

————— **#LetHerDecide** —————

# **GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY TOOLKIT**

Establishing Medicare Coverage  
for Custom Breast Prostheses

**JOIN THE MOVEMENT**



# ARE YOU READY TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT?

Dear Friends,

This packet is your grassroots toolkit and is meant to help you and supporters like you through the process of advocacy. There are countless different ways to advocate for this important legislation and no two stories are alike, so use these tools as you see fit!

The toolkit has background information on the issue and then provides key items to help you reach media, your patients, and Congress. Some of the elements in this toolkit are informational, while others are meant to be printed multiple times and shared with anyone and everyone! The table of contents will help guide you through the toolkit.

If you need assistance, have questions, or want to share your success, please reach out to the Let Her Decide team. We are happy to assist with the scheduling of congressional events, provide additional resources, and offer advice on successful grassroots advocacy.

By participating in this campaign, you are playing an integral role in expanding access and coverage to custom breast prostheses for women across the country.

Thank you for supporting this important campaign and working alongside our team to help women who have undergone a mastectomy have all of their options available to them.

Thank you for joining the movement!



**Nikki Jensen**

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[LetHerDecide.org](http://LetHerDecide.org)

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Making a difference is easier than you might think. Follow along with this guide to see the most effective ways to engage with media, patient/public advocacy, and policymakers on Capitol Hill.

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# **INTRODUCTION TO LET HER DECIDE CAMPAIGN**

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# ISSUE SUMMARY

The Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act will allow Medicare to cover custom breast prosthesis as an eligible option for women post-mastectomy surgery. Currently, the options for breast replacement following mastectomy surgery are off-the-shelf breast prosthesis and surgical reconstruction. Not all women are candidates for surgery or would choose surgery if they had an option that would allow a better fit than what off-the-shelf prosthetics can provide.

While these options work for many women, there are some who would prefer a custom breast prosthesis, the missing option. The problem is Medicare doesn't cover custom breast prostheses. In fact, as we have researched—the breast is the only custom prosthetic body part that is not covered by Medicare. Legislation is needed for Medicare to include this as a covered benefit.

**The goal of this bill is to make sure women have the choices they need when faced with making a decision for breast replacement after mastectomy surgery.**

## The Difference Between Surgical Reconstruction, Off-the-shelf Prostheses, and Custom Prostheses

### Surgical Reconstruction

- Not everyone is a good candidate
- Requires multiple surgeries
- Surgical procedures may include implants or may involve using tissue from another part of the body to create the breast.
- All new surgical procedure codes since 1998 have been allowed and have not required legislation to be covered by Medicare.

### Off-the-Shelf Breast Prostheses

Women are unique and come in all shapes and sizes. Off-the-shelf prostheses may not work the same for everyone.

- Can shift
- Symmetry isn't always possible
- May not match skin tone
- Requires a pocketed mastectomy bra



### Custom Breast Prostheses

Certified mastectomy fitters can use a computer or tablet to scan a patient's chest wall to meet the exact shape of a patient, perfectly fitting her chest wall:

- Minimizes shifting of the form
- Gives patients symmetry
- Matches skin tone



## Action Item

**To establish custom breast prostheses as a Medicare-covered benefit, Congress must pass legislation.**

- "Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act" will allow Medicare to establish coverage for this benefit.
- Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 (WHCRA) allows for all surgical advancements to be covered since 1998; however, advancements in prosthetics have not been covered. Interpretation of prosthesis has only allowed for off-the-shelf.
- The breast is the only body part not allowed with a customized prosthetic replacement by Medicare.
- Billing code, L8035, and fee schedule were created in 1999.
- Medicare has deemed custom breast prosthesis as not medically necessary because it doesn't increase functionality. Eyes and ears are allowed a custom replacement even though they do not increase functionality.

**One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.** No one knows what choice they may need until they're in the situation.



# MASTECTOMY SURGERY DATA

It is estimated there will be 281,550 women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in the United States in 2021. Approximately 144,000 of those women will undergo mastectomy surgery. Below is information from CMS.

