

My Trip Journal to this year's IEEE Congressional Visit

I recently embarked on an enlightening journey to Capitol Hill alongside esteemed colleagues from IEEE-USA. Our mission: to engage with the distinguished members of Congress on a few pivotal technological issues shaping our era.

Navigating the labyrinthine corridors of power, we indirectly interfaced with an array of influential committees including AIPC, CCP, CTAP, EPC & RDPC thru scheduled discussions with Senators & Representatives (or mostly with their Aids/Councils instead), our dialogues catalyzed a dynamic exchange of ideas and perspectives.

This year, our cohort comprised of ~160 IEEE members from 32 states, representing 98 Congressional Districts with 164 meetings scheduled with Senators & Representatives. Our IEEE Director of Government Relations Erik Hellman and his planning team had done a remarkable job in putting this event together. Kudos to Erik and his team!

The inaugural event commenced with a meticulously designed training session the day before, illuminating the intricate art of advocacy. I seized a photo op with our IEEE-USA President Thomas Coughlin, President-Elect Kathleen Kramer & many others. Photos tell stories and recount memories & I am grateful for a chance to gather a few more in an ephemeral life span.

Paired with Professor Leon Tabak, I embarked on a series of 6 meetings with Senators & Representatives from IA & NH. Engaging with their aids revealed a cadre of exceptionally astute professionals, possessing profound grasp of the pertinent issues & a remarkable facility for articulate discourse.

As we traversed the vast Senate campuses, a palpable energy infused the atmosphere. I was impressed with the bustling throngs of lobbyist clad in sartorial emblem of influence & the whirlwind of activities, it was the moments shared with my local IEEE chapter Execom colleague, Raj Vayyavur, that proved equally cherished. From our shared Uber rides & breakfast / dinner at the Amtrak station Food Court, these interludes afforded a rare opportunity to build friendship & share ideas.

In the company of Professor Leon Tabak, each step taken was imbued with a sense of camaraderie & shared purpose. Thru our quest to locate the offices of Senators & Representatives, his anecdotes and insights were both enlightening and entertaining, enriching our journey with each passing moment. I found our time together simply delightful and enchanting!

Central to our discussions was the pervasive influence of AI within the chambers of Congress. As the legislative machinery churns, a plethora of bills addressing this seminal issue are in the process of

formulation. While concrete commitments & funding allocations remain elusive, our collective voice served to amplify the urgency of our concerns, underscoring the imperative for informed action. Our endeavors served not only to articulate our concerns but to catalyze a broader dialogue, ensuring that the imperatives of technological innovation are met with informed and equitable governance.

Thank you, IEEE NH Chapter, for this opportunity!

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