

"I'M READY TO CONTACT MY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. WHERE DO I START?"

Engage with Washington, D.C., and your legislators' local offices to build relationships with three easy steps. Regardless of personal politics, being polite and courteous of the official's time will go far!

STEP 1

Make the Phone Calls for Support to Washington, D.C.

Goal: Ask for support and sponsorship of S.562 (senators) and H.R.1370 (representatives) and indicate that this is an important issue to you as a constituent.

How: Call the United States Capitol switchboard at 202.224.3121. An operator will connect you with the office.

What to Say: "Hello, my name is (name) and I live in (city). I am calling today to respectfully request that Senator/Congressman (last name) consider supporting S.562/H.R.1370. This bill would provide Medicare coverage for custom breast prostheses to women who have undergone a mastectomy. Currently, the female breast is one of the only body parts not covered by Medicare for a custom prosthetic. This legislation would greatly benefit countless breast cancer survivors after undergoing a mastectomy by giving them all of the options available to them: reconstruction, off the shelf prosthesis, custom prosthesis and going flat. This legislation has the potential to provide significant cost savings to the government compared to the alternative of reconstruction surgeries covered by Medicare. Thank you for your time and consideration!"

STEP 2

Connect with the Local Offices

Goal: Build relationships with the staff members of your elected officials' local offices as an advocate, small-business owner, survivor, family member, or any combination.

How: Contact the local offices of your elected officials and politely ask for some of their time to visit on this issue. Information can be found on their official websites through a simple internet search.

What to Say: "Hello, my name is (name) and I live in (city). I am reaching out today to request a meeting with a staff member in the state to discuss S.562/H.R.1370 and the importance of this legislation for many breast cancer survivors. May I send you an email with some background information and to determine a time that works in your schedule to meet? If the congressman/senator is back in the state and available, we would love the opportunity to visit with him/her on this important issue."

Note: If you are business owner, this is a great opportunity to host the office at your store. Otherwise, they are likely to request that you come in to the local office for an in-person meeting. Use this "Advocacy Toolkit" for documents you may share with the congressional staff members.

STEP 3

Conduct an In-person Meeting

Goal: Face-to-face interaction most often yields much greater results. Having an in-person meeting with the elected officials and staff will lead to positive results more than a stand-alone email or phone call.

How: Building off your contact with the local offices with your request for a meeting, executing a meeting is the culmination of your work thus far! There is a likely chance that this meeting will be only with a staff member, which should not bring disappointment! While you should request the congressman/senator to visit a store or be present for the meeting, it does not always happen with their extremely busy schedules.

What to Do: Put all personal politics aside, as this legislation is highly bipartisan! Connect with advocates, survivor coalitions, clients, clinicians, or others in the area who recognize the importance of this legislation. When meeting with the member or staff, stay on topic by only discussing breast prosthetics and mastectomy-related information. Discussing other unrelated political issues will likely take away attention from this important legislation. Follow the "Congressional Meeting Checklist" to help you prepare for your meeting!