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It is very important for a part of the group that is discussing policy or publically debating a topic is reasonable informed on the subject. This does not mean that the group needs to be comprised of engineers or other experts in whatever field it is, but it does mean that some of the people in the group are atleast knowledgable on the subject. When a new governmental policy regarding the environment or the education system is discussed, the government normally has an expert in the field at those discussions or a member of the committee has worked in that field in the past.

I do not think that there is a moral obligation that the engineers seek out and attend these discussions, but it is definitely desirable and can benefit both the committee and the engineer. The presence of an expert can help to improve the discussion to be more accurate and help the decision to be better for both the engineering field and for the general public. If an engineer is invited to a discussion or asked to act as an expert in court or policy hearings, the engineer is more morally obligated to attend, because his/her expertise was specifically asked for and his point of view could help to clear up important points in the case.

One example of topics that it may help to have an expert's opinion on are a lot of the policies regarding online security and net neutrality in the United States Congress. Many of these bills are written by companies that have a bias towards the removal of net neutrality, such as the larger Internet service providers. The Federal Communications Commission has prevented every attempt from these bills, and has even changed the designation of broadband internet to telecommunications so that it is better protected. Many professionals in the field tend to side with the stance of the FCC, as it is the more consumer friendly option.