

## **ADVOCACY: YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON WORKFORCE ISSUES**

### **Advocacy is your opportunity to communicate with your lawmakers.**

Lawmakers and their staff members want to hear from you because you are a constituent and a voter. At the same time, you represent an organization that is vital to the well-being of thousands of people in your district. Your legislators want to know how the issues of the day affect you, your staff, and your ability to deliver quality health care, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **Advocacy is your opportunity to educate your lawmakers.**

Lawmakers vote on legislation that is often highly complex, yet they rarely have time to review each clause in every bill. They rely on good staff work, trade association expertise and constituent contact to provide them with information on how legislation will affect their constituents – your patients, your employees, your community and your organization.

### **Advocacy is your opportunity to represent the employment side of issues.**

The list of issues that health care human resources deals with every day is long and growing longer.

Those who stand on the other side of health care workforce issues have an equally strong – sometimes stronger – voice. These groups have the power to strain health care resources and interfere with the delivery of health care. You must assume Congress hears from them every day, and do your part to counter their messages. Consistently, clearly and frequently tell the health care story – your story – to your legislators. The American Hospital Association (AHA) and our state, regional and metropolitan association partners do this every day, but direct communication with health care HR leadership in a member's home district carries significantly more weight and is almost always more effective.

### **Advocacy is your opportunity to partner and participate.**

Your elected officials need you as much as you need them. They need information that will help them make better decisions, and you want them to make decisions that will help you serve your community. By creating a symbiotic relationship, you both win. It's easy to participate – make a personal visit, pick up the phone, send letters that get noticed, show them what you do in your health care environment, or take political action.

### **Advocacy is your opportunity to make a difference.**

Your voice matters! By sharing your personal experience and using real-life examples to illustrate your points, you can be a valuable resource for your legislators and their staff, not to mention having a positive impact on the health care workforce and issues most important to your employees and patients. Even if you cannot visit in person, connect with them on Facebook and Twitter – over 80% of members of Congress have social media accounts to present matters that are important to them and give you opportunities to share your views.



## RESOURCES: YOUR TOOLS TO MAKE IT EASY FOR YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN MAKING AN IMPACT

### Find Your Legislators

Go to [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov). Access information on the legislative process, current legislation and legislative activities, members of Congress and committees. Toward the bottom of the page, you can pull up a list of current members of Congress by state.

**United States House of Representatives:** Go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov). Enter your home and/or work zip codes at the right side of the top banner of the page to find the representative for your district. When your representative's name comes up, you will see icons: an "envelope" (email) and a "computer monitor" (website). Look for a phone number or prompt to "Schedule an Appointment" electronically. It is likely that your representative has a Health Care or Workforce Legislative Assistant who is responsible for meeting with constituents who are representing those interests - request an appointment with them specifically if your representative is unavailable to meet with you themselves. To find a full list of representatives for the state(s) you represent, go to [www.house.gov/representatives/#state](http://www.house.gov/representatives/#state).

**United States Senate:** Go to [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). Enter your state from the drop-down menu where it says "Find Your Senators" at the right side of the top banner of the page. A list of your senators will appear, along with a link to contact their office. Look for a phone number or prompt to "Schedule an Appointment" electronically. It is likely that your representative has a Health Care or Workforce Legislative Assistant who is responsible for meeting with constituents who are representing those interests - request an appointment with them specifically if your representative is unavailable to meet with you themselves.

**Health Related Committees:** Your representatives may also serve on committees and subcommittees with jurisdiction over legislation pertinent to hospitals and other health care institutions. Members of the committees are the most influential health legislators on Capitol Hill, so it is important to communicate with these members if they are in your district:

- Committee on the Budget - Senate: <http://www.budget.senate.gov>
- Committee on Finance: <http://finance.senate.gov>
- Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions: <http://help.senate.gov>
- Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs: <http://hsgac.senate.gov>
- Committee on the Judiciary - Senate: <http://judiciary.senate.gov>
- Committee on the Budget - House: <http://www.house.gov/budget>
- Committee on Education and the Workforce: <http://edworkforce.house.gov>
- Committee on Energy and Commerce: <http://energycommerce.house.gov>
- Committee on Homeland Security: <http://hsc.house.gov>
- Committee on the Judiciary - House: <http://www.house.gov/judiciary>
- Committee on Ways and Means: <http://waysandmeans.house.gov>



### Plan Your Visit

Visit the site of the Architect of the Capitol at [www.aoc.gov/plan-your-visit](http://www.aoc.gov/plan-your-visit) to find information about itineraries, prohibited items, where to eat, where to shop, accessibility services, getting to Capitol Hill and other attractions in Washington, D.C.

Visit the site of the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center at [www.visitthecapitol.gov/plan-visit/us-capitol-map](http://www.visitthecapitol.gov/plan-visit/us-capitol-map) to access a **map of the campus** and additional information about visiting.

### Build Your Knowledge

Visit the AHA's Advocacy Issues website at [www.aha.org/advocacy-issues/index.shtml](http://www.aha.org/advocacy-issues/index.shtml) to review Key Issues, Tools & Resources, and Key Initiatives that may have relevant information to support your organization's particular concerns.

Examples of **Key Issues** currently represented include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ clinical integration
- ✓ cybersecurity
- ✓ Ebola preparedness
- ✓ emergency readiness
- ✓ teaching hospitals and medical education
- ✓ workforce
- ✓ working with employees

Examples of **Key Initiatives** currently represented include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ America's Hospitals: Caring for Patients, Strengthening Communities
- ✓ Community Connections
- ✓ Hiring Veterans
- ✓ United Against the Flu
- ✓ Workforce Center

Check in with your state, regional or metropolitan **hospital association** to find out what advocacy efforts they are representing in your area – find yours at <http://www.aha.org/about/srmassoc/index.shtml>.

If your employer has a **Government Relations** office, check in with them to find out what you can do to support the advocacy efforts already in place.

Visit ASHHRA's Advocacy/Labor Relations webpage for member access to our Library, Health Care Labor Report and Labor Activity in Health Care Report: [www.ashhra.org/advocacy](http://www.ashhra.org/advocacy).

