Advocacy 101 for Medical Students: Let’s pass the MUP bill!

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Bill 6611: HEADs UP Act 2018

- Medically Underserved Populations listed in 1944 Public Health Service act
  - Groups that are underserved but not defined by geography
  - Designates funding
- Bill would add individuals with I/DD as MUP
  - Give HRSA support
    - Improve research
    - Innovate outreach, definitions/terminology, standards of practice/care
    - NHSC funds/personnel/loan forgiveness
    - Education (medical school and CME)
    - M & E for health
  - Improve reimbursement
Read the Bill itself:

Follow the Bill’s Progress: (currently requires approval by the House Committee on Energy and Commerce; see prior page for list of members)
- AAFP Bill Tracker
  - [https://www.aafp.org/advocacy/track/bill-tracker.html](https://www.aafp.org/advocacy/track/bill-tracker.html)

Read more about the reasons to support the Bill:

- DORIS MATSUI (CALIFORNIA – 06)
- JERRY MCDONALD (CALIFORNIA – 09)
- ANNA ESHOO (CALIFORNIA – 18)
- RAOUL RUIZ (CALIFORNIA – 36)
- ANNA ESHOO (CALIFORNIA – 18)
- RAOUL RUIZ (CALIFORNIA – 36)
- TONY CARDENAS (CALIFORNIA – 27)
- MINI WATERS (CALIFORNIA – 43)
- SCOTT PETERS (CALIFORNIA – 52)
- DIANA DEGETTE (COLORADO – 01)
- GUS BURFAX (FLORIDA – 12)
- KATHY CASTOR (FLORIDA – 14)
- BUDY CARTER (GEORGIA – 01)
- ROBBY RUSH (ILLINOIS – 01)
- JANICE SCHAKOWSKY (ILLINOIS – 09)
- JOHN SHIMKUS (ILLINOIS – 15)
- ADAM KINZINGER (ILLINOIS – 16)
- SUSAN BROOKS (INDIANA – 05)
- LARRY BUCSHON (INDIANA – 08)
- DAVID LOEBSACK (IOWA – 02)
- BRETT GUTHRIE (KENTUCKY – 02)
- STEVE SCALISE (LOUISIANA – 01)
- JOSEPH KENNEDY (MASSACHUSETTS – 04)
- JOHN SARBALES (MARYLAND – 03)
- FRANK PALLONE (NEW JERSEY – 06) RANKING MEMBER
- LEONARD LANCE (NEW JERSEY – 07)
- BEN LUCE (NEW MEXICO – 03)
- YVETTE CLARKE (NEW YORK – 09)
- ELIZABETH ENGEL (NEW YORK – 14)
- PAUL TONKO (NEW YORK – 20)
- G.E. BUTTERFLY (NORTH CAROLINA – 01)
- RICHARD HUSSON (NORTH CAROLINA – 08)
- KEVIN CRUMER (NORTH DAKOTA – 00)
- ROBERT LATT (OHIO – 01)
- BILL JOHNSON (OHIO – 06)
- MARKWAYNE MULLIN (OKLAHOMA – 02)
- GREG WALDEN (OREGON – 02) – CHAIRMAN
- BILLY LONG (MISSOURI – 07)
- FRANK WELCH (VERMONT – 00)
- MORGAN GRIFFITH (VIRGINIA – 09)
- CATHY MCMorris Rodgers (WASHINGON – 05)
- DAVID MCKINLEY (WEST VIRGINIA – 01)
Creating your message

Your story:
- Stay positive
- Why does this matter to you/your patients
- How does it affect your practice, your community
- The Bill will make an impact/ how specifically would it affect what you do
- Keep it simple
- Don’t use jargon
- Make it about people, not diagnoses
- 3 sentences (50 words, twitter message)

The message as a whole:
- Concise
- Relatable
- Repeatable
- Make a clear case
- Reach out again...and again
- Consider opposing arguments - ask why until you understand
- Be polite and non-threatening (agree online, disagree in private)
- Connect with the interests of your Rep (do your research)

"80% of congressional offices say less than 30 posts will demand attention."
- AAFP Congress 101 Webinar, Dr. Conrad Flick

Top 10 Considerations:
1. PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!
2. Be an expert in your story (don’t worry about being an expert on the legislation)
3. Clear, concise, memorable, relatable, personal
4. Use your professional leverage
5. Connect the Bill to the issues
6. Connect the Bill to the Rep’s interests (do your research)
7. Make a clear “ask”
8. Be flexible
9. Follow-up immediately
10. Engage allies

#HEADsUPCongress
{[your district]}
.@[your rep’s handle]
As a __________________ I strongly support House Bill 6611 because:

As your constituent, I have seen first hand the impact of diminished healthcare resources for individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities and their families. [add a sentence or two about your practice or your personal experiences]

Adding people with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities as a Medically Underserved Population under the Public Health Services Act will enable dedicated education and funding to significantly improve the health disparities, health status, and barriers to health care experienced by these individuals and their families. It is long since time to address their needs and develop innovative practices to care for this diverse and underserved population. I hope you will remember my experiences and Vote Yes on Bill 6611.