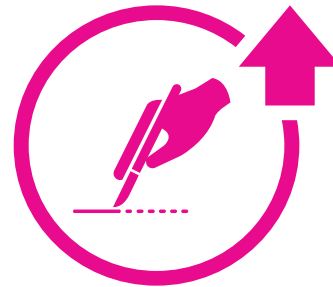
## CMS Utilization Data

Sen. Grassley (R-IA), former Senate finance chairman, requested utilization data for mastectomy, surgical reconstruction, and off-the-shelf breast prosthetics for 2016-2018 from CMS. This data was provided from CMS based on Sen. Grassley's inquiry.

### Total Mastectomies - Medicare Beneficiaries

Year	Service Count	Cost*
2016	98,619	\$257,514,982
2017	98,806	\$209,819,202
2018	101,555	\$246,217,980

\*Includes HCPCS codes: 19301, 19302, 19303, 19304, 19305, 19306, 19307

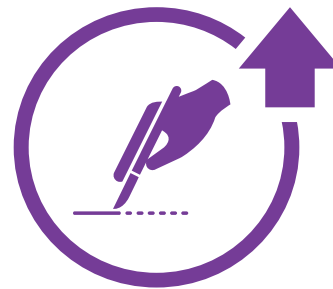


INCREASE IN  
PROCEDURES

### Total Surgical Reconstruction Procedures - Medicare Beneficiaries

Year	Service Count	Cost*
2016	9,066	\$38,484,218
2017	9,113	\$44,203,378
2018	9,560	\$52,128,570

Includes HCPCS codes: 19350, 19357, 19361, 19364, 19366, 19367



INCREASE IN  
PROCEDURES  
AND COST  
OVER THE LAST  
THREE YEARS

### Total Off-the-Shelf Breast Prostheses Dispensed - Medicare Beneficiaries

Year	Service Count	Cost*
2016	106,610	\$30,582,689
2017	98,483	\$29,115,586
2018	93,172	\$27,926,543

\*Includes HCPCS codes: L8030, L8001, L8002



DECREASE  
IN COST AND  
UTILIZATION  
OVER THE LAST  
THREE YEARS

# MASTECTOMY SURGERY DATA

## Surgical Reconstruction or Custom Breast Prosthesis?



We know that surgical reconstruction can cost on average \$30,000 to \$40,000 depending on the woman.



These are just costs with the one billing code per procedure, not the cost of the entire procedure, which would include multiple billing codes.



Custom breast prosthesis is a non-surgical reconstruction option that will cost less than surgical reconstruction and will have fewer complications.

## Benefits of Custom Breast Prostheses



No additional doctor visits once the surgery site is healed. Women are scanned and fitted for their prosthetics.



There is no risk of complications.



Custom breast prosthetics are considered DME and are subject to resupply every two years.

The Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 requires U.S. health insurers and self-insured plans that cover mastectomy to also cover reconstruction and prostheses.



The billing code and fee schedule for custom breast prosthesis, L8035, was created in 1999, one year after the WHCRA.



All surgical procedures since 1998 have been allowed without need for legislation.



The breast is the only body part not allowed by Medicare as a custom replacement.

# BREAST REPLACEMENT OPTIONS

Women who seek breast replacement after mastectomy deserve to have all the options available, recognizing that some women choose to go flat. The “good” and “best” options for breast replacement are covered by Medicare, but “better” is not. Stakeholders and patient advocacy groups are currently working to gain sponsors for the “Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act” to provide women with the “better” option. Let her decide what’s right for her.

	GOOD OPTION	BETTER OPTION	BEST OPTION
DESCRIPTION	Off-the-Shelf Prosthesis, L8030 Breast Prosthesis Without Adhesive	Custom Breast Prosthesis, L8035	Surgical Reconstruction
COVERED BY MEDICARE	✓	✗	✓
COST PER BREAST	\$315.48–\$420.63 (Based on 2021 CMS DMEPOS Fee Schedule)	\$3,291.75–\$4,388.99 (Based on 2021 CMS DMEPOS Fee Schedule)	\$5,000–\$15,000 (Initial surgery only)
REQUIRES ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES	✗	✗	✓ 2-4 additional surgeries
RISK OF COMPLICATIONS E.G., INFECTION	✗	✗	✓
RECOVERY TIME	None. Once mastectomy surgery site is healed, the breast prosthesis can be used.	None. Once mastectomy surgery site is healed, the custom breast prosthesis can be used.	Varies depending on procedure, multiple surgeries required, and lengthy recovery
TAILORED TO RESTORE THE PATIENT PROFILE	✗	✓	✓

Until faced with a breast cancer diagnosis, women don’t know what options they may need for their unique situation.

