

There are many traditions in the United State Congress. Some are formal rules that guide the legislative process. Others are unwritten standards of conduct and decorum. One of the most enjoyable for me is a Washington tradition that was created by Nebraskans for Nebraskans.

The "Nebraska Breakfast" is a six decade-old tradition that welcomes visiting Nebraskans to the nation's capital on the Wednesdays in which both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives are in session. The practice started in 1943 when Senator Hugh Butler began meeting informally with the other members of Nebraska's Congressional delegation and their guests.

Reflecting Nebraskans' independence and neighborly spirit, the Nebraska Breakfast is only state gathering of its kind, welcoming hundreds of constituents to the U.S. Capitol each year. While some state delegations may never meet as a whole throughout the year, ours makes it a point to does so each week. For the elected officials, it is a unique opportunity for us to share thoughts and ideas about specific policies and proposals. For Nebraskans visiting our nation's Capitol, we hope it is a worthwhile occasion to interact with your federal representatives.

I am honored to serve as chairman of the 2011 Nebraska Breakfasts, a privilege that rotates among members of the Nebraska congressional delegation from year to year. This means it is my responsibility to welcome our Nebraska guests, keep their attention by facilitating discussion among my colleagues, and provide updates on important congressional news.

This year the first Nebraska Breakfast is on Wednesday, February 9. Other 2011 breakfasts are February 16; March 2, 9, 16 and 30; April 6 and 13; May 4, 11, and 25; June 15 and 22; July 13 and 27; August 3; and September 7, 14, and 21.

When visiting our nation's capital, I strongly encourage you to make the event a part of your itinerary. The Nebraska Breakfast begins at 8:00 am eastern time and is held at the Senate Buffet in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, First Street and Constitution Ave., NE, Washington D.C. For more information on attending, please contact my Washington, D.C. office at 202.225.4806 or visit my website at https://forms.house.gov/fortenberry/webforms/tour_request.htm . I hope you can join us!