

PREPARING FOR A VISIT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Tips for Families Sharing Their Story

Meeting with legislators is a powerful way to help them understand the real impact of disability policy. Your voice matters. The goal is to help them see the everyday reality families face and why their decisions matter. Below are a few tips to help you feel confident and prepared.

1

Start with a simple introduction

Begin by sharing your name, where you live, and your loved one's name.

Example: "My name is _____. I'm the parent of _____."

If you are comfortable, briefly share your loved one's diagnosis using plain language. Try to keep clinical terms to a minimum.

2

Describe daily life

Help them picture what life looks like. You might share:

- What a typical day looks like
- The supports your loved one needs
- The joys and the challenges

Real examples help legislators understand the human side of policy.

3

Share how disability affects your family

Many lawmakers do not realize how much disability affects family life. Consider sharing:

- Has it impacted your ability to work?
- Have you reduced hours, changed jobs, turned down promotions, or left work?
- How has your family adapted?

This helps connect disability policy to workforce and economic realities.

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4

Talk about the future

Legislators are thinking about long-term systems. It helps to share what the future might look like for your loved one. For example:

- Will they be able to work?
- What skills or supports will they need?
- Will they need residential care as an adult?

This helps policymakers understand why planning and funding matter now.

5

Keep your story short and focused

To make sure everyone has a chance to speak, we are aiming for [a max of 3 minutes per person](#). A few tips that help:

- Pick 2–3 key points you want them to remember
- Focus on the moments that best explain your experience
- Try to keep your story clear and to the point

Short, focused stories are easier for legislators to remember.

6

Notes are welcome

Feel free to bring notes or a printed statement. Cheat sheets are absolutely allowed. Many people find it easier to stay on track when they have something written in front of them.

7

Make space for every voice

Each family's experience is important. During the visit, we will do our best to make sure everyone has a chance to share. Keeping comments brief helps ensure every family is heard.