# BILL TIMELINE

**1998**

[Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998](#) passed. Federal law requires coverage for all surgical reconstruction and prostheses, and treatment of physical complications of all stages of the mastectomy.

**1999**

Billing Code, L8035, and fee schedule created for Custom Breast Prosthesis

**2012**

S. 1217/H.R. 2233 Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act first introduced by Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and Rep. Mike Ross (D-AR).

**2018**

Nikki Jensen and Tom Powers meet with CMS Ombudsmen. Asked if CMS could make a regulatory change to their interpretation of the [Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act](#), to allow custom breast prostheses.

**2018**

S. 3687/H.R. 6980 Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act introduced in September 2018 near the end of the 115th Congress.

**2019**

S. 562/H.R. 1370 Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act reintroduced into 116th Congress.

**2019**

Sen. Grassley (R-IA) has a conversation with CMS in late 2019 to ask if they had regulatory authority to allow coverage for custom breast prosthesis and also requested the CMS utilization data for surgical procedures.

**2020**

Request for CBO score submitted by Senate Finance Committee staff.

**2020**

The state of Indiana passed a bill, [SB0239](#), to allow custom breast prosthesis as an eligible option for state employees. This legislation was found to be a no-cost bill.

**2020**

Pennsylvania passed a bill, [HB 1457](#), to allow custom breast prosthesis for patients who have had mastectomy surgery.

**2020**

CBO score received in late December, currently awaiting updated score following an update meeting with CBO representatives.

**2021**

We are currently working to reintroduce the legislation into the 117th Congress.



# Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act

## H.R. 3087/S. 2051

Women living with breast cancer deserve to feel comfortable and secure, whether they are recovering from a recent mastectomy surgery or looking for a more customized prosthetic solution.

### Current Options Aren't Enough

#### **Surgical Reconstruction**

(payable by Medicare)

Not all women are candidates for reconstruction, and some may not want to go through another surgery following a mastectomy.

#### **Off-the-shelf Breast Prosthesis**

(payable by Medicare)

Off-the-shelf prostheses are a great solution, but may not work for everyone. Many women have issues matching the symmetry of their remaining breast, fitting the contour of their chest wall, and matching their skin tone post mastectomy. When a prosthesis does not fit correctly, it may move and shift causing discomfort and embarrassment.



#### **Go Flat**

Instead of reconstruction and off-the-shelf prostheses, some women choose to go flat.

### It Doesn't Have to Be This Way

#### **Custom Breast Prosthesis**

(not currently payable by Medicare)

Custom breast prostheses are individually constructed to match the contour of the woman's chest wall, provide symmetry, and match skin tone. This allows for a comfortable, lightweight solution to restore her unique profile after mastectomy.

The Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act will allow for Medicare to cover custom breast prostheses.



There's already a code, L8035, and a fee schedule established.

But, we need legislation to allow Medicare coverage.

**#LetHerDecide**

Get involved! Contact your legislators and ask for support or visit [LetHerDecide.org](http://LetHerDecide.org) today!

# AUDIENCE OUTREACH: MEDIA

## **Engaging with the Media**

Guide to interacting with the media.

## **Sample Press Release**

Fill in the information and distribute to your local media outlets.

# ENGAGING WITH THE MEDIA

Engaging with the local media is a great, cost-effective way for your message to reach outside of your regular customer base. Creating awareness through the local newspapers, radio, and television can rapidly grow a movement throughout an entire community. Engaging with your local media is not as daunting as it may seem and is a persuasive medium to gain the attention of elected officials. It can also have exponential impact as local media channels can spread throughout larger outlets and reach an even greater audience.

## Interviews

Interviews with reporters have proven to be very effective in creating greater awareness of what this legislation will provide and how beneficial it will be to those who choose custom breast prostheses. Congressional offices pay close attention to these stories and often times reach out to providers after seeing the story.

