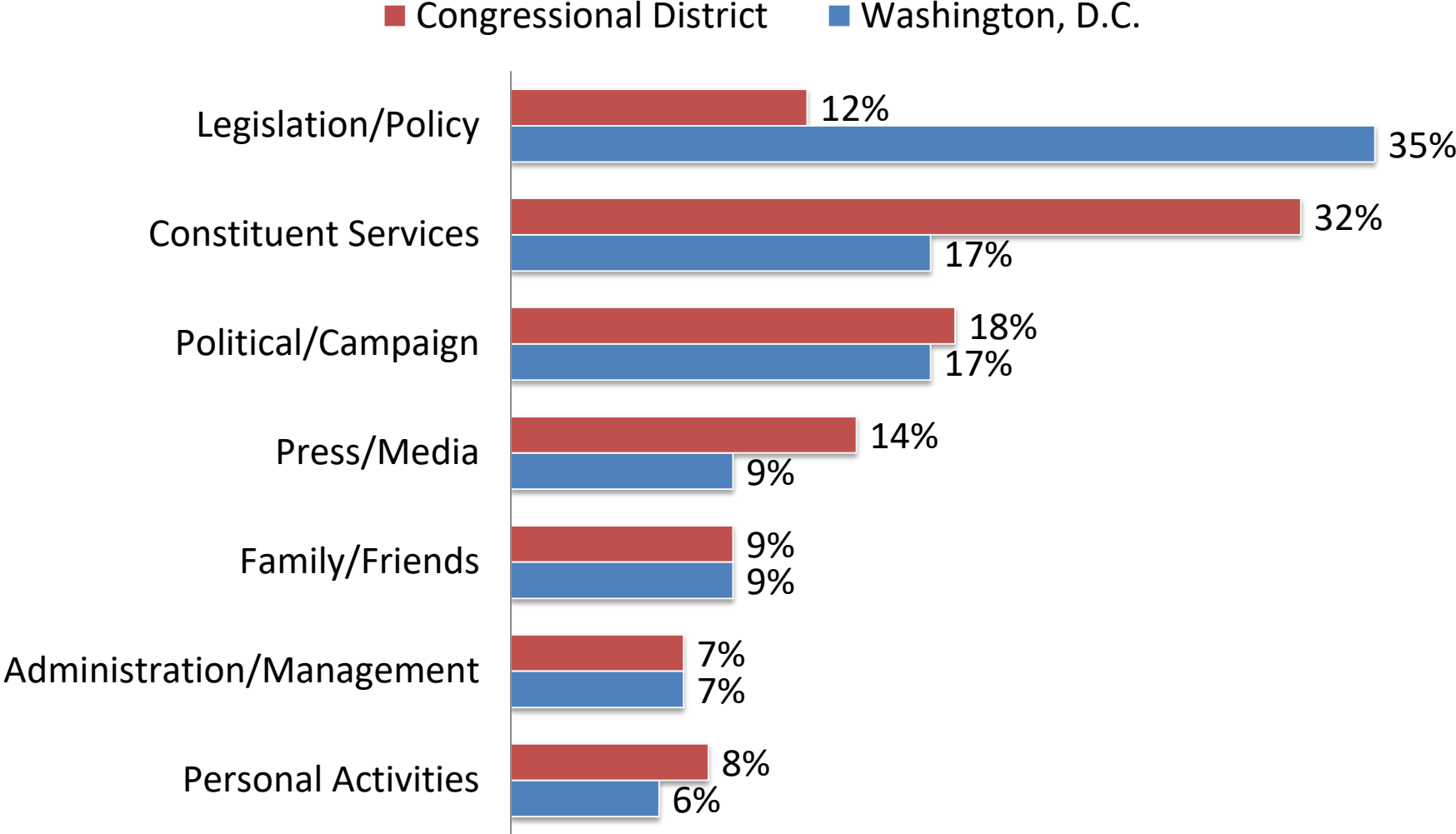
Significantly Less



Significantly More

Members Survey

Member Time Spent on Major Activities



CMF New Member Training Series

- January 15 – “Setting up a Congressional Office for Success”
- January 29 – “Hiring an Effective and Diverse Staff”
- February 5 – “Setting up a Congressional Scheduling Operation”
- February 22 – “Setting Up Constituent Communications and Engagement Systems”
- March – “Creating and Implementing a Legislative Agenda”
- April – “Managing Freshmen Headaches”

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