

LEGISLATIVE MEETING TIP SHEET

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- Gather in your group and assign roles. Your meetings will likely be short, so you want to know who will cover which topic—Who will share their story? Who will make the ask? Who will submit the meeting report?

DURING THE MEETING:

- Introduce yourself to the lawmaker and indicate where you live (on what street in his/her district?)
- Share your story to set up the ask
- Let your lawmaker know why you are visiting (make the “asks”)
 - **Deliver the Medicaid Cessation ask**
 - **Deliver the Coverdell Stroke Registry funding ask**
 - **Deliver the Heart Screening bill ask**
 - Make it personal—share your own expertise and why these issues matter to you.
 - **Ask your member for their support.**
- Thank them for their time, exchange information, and give them the leave behind.
- Ask for a photo opportunity and post to social media using the #HeartattheCapitol hashtag.

AFTER THE MEETING:

- Compare group notes and assign someone to your meeting report.
- Let AHA staff know if your lawmaker needs more information (provide details if you can).
- Stay in touch with your lawmaker:
 - Follow up with a thank you letter.
 - Make an appointment in your calendar to call the legislator again in a few weeks and plan to check in periodically.
 - If a new piece of information or research is released, send it along to them.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Whether you speak to a legislator or a staff member, it will make an impact. Remember to always be friendly and thank them for taking the time to speak with you.
- You can persuade your legislator by presenting facts and resources provided by the AHA.
- Sharing your story can be the most convincing part of the conversation—it makes the issue real to people who may otherwise not have a vested interest.

What to do if your lawmaker is unavailable:

- Leave a note for your lawmaker!
 - Using the notecard in your folder, leave a note with a message like this: *Dear [Representative or Senator Name], I'm a constituent living in Brookhaven. I'm sorry I missed you today, but I'd like to ask for your support for policies that will advance prevention and early intervention in heart and brain health. You can reach me at 504-606-0834 if you have any questions. Thank you, Aline Stone*
- Leave the leave behind sheets and your note card with your contact information.

Questions? Contact Laura Bracci (757-813-6410) or Aline Stone (504-606-0834)

TALKING POINTS

ASK: HELPING PEOPLE QUIT TOBACCO (HB 506)

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of heart disease and stroke. Strengthen chronic disease prevention by ensuring Medicaid members have access to comprehensive, evidence-based quit resources. Expanding access to counseling and FDA-approved cessation treatments improves heart and brain health and reduces long-term healthcare costs.

ASK: USING DATA TO IMPROVE STROKE CARE: COVERDELL STROKE REGISTRY

Stroke is the 5th leading cause of death in Georgia. Continued funding for Georgia's Coverdell Stroke Registry will improve stroke care quality and patient outcomes statewide by helping hospitals track, evaluate, and enhance care. This investment will give more Georgians a better chance to survive stroke and recover more fully.

ASK: IDENTIFYING HEART RISKS EARLY: HEART SCREENING FOR STUDENT ATHLETES (HB970)

Support heart screening for student athletes during their regular sports physicals using an evidence-based, layered approach that includes a review of personal and family history, along with a physical exam. This is the best way to identify serious heart conditions that may require further testing.

Let us know how your meeting went by snapping this QR code or filling out the form in your folder and emailing it to laura.bracci@heart.org:



REMEMBER — You do not need to be an expert. Share these key facts and your personal story.

If a lawmaker asks a question you cannot answer, make a note of it and let them know you will follow-up with them.