## Social Media

Encourage your friends to support this issue by sharing "Calls-to-Action" and important updates by the Let Her Decide team. Follow us (and invite your friends!) on Facebook and Twitter for action items and content to create awareness for this important campaign! Posting a personal experience that is relatable to many will generally drive more impressions.

## Op-Ed Pieces

Much like a letter to the editor, these act as opinion pieces from writers outside of the organization and usually allow for a greater word limit. These are typically accepted when created by the organization's executives and thought leaders. For a business owner, clinician, or non-profit, this is a great media tool!

## Letters to the Editor

Writing a short letter to the editor of your local newspaper outlining the need for this legislation is another way to speak directly to the community. These pieces are typically between 200-500 words, depending on the publication, and submission forms are typically found on the publication's website!

## Tell your story with the five principles:

1. Use the resources in this toolkit to give to the news organization to educate and spark interest on the issue. You are "selling" a story and a cause to the news!
2. Relay the story in a clear, concise way to educate the public who may not understand the issue. Limit the use of acronyms and explain clinical references in a simple way.
3. Explain the ultimate impacts to the individuals who would benefit from this legislation.
4. Solidify the final call-to-action and encourage viewers to contact Congress to support this issue.
5. Providers should share media coverage on their social media pages, send links and newspaper clippings directly to their elected officials, and ask to schedule a call to discuss the story.

**Follow us on social media and invite others, too!**



@LetHerDecide



@LetHerDecide

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE FOR MEDIA FROM A BUSINESS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE:

Contact:

INSERT NAME AND EMAIL

## **[Insert Business Name] supports Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act**

[CITY, STATE] – [Month day, year] - [Insert business name] is proud to support the Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act, which will increase the options that breast cancer survivors have after undergoing mastectomy surgery.

This legislation will allow for Medicare to establish coverage for custom breast prostheses after mastectomy surgery. Offering this option of care for breast cancer survivors will provide many women with the opportunity to feel whole again after mastectomy surgery as they begin life after breast cancer.

"This legislation would have tremendous impact on women across the nation whose only options now are reconstruction, off-the-shelf prostheses, or go flat," said [Insert First Last Name], [title] of [Business Name]. "These options are not enough. Each woman is beautifully unique and deserves the opportunity to choose the option that works best for her and her body."

Today, if a woman has mastectomy surgery, primarily to remove or prevent breast cancer, her options can be limited. After removal of the breast in a "simple mastectomy," or the removal of both breasts in a "double mastectomy," a woman's chest wall is entirely different than before. One option a woman has is an "off-the-shelf" prosthesis. However, finding one with the right symmetry and skin tone is not always possible, especially if she has an irregular chest wall following surgery. Reconstruction surgery is an option, too, but it is costly and not everyone is a good candidate. Both of these options are currently covered by Medicare and many other types of insurance but not custom breast prostheses.

[Insert Client Quote/Testimonial on what passing the Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act would mean to them]

The female breast is one of the only body parts not covered by Medicare as a custom replacement. A similar bill to the Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act was introduced in 2011; however, it did not gain enough support to pass.

[INSERT NAME] concluded, "We ask that anyone affected by breast cancer, or if you just feel this is the right thing to do, please contact your elected officials and show support for the Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act."

For more information and to send a message to your elected officials, visit [LetHerDecide.org](http://LetHerDecide.org) and click "TAKE ACTION NOW."

# AUDIENCE OUTREACH: PATIENT/ PUBLIC ADVOCACY

## **Breast Cancer Recovery: What You Might Not Know**

***(PRINT ME)***

This is an infographic that you can print and display in your store. Print as many as you'd like and share with your vendors as well for them to put up.

## **Advocating for Better Health Care for Breast Cancer Patients and Join the Movement**

***(PRINT ME – I'M DOUBLE SIDED)***

These are double-sided informational cards meant to be printed several times and cut apart. The front side is a brief overview of the Let Her Decide Campaign and why it is important. The back side is a step-by-step guide to help customers reach out to their members of Congress via email. The email is pre-written for them and they don't even need to know their member of Congress! Hand these out to everyone who will take one!