Sincerely,
Thank you for listening!

Questions?

Download our resources online:

- Toolkit:
- Letter and Phone script:
- Post-Card:

Use Our Hashtag: #HEADsUPCongress
For the remainder of the session we will work on...

Understanding the difference between lobbying and advocacy

Considering your role as a professional and an advocate

Learning about resources available to you

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**Lobbying vs. advocacy**

“All lobbying is advocacy but not all advocacy is lobbying”

- **Advocacy:** Educating lawmakers on policy, issues, or ideas
- **Lobbying:** An attempt to influence specific legislation by contacting members of Congress or their staff
  - Also applies to Presidential Administration on legislation, rules, or regulations
  - Can be done through email, via phone or in person meeting
Roadblocks to Advocacy

Lack of comfort with the advocacy process
Not sure where to start
Not sure where to get help
Don’t feel you are ‘expert’ enough to advocate

Source: www.naemt.org/Files/Advocacy/TheArtOfAdvocacy214web.ppt

We’re here today to leave you feeling empowered!
But let’s break it down

oh lets break it DOWN

ROADBLOCK #1:
LACK OF COMFORT WITH THE ADVOCACY PROCESS
The Policy Process

• Public Policy is a government policy affecting the public interest
• Law establishes public policy
• Policies can be updated and changed

But also there are levels of government we need to think about
And there are different branches of government

Think through a strategy -

What is the issue?

What does the data say?

What is your request?
  • Provide rationale with data
  • Explain implications
  • Justify cost
ROADBLOCK #2: NOT SURE WHERE TO START

Know who your government leaders are...

NY-D, Senator Chuck Schumer
Then connect!

• Written
  • email, letter

• Oral
  • call, set up a meeting

• Or both!

• Introduce yourself as a resource to them – share your expertise & positionality

• Explain how you can help them and they can help you

E-mail Chuck
As your U.S. Senator, Chuck would like to hear your thoughts, opinions, and concerns on the issues. Use this form to contact the Senator or to re-direct you to the form you need for specific communication with the Senator and/or his office staff.

How Can Chuck Help?
- Select an option -
ROADBLOCK #3: NOT SURE WHERE TO GET HELP

Your network
Coalitions, Associations & Ally’s

• Coalition - “An alliance for combined action”
• Ally – “Being willing to act with and for others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equality”

ROADBLOCK #4: DON’T FEEL LIKE YOU ARE ‘EXPERT’ ENOUGH TO ADVOCATE
Speak about what you know

DO YOUR RESEARCH

“No one knows everything, everyone knows something”
- Pierre Lévy

Your experience is important

Multiple Perspectives
There are lots of resource - Disability Policy In Brief

Now we’ve convinced you to advocate & it’s time to set up a meeting...
**Structure of Meetings – Your ‘Elevator Speech’**

1. Describe who you are and where you come from
2. Describe issue – use data if possible
3. Tell a story about a patient / make it real
4. Wrap up / final ask
5. THANK YOU!!!

**Tips for government related meetings**

- Talk about what’s most important to you! Talk about how your life, or the people you serve are affected.
- Develop a brief story to help the staff put context with an issue, and to understand how people are affected by laws and policies.
- If you’re going in person – dress professional (but wear comfy shoes!)
- Give yourself plenty of time & know where you’re going
- Bring supporting materials
- Follow up with an email / additional resources
Sample for dental student – Medicaid Funding

Issue – constant pressure to cut/curb Medicaid spending
- Medicaid covers preventative dental care every 6 months
- Cost of 1 visit = $160

Story
- Patient with IDD, CP, seizures had not seen dentist in 15 years. Traveled to Complex Care Center with acute dental pain and a swollen face. Dentist found multiple non restorable teeth. 13 teeth ultimately extracted, leaving only 4 remaining teeth.
- Total cost = $7,000
- Additionally this patient will no longer be able to eat solid foods – quality of life impacted

“Ask”
- Congress must understand that Medicaid is a necessity to people with IDD and their families & reject reductions or caps to the Medicaid program
Questions?