

The Annual Congressional Reception

FAQs

Helpful Details to Know!

About the Event:

What is the purpose of the event?

- For elected officials to hear directly from individuals impacted by homelessness.
- Encourage elected officials to support policy priorities related to our theme, *Opportunity Starts at Home: Building a Necessary and Secure Foundation for Healthy Communities*.

What is the agenda for the Congressional Reception?

- The event will open with remarks from our national partners.
- Monarch Housing's master of ceremony will introduce our elected officials as they arrive.
- Impact speakers will speak about their lived experiences with homelessness or housing insecurity.
- The event will conclude by 4:00 p.m. with ample time to walk back to the buses and depart for New Jersey.

Who will speak at the Congressional Reception?

- We are looking for one impact speaker for each of New Jersey's 12 House districts and for the two U.S. Senate offices. Ideally, the impact speakers are individuals impacted by homelessness and will share their stories for 3-5 minutes each. Please reach out to Kate Kelly at kkelly@monarchhousing.org if you or someone you know may be interested in being a speaker.

What will I be doing at the event if I am not a speaker?

- Your role in the reception is very important. You will help fill a room of passionate people to show our elected officials the importance of ending homelessness. An opportunity to be in a group photo with your member of congress and New Jersey's two senators will be available.

Will my elected officials attend the Congressional Reception?

- Yes, we hope so! We can all work to encourage Senators Booker and Menendez and New Jersey's 12 congressmen and congresswoman to attend. We need your help in doing this! We will have contacts in their offices who you can reach out to through social media and email. Let [Kate Kelly](#) know if you are interested in helping with this.

What should I do when I meet my elected official or their staff person?

- The best course of action (whether you agree or disagree with their positions on policy issues) is to be polite and share with them why you traveled to D.C. to be part of the Congressional Reception.

Are food and beverages provided at the Congressional Reception?

- A boxed lunch and drink will be provided at the event venue.

Will there be a lot of walking or stairs?

- The buses will drop us off about 10-15 minutes from the Dirksen Senate Building. We will walk from the bus drop off, including up a hill, to the Dirksen Senate Building. Please let [Kate Kelly](#) know if you will need assistance. A limited number of golf carts provide transportation for part of the walk.

The Auditorium in the Dirksen Senate Building is on the first floor, and accessing this floor involves some stairs.

What should I wear?

Please remember this is a long day and to dress comfortably. Washington, D.C. in July can be very hot and humid. The day will start early and is likely to end late.

Please contact Kate Kelly with any comments, questions, or concerns at kkelly@monarchhousing.org

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What is the cost of this event?

- The registration includes a \$10 bus confirmation fee for anyone taking round trip bus transportation from one of the six locations in New Jersey to D.C. Your \$10 cost helps defray the cost of the buses and other expenses related to the Congressional Reception.

Sponsorships:

Can my organization sponsor the Congressional Reception?

- Yes! We are accepting sponsorships from organizations on an ongoing basis. Sponsorships are available at both the \$400 and \$800 amount. If your organization is interested in being a sponsor, please email [Kate Kelly](mailto:kate.kelly@monarchhousing.org).
- Those attending, but not speaking will have a chance to talk to other like-minded people from across the state. It is our hope that all in attendance will get a chance to meet their elected officials.

Transportation:

Can I travel to the event on my own?

- Yes, if you choose to travel on your own, there is no bus confirmation fee cost. However, you still must register for the Congressional Reception online. Please plan to arrive at the Dirksen Senate Auditorium on your own.

Will there be transportation from the buses to the event?

- Transportation by golf cart will be available only for those who need assistance. The buses will not depart from D.C. until all passengers are accounted for.

Will the bus make any stops for food or the bathroom?

- Although each bus has a bathroom, we plan one stop on each leg of the trip to allow attendees to use additional bathrooms, stretch their legs, and get something else to eat. Please keep in mind this stop is not guaranteed as it depends on traffic and travel time.
- We plan to make a stop on the way back which will allow people to purchase dinner if they choose

How long is the bus ride?

- We will be sitting on a bus for a total of about 5-7 hours round trip (Depending on where you are departing from in NJ). Buses will depart from the six locations across the state between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m.

Donations:

I am interested in donating water and snacks for the bus, what should I donate?

- While water and snacks for everyone on the bus has been secured, we are always seeking more water and any other snack donations to help those traveling to D.C. on a limited budget. Please feel free to bring your own personal snacks and water.
- Please reach out to [Kate Kelly](mailto:kate.kelly@monarchhousing.org) if your organization is in a position to make a donation.