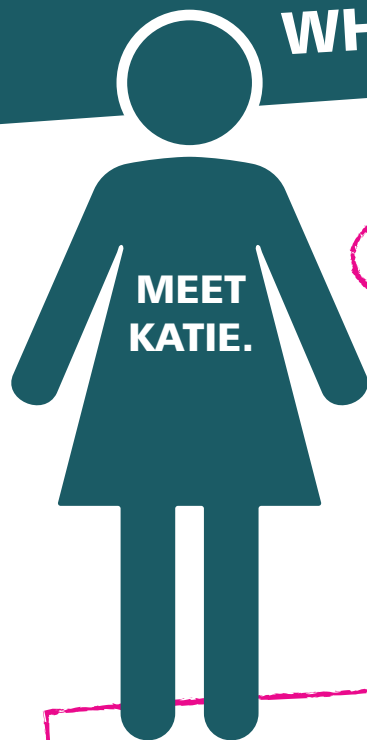
## **#LetHerDecide and Join the Movement**

***(PRINT ME – I'M DOUBLE SIDED)***

This is a doubled-sided social media card that provides social media information to follow the campaign on the front side. The back side has the same "Join the Movement" information as the card above. These are great handouts for anyone who comes in your store. Print several, cut apart, and give to your customers as they leave the store for a quick, easy way to spread the word in the social media world!

# BREAST CANCER RECOVERY:

## WHAT YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW



Katie is covered by Medicare.



Katie is **1 of 3,800,000** women living in the U.S. with a **family history** of breast cancer.



She is told that 1 in 8 women develop invasive breast cancer.



When she discovers **a lump in her breast**, she goes to the doctor.

Katie is **1 of 281,550** women who will be diagnosed with invasive breast cancer in 2021...which is more than lung, colon, and uterine cancer combined.



Katie is **1 of more than 100,000** women who will undergo a mastectomy this year.

While researching her options, she realizes **she has four choices**:

Reconstruction

Custom Breast Prosthesis

Off-the-Shelf Breast Prosthesis

Go Flat

Lung, Colon, and Uterine Cancer

Breast Cancer



Medicare covering the L8035 custom breast prosthesis code **would give Katie** (and the thousands like her) **another option.**

After her mastectomy, Katie doesn't want any more surgery. None of the ready-made prostheses forms are a good fit for her and don't match her skin tone.

**But Medicare won't cover custom prosthesis.**

Because of this, Katie goes without.



#### SOURCES:

- Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act H.R. 3087, S. 2051, 117<sup>th</sup> Congress
- U.S. Breast Cancer Statistics. (n.d.). Retrieved from [https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/understand\\_bc/statistics](https://www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/understand_bc/statistics)

TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT, VISIT

[www.LetHerDecide.org](http://www.LetHerDecide.org)

## Advocating for Better Healthcare for Breast Cancer Patients

Did you know...the breast is the only body part not covered as a customized replacement by Medicare?

We want to change the current Medicare guidelines to allow reimbursement for custom prostheses.

Women seeking breast replacement after mastectomy surgery are currently allowed:

- Surgical Reconstruction
- Off-the-shelf breast prosthesis

Custom breast prosthesis should also be an option and covered as an eligible benefit.

Many women benefit from reconstruction or off-the-shelf breast prostheses. However, not all women will be candidates for reconstruction surgery, and not all off-the-shelf prostheses will be able to meet the needs of every woman.

It's important for women everywhere that this legislation passes so breast cancer patients can be allowed to choose the solution that is best for their unique needs.

### TAKE ACTION:

**Visit [LethHerDecide.org](https://LethHerDecide.org) today to send a letter of support to your representative or to share your story!**

Connect with us!



@LethHerDecide

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## Join the Movement

- 1 **Go to [www.LetHerDecide.org](http://www.LetHerDecide.org).**
- 2 Click the pink "TAKE ACTION NOW" button on the right hand corner of the screen.
- 3 Click the "Send Message" button, then enter your Zip Code (this will help you identify your member of Congress).
- 4 Create your letter. It is pre-written for you, but you can edit it if you'd like.
- 5 Save and preview.
- 6 Send your letter!
- 7 And then...SHARE IT on social media! Make sure you're following:



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## #LetHerDecide

### H.R. 3087/S. 2051 Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act

Breast cancer survivors should have the option to choose the best solution post-mastectomy.

