

Abstract Submitted  
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**Committee Work or How I Learned to Stop Complaining and Love the Process** CABOT ZABRISKIE, Old Dominion University — Over the course of their career, most American scientists, be it at an independent university, government lab, or in the private sector, will at some point receive public funding to perform their research. Yet most of these individuals have only a vague sense of how their money was originally allocated. Most may be familiar with the intricacies of NSF, NIST, or any one of the agencies that compose the alphabet soup of the Federal Government, but what about before that, when the money and subsequent directives are being allocated to these agencies? In other words, what about congress? In an effort to better understand this process and to contribute to the reciprocal understanding by congress I embarked on a 10 week internship with the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, funded by the John and Jane Mather Foundation as part of the SPS Summer Internship Program. In my time with the committee I was able to attend multiple hearings and seminars on the Hill and see how policies with regard to science are created. In this talk I will discuss my experience and observations, for example that no one wished to be viewed as anti-science and that even those who are looked upon as very critical are often more critical of the opposing side of the aisle than of the actual science itself. In fact, I saw that the biggest hindrance to science in the political setting is the lack of understanding of just what it is. This the same problem faced by the general public and the steps toward fixing this issue may very well be the same.

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