

**Get Involved with
APHA's PHACT
Campaign**



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION (PHACT) CAMPAIGN

Summer 2011

www.apha.org/advocacy/tips/PHACT+Campaign.htm

What is the PHACT Campaign?



- APHA's Annual Congressional Summer Recess Advocacy Campaign
 - Focuses on advocacy while members of Congress are home in their districts
- Engages APHA state affiliates, APHA members, and other supporters
- APHA provides materials and resources
- Encourages participants to share their stories with other advocates



2011 PHACT Campaign Legislative Priorities



- **Increasing public health funding:** Urge Congress to protect critical funding for public health service agencies including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration.
- **Protecting public health funding in health reform:** Encourage Congress to protect the Prevention and Public Health Fund, the first national commitment to public health and prevention of its kind, created under last year's health reform law.

PHACT Campaign Toolkit



APHA provides a toolkit for advocates including:

- Fact Sheets
- Sample questions for town hall meetings
- Tips for calling and meeting with members of Congress
- Tips for writing and submitting a Letter to the Editor and an Op-ed
- Sample LTE and sample Op-Ed
- Tips for utilizing social media



PHACT Toolkit:

Meeting with your Members of Congress



DO

- Present the need for what you're asking the member of Congress to do using data or cases.
- Relate relevant situations in his/her home state or district.
- Ask the policy-maker's position and why.
- Show openness to the knowledge of counterarguments and respond to them.
- Admit you don't know. Offer to find the answer and send information back to the office
- Spend time with members whose position is opposite yours
- Develop relationships with congressional staff.
- Thank them for stands the member has taken that you support.

DON'T

- Overload the meeting with too many issues.
- Confront, threaten, pressure or beg.
- Be argumentative.
- Expect members of Congress to be specialists.
- Make promises you can't deliver.
- Be afraid to take a stand on the issues.
- Shy away from meetings with legislators with known views opposite your own.
- Be offended if a legislator is unable to meet and requests that you meet with his/her staff.

PHACT Toolkit: Town Hall meetings



The PHACT Toolkit also offers tips for attending a town hall meeting

- **Arrive on time.** Town hall meetings are often very crowded and you do not want to disturb the meeting after it has started. Also, you may have a better opportunity to ask your question and speak with your member of Congress after the event if you are seated near the front of the hall.
- **Prepare your question ahead of time.** Before attending the town hall, write down your question on a piece of paper so you are prepared to ask it when the time comes . A clear, concise question will show you are knowledgeable about the issue area and will give your member of Congress a better opportunity to respond.
- **Be polite and professional** even if your member of Congress or other town hall attendees disagree with your position. Stick to the facts, even if others don't.
- **Follow up with the member of Congress and his/her staff.** Call or email the office after the town hall to offer additional resources or ask follow up questions about the issues that were discussed.

PHACT Toolkit: Town Hall Meetings

Sample Questions



- I am concerned about the future of our state and local public health workforce and the important services they provide in our state and communities. Are you familiar with the public health programs that are funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Health Resources and Services Administration in our state/district? Will you pledge to support adequate funding for these important agencies?
- It's been said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Do you support maintaining funding for the **Prevention and Public Health Fund** which provides much needed mandatory funding that is being used for programs at the local, state, and federal level to fight obesity, curb tobacco use, increase access to preventive care services, as well as to help state and local government respond to public health threats and outbreaks?

PHACT Toolkit: Letter to the Editor/Op-ed



TIPS FOR GETTING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR PUBLISHED

Writing a letter to the editor for your local newspaper or other media outlet is a great advocacy tool and helps create awareness of the importance of public health in health reform.

- **Be brief and concise.**
- **Refer to other stories.**
- **Include contact information.**

TIPS FOR GETTING AN OP-ED PUBLISHED

Writing an op-ed for a local newspaper helps bolster awareness around a variety of public health issues. An op-ed is a short opinion piece generally placed opposite the editorial page in your local newspaper.

- **Start early.**
- **Reach out.**
- **Follow the submission guidelines.**
- **Be persistent.**

Additional Resources



The PHACT Campaign website also includes useful materials for advocacy activities:

- Up-to-date listings of town hall meetings by state
- Links to HHS fact sheets and resources on the Prevention and Public Health Fund
- State by state public health fact sheets

Questions?



Email APHA staff at phact@apha.org
with any questions!