

# Call Your Legislator

## Why Calling Works

Calling members of Congress is the most effective way to have your voice heard. As with letters, legislative staff track the number of calls they receive on various topics. Just a couple phone calls over a short period of time can bring an issue to the attention of your legislator and raise his or her awareness of how strongly their constituents feel about a current issue. The sooner you reach out, the more likely it is that your voice will influence their position.

## Calling Tips

- **Choose your words wisely.** You'll be speaking to an aide. For them to tally your opinion correctly, you will need to clearly make your point.
- **Be respectful.** The staffers that answer the phone are not looking to challenge your opinion, and you should treat them with the same respect you expect from them, regardless of which party they work for.
- **Add your own words.** The provided script is useful, but you should make the phone call as personal as possible. Representatives and staffers want to hear your individual story and how the issue impacts you on a personal level.
- **Call congressional offices directly.** If you do not know the names of your members of Congress or want the direct line to their office, you can look up your members here: <http://whoismyrepresentative.com/>
- **Let them know that you are a constituent.** Be sure to say the city and state you are from. Elected officials are most interested in your opinions if you are their constituent.
- **Know your facts.** Have the basic information about your topic in front of you when you call. Use the fact sheet we have provided and do not hesitate to contact us with questions or to run through your talking points before your call. You should be able to specifically describe the topic you are calling about and what you think your legislator should do.
- **Note your expertise.** If you have professional experience with the issue you are calling about, be sure to mention it. This will establish your credibility on the issue and may even prompt the aide to ask you for some guidance on the issue.
- **Be brief.** Aides receive a high volume of phone calls every day, so keep your call short and to the point.
- **Be timely.** Timeliness is especially important when you are calling. If the vote on your issue is imminent, the aide is much more likely to pay attention to what you say.
- **Let us know how it went.** Be sure to let us know the results of your call. The more details you can provide us with the better. Please call us at 484-445-4282 and let us know how the call went.

## Sample Phone Call Script

Hello, my name is [insert your name] and I am your constituent from [insert city and state]. I am calling to ask [senator or representative's name] to support funding for the seven Hemophilia Treatment Centers in Pennsylvania. I am a patient at [Hemophilia Treatment Center]. The funding the Treatment Centers receive allow them to provide multi-disciplinary teams to provide state of the art care. This multi-disciplinary team of nurses, social workers, physical therapists, and doctors have helped me in the following ways [tell personal story and emphasize why treatment at a Hemophilia Treatment Center is important to you or your family].

The Specialty Care Programs funds have been distributed in previous years through a state procurement process known as a Sole Source request. This ensured that if the hemophilia line item was in the state budget, all 7 hemophilia treatment centers in Pennsylvania received state funding. This will end on June 30, 2020. In its place is a new grant process called Request for Applications (RFAs). The RFAs will use a regional approach, based the on the Pennsylvania HealthChoices five regions.

### Problems with this model:

- There are 7 federally supported hemophilia treatment centers (HTCs) but only 5 HealthyChoices regions, with 4 HTCs located in Philadelphia.
- While applicants may apply for multiple regions, having only one grant awarded per region is problematic when four world class HTCs are in one region (Philadelphia). As proposed, the four HTCs in Philadelphia will be pitted against each other competing for funding.
- When the Pennsylvania Hemophilia Foundation Chapters voiced this concern in a meeting with the Department of Health they were told they expect the Treatment Centers to team up to apply for funding. But this only creates more problems as who will be responsible for the administrative burden and how will the funding be divided between them?

This one-size fits all approach that the Department of Health is requiring for all specialty care programs clearly doesn't work for hemophilia and will only jeopardize our HTCs funding. Lost funding can result in staff positions being eliminated which will result in loss of comprehensive care.

It is important to note that 100% of the Hemophilia Program line item goes directly to patient care, mostly for non-billable nursing and social work services vital for patient care. It is critical to preserve the existing HTC model for the comprehensive and coordinated care for patients.

**Therefore, we are asking the General Assembly to keep the Hemophilia Program as a separate line item at the current fiscal year amount of \$959,000. In addition, we request that**

**the funding continue to be distributed, as in previous years, to all seven-state supported hemophilia treatment centers.**

**We urge you to notify your leadership, particularly the Appropriations Chairs, of this proposed change to the Specialty Care Program for hemophilia and request their support to keep the funding as is to all seven HTC.**

Thank you for your time and for considering my request for your support.