Currently, one of the only body parts not covered by Medicare with a custom replacement is the breast.

Medicare already has a code and an allowable amount in place for L8035, custom breast prosthesis.

Women should be allowed to choose the breast replacement option that meets her unique needs.

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## Join the Movement

Contact legislators to ask for support H.R. 3087/S. 2051, the Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act. Two ways to contact:

1. Go to your legislator's website to call or email asking for support
2. Go to [letherdecide.org](http://letherdecide.org) and click "TAKE ACTION NOW!" to send a pre-written email

Be sure to spread  
the word using  
social media!

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Contact legislators to ask for support H.R. 3087/S. 2051, the Breast Cancer Patient Equity Act. Two ways to contact:

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# AUDIENCE OUTREACH: CONGRESS

## **Where Do I Start**

Guide to engaging with members of Congress.

## **Connecting with Legislators**

Tips on how to best connect with your legislators.

## **Policy Guide**

This is a great document to leave behind with representatives of Congress. Print several so you have enough for each representative you meet with.

## **Congressional Meeting Checklist**

A simple checklist to make sure you're ready and covered everything you need to in your meeting, as well as follow up.

## **Evaluation**

After your meeting, fill out one of these sheets to help track your progress. You will need several copies of these as well.

## **Attending an Event**

Tips on how to find town hall or campaign events, what to expect, and what to do during and after the event.

## **Join the Movement**

This a step-by-step guide to help you reach out to your member of Congress via email. The email is pre-written. All you need to know is your Zip Code.

# "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. 2051 (senators) and H.R. 3087 (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 H.R. 3087/S. 2051. 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. 2051/H.R. 3087 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!

# CONNECTING WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

## Three Tips to Connecting with Your Elected Officials

Follow these tips to begin the process of building a relationship with your elected officials:

1

### LEAVE YOUR PERSONAL POLITICS ASIDE!

You may not have voted for or agree with your elected officials' views. That is fine. Regardless of your feelings toward their politics, it is your representative's and senators' job to represent you – their constituents – on Capitol Hill.

When approaching any discussions with your legislators or their staff, put your political views aside and share your concerns in a polite manner. Always make it a point to thank your elected officials for their service to your community.

2

### BECOME A RECOGNIZABLE NAME AND FACE.

#### Local Political Offices:

- Begin by building a relationship with the local office staff of your elected officials.
- Stop in and introduce yourself. Be respectful of their time.
- Explain your business's services and what you do for the customers you serve.
- List the legislative pieces that are important to your business (H.R. 3087/S. 2051).
- Ask staff members to coordinate a visit from the elected official when they are in the area.

#### District and D.C. Staff:

- After getting to know the local office staff, politely ask to be connected to the district staff.
- Make it a goal to connect with D.C. staff once every few months to keep your priorities fresh in their minds.

3

### TRY, TRY AGAIN.

Be persistent. In the event that you do not get a response or their schedule is too full to get a meeting, do not be discouraged. Keep trying to connect.

Be polite. Leaving a positive impression will get you much further in building strong relationships with the staff.

### Advocacy Assistance

If you want more information on how to get involved, or how to connect with your elected officials, or just don't know where to start, contact Essentially Women at [essentiallywomen@vgm.com](mailto:essentiallywomen@vgm.com)



# CONGRESSIONAL MEETING CHECKLIST

You have sent emails, made phone calls, and coordinated a meeting with your member of Congress or their staff member. Follow this checklist to ensure that your meeting is a success.

- ☐ Establish a date and time with local staff members for an in-person meeting.
- ☐ Send them briefing materials via email beforehand to allow staff to prepare.
- ☐ Invite a short list of clients who would benefit from custom prostheses, advocates, clinicians, etc.
- ☐ Print off multiple copies of supporting materials in this "Advocacy Toolkit" to go over during the meeting.
- ☐ Establish one person to direct the meeting in an organized fashion.
- ☐ If you are hosting the meeting in a store, prepare any cookies, snacks, or coffee for the elected official and guests.
- ☐ Fill out a "Congressional Meeting Evaluation Sheet" with notes, follow-up tasks, and other information.
- ☐ Share photos of the meeting on social media with #LetHerDecide.
- ☐ Follow up with the staff member and office with a thank you email for their time and consideration.
- ☐ Call us and tell us how it went at 800.988.4484!



