Year-End Report

Best Practices

Office of Congressman Michael C. Burgess, M.D.

What to Highlight

- **Legislative Work and Accomplishments**
  - Sponsored legislation.
  - Letters to top government officials.
  - Congressional caucuses.
- **Constituent Correspondence**
  - Number of email, letters, phone calls and faxes received.
  - Top issues of concern.
- **Constituent Services**
  - Number cases your office opened.
  - Number of tours requested for constituents.
- **Events and Meetings**
  - Number of total events held or attended.
  - Number of summits, tele-town halls and town halls held.
  - Number of Chamber of Commerce meetings.
  - Number of meetings held on various issues.
- **Media and Communications**
  - Columns and Letters to the Editor authored.
  - Number of articles and blogs mentioning the congressman.
  - Number of radio and television interviews.

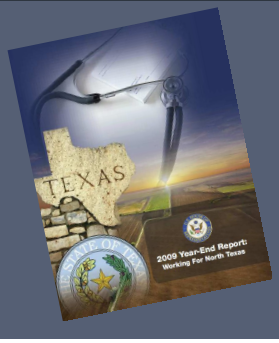
Why Do a Year-End Report?

For the past two years our office has provided a "Year-End Report" for our constituents. This annual report is a way for us to showcase what our office has been able to accomplish. This project is a Washington and district wide project as information is gathered by each department and the report is reviewed by numerous people before being sent out. Our goal is to get it out the door within the first few days after the New Year. We post the document on our website, send a link to the document and highlights to the press, and send it as an e-newsletter to our opt-in list. We also have a limited number of hard copies in our offices.

Throughout the year, each staff member is responsible for keeping track of the information that is under their issue or position. Having the information tracked throughout the year allows the information to come together quickly at the end of the year when the report is being made. Right before the holidays, it makes gathering everything needed to complete the report much easier.

Since every office functions differently and has different focuses, each yearly report will vary. Hopefully this document and our "2010 Year-End Report" will serve as a starting point for your office so that you can start collecting information for 2011. With another week of recess just around the corner, now is the perfect time to compile information and talk about ideas for what to include in your yearly report.

Examples for Review



You can find our office's "Year-End Report" on our website, burgess.house.gov/YearEndReport. We leave the report highlighted on our homepage throughout the year as well as the "About Me" section of the website. We also have a link at the bottom of the page to the "2009 Year-End Report."

Other Items to Include

- **Opening message**
  - Have an opening message from the congressman that gives a general overview of the year.
- **About the Congressman**
  - Include the official biography in the opening pages.
- **Personal Statements**
  - Include any personal statements from the congressman.
    - Ethical conduct.
    - Constituent principles.
    - Legislative decisions.
- **Hearings, Votes, and Bills**
  - Number of hearings that the member participated in during the year.
  - Number of votes made.
  - Number of bills introduced and co-sponsored.
  - Number of amendments introduced.
- **Awards**
  - List the awards the congressman received during the year.
- **Articles and Videos**
  - List and link the top articles and videos the congressman appeared in during the year.
- **Contact Information**
  - List all office locations contact information.
  - List the urls for social media sites.
- **Quotes**
  - List some of the media quotes describing the congressman and their work in the district.

What We've Learned

Having done the "Year-End Report" for two years, we have learned how we can improve the process and are still developing the report and working on areas where we can improve and include additional information. Below are the key points we have learned.

- **Accomplishments:** The report not only shows constituents what we have accomplished, it also allows the congressman to see what the staff has done during the year.
- **Tracking:** Through the report we have been able to track the movement of legislation we have introduced and see what legislation we have been able to move and how far the legislation has gone.
- **Improvements:** The "Year-End Report" allows us as an office to see what areas we are excelling and improving in and where we can focus on development.
- **Design:** The first year we did this report we contracted it out to a vendor. This made it harder to make edits when needed. Having this done in-house has allowed us to save money, make edits quickly, and use our creativity to design and layout the document.
- **Gathering Information:** Gathering information throughout the year verses collecting information at the end of the year will save you time and allow you to include as much information in your report as possible.

Layout and Design

Having a unique design and layout is important. We are able to do this entire project in-house, allowing us to save money and time when edits are needed.
For our cover we wanted to showcase our state and issues important to the congressman. We followed the color scheme throughout the document and incorporated the box theme in the report as well. We also wanted to provide contact information for our offices.
When choosing a design, stick with characteristics that fit with your member's personality. This is their report to the constituents.

For questions regarding the "Year-End Report" please contact our Communications Director, Whitney Thompson at 5-7772 or whitney.thompson@mail.house.gov.