# CONGRESSIONAL MEETING EVALUATION SHEET

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a: ☐ Mastectomy-related Business ☐ User/Survivor ☐ Clinician

Member of Congress: \_\_\_\_\_ State/District: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Member(s): \_\_\_\_\_

With whom did you meet ☐ Member and Staff ☐ Member Only ☐ Staff Only

Member Agreed to Support Legislation ☐ Yes ☐ No

Member Agreed to Cosponsor Legislation ☐ Yes ☐ No

Member/Staff would like to Evaluate Further ☐ Yes ☐ No

Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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Requested Information and Follow-Up Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Send this completed form to [essentiallywomen@vgm.com](mailto:essentiallywomen@vgm.com) or fax 855.291.3819.**

# ATTENDING A TOWN HALL OR CAMPAIGN EVENT

If you reach out to your congressional member's district office staff and find that a private meeting or tour of your facility will not fit the schedule, there are still ways to see your representative or senator while he or she is in town. Attending a campaign fundraiser or a town hall-style public event (or a meet-and-greet event) will get you the opportunity to briefly meet face-to-face and discuss the issues.

Here is a list of tips for making this happen:

## 1. Finding Event Information

Because of campaign finance rules, congressional campaign events and legislative events for constituents must remain separate. This means you will seek out information about these events from two different sources.

**Campaign Events** – Go to your member's campaign website to look for events or for a phone number to call the local campaign office. To find the site, search for their name online and the word "campaign." "Representative Doe Campaign," for example. You'll be required to give a contribution at the event, but doing so will be worth the opportunity to be involved and meet face-to-face even if for a moment.

**Legislative Events** – Call the district office to learn more about meet-and-greet opportunities. You can find the office located closest to you on the official legislative website, which is different than the campaign site. You'll know this site because the web address will look official and be followed by .gov.

## 2. What to Expect

All events will ask you to sign in. They will usually allow time for meet-and-greet and then the member of Congress will give a speech about current policy issues or a motivational campaign talk. Make sure to make your way to the Congress member early. If you sit back and wait, you may miss the opportunity.

## 3. Connect with Staff at the Event

The member of Congress will always have staff nearby to help the event run smoothly. The person who is the "right hand" of the congressman will be quite visible. Go up to that person and ask him or her for a moment to speak with the congressman. Mention "issues related to Medicare" and also that you would like to get a photo with the

congressman. The earlier you do this, the more likely it is you will get the face-to-face time you want. Also, ask the staffer for the name and email address of the person to follow up with in the Washington, D.C., office and one name and email address of a local staffer. Ask specifically for those who work with health or Medicare issues. In the future you can send important email messages directly to those staffers.

## 4. Check Your Ideology at the Door

It's important to meet with members of Congress whether or not you agree with their policy positions. Particularly during campaign events when the congressman is speaking to their partisan base, it might be difficult to listen to if you don't agree with the points being made. Remember you are here for one reason today. Stay focused and stick to your issue. Don't be sidetracked by the show.

## 5. It's Your Turn to Talk Now

Your tone and "elevator speech" will be key to getting your point across. When you get the opportunity to talk, be friendly and factual. Don't be confrontational. Give scenarios about how your business and customers are being impacted by CMS policy. They should now know what competitive bidding and audits are, so you should be able to move into your everyday concerns without starting from square one. Tell a true, local and factual story to make the situation more real.

## 6. Follow-Up

Email a thank you that includes the policy guide. Again, if you attended a fundraiser, do not mention the fundraiser in the email. Just mention the date you met and offer thanks and more information.

# NOW YOU'RE READY TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT!

Bills are only passed with advocates like you –  
your support matters.

If you have any questions, please contact the Let Her Decide Team!

**Thank you for your support!**



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800.988.4484  
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