



amputee
coalition™

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

APRIL 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Welcome to Advocacy!
Section 1	What is Advocacy?
Section 2	About the Amputee Coalition
Section 3	What Does It Mean to be an Advocate?
Section 4	Advocacy 101
Section 5	Telling Your Story
Section 6	Making the Ask
Section 7	Year-Round Advocacy
Section 8	Guide: Write a Letter to the Editor
Section 9	Guide: Call Your Lawmaker
Section 10	Guide: Engage on Social Media
Glossary	

Welcome to Advocacy!

Dear Advocate,

Whether you're new to advocacy and want to get more involved or you're an Amputee Coalition Lead Advocate looking to sharpen your skills, this toolkit is for you.

Together, we'll learn about the Amputee Coalition's advocacy priorities, how you can use your personal to make a difference for millions of people living with limb loss or limb difference, and specific tools and resources you can use to be an effective advocate all year long.

The Amputee Coalition is the only national non-profit representing the limb loss and limb difference community in Washington, D.C. As the independent, unbiased, evidence-based voice of people living with limb loss and limb difference, we work to improve care through advocacy, education, support, and prevention.

We can't do it alone. Your voice matters. By telling your personal story, you can make a difference with your lawmakers. You can tell them how the National Limb Loss Resource Center's information and support services helped you when you needed them most and why it's so important to fund them. You can explain the challenges you face accessing the care you need and why we need new legislation, like the Triple A Study Act, to understand what works well so we can replicate it and what isn't working so we can fix it. You're the expert on living with limb loss or limb difference – and your representatives in government need to hear from you.

There are many ways to advocate. This toolkit will give you the information, tools, and exercises to be an effective advocate throughout the year so you can improve care for everyone living with limb loss and limb difference. We're thrilled you're joining us. Together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Richards". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Mary Richards
President and CEO
Amputee Coalition

I. What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is using your voice to improve care for the limb loss and limb difference community. By sharing your story, you can build a relationship with your lawmaker that can advance legislation, improve policies, and change law to help millions of people living with limb loss and limb difference.

Your story is powerful because you're the expert on living with limb loss and limb difference. You live the details every day. Who better, then, to explain the issues facing our community?

It's likely your lawmaker or their staff may not know much about the limb loss or limb difference community and the challenges you face. Your story brings those issues to life in a way a briefing memo never could. You give our community and our issues a face and name.

To represent you, your lawmakers need to hear from you. They ran for office to serve their constituents – like you. Your story matters to them. By telling your story, you can show them how they can help people living with limb loss and limb difference in their districts, their state, and across the country.

You're probably thinking, "But I'm just one voice!"

When we join our voices together as advocates, we can make big change happen. Every one of our Lead Advocates will tell you how rewarding it is to advocate together knowing you're making a difference for millions of people living with loss and limb difference.

II. About the Amputee Coalition

As an advocate, you represent the Amputee Coalition and the limb loss and limb difference community. In this section, we'll learn about the limb loss and limb difference community, the Amputee Coalition, the National Limb Loss Resource Center®, and our policy priorities.

Who Lives with Limb Loss and Limb Difference?

- More than 2.1 million Americans live with limb loss and limb difference.
- Another 28 million are at risk to lose a limb.
- An estimated 185,000 amputation surgeries occur each year – that's approximately 500 each day.
- Leading causes of limb loss are diabetes and vascular diseases (54%), trauma (44%), and cancer (~2%).
- People who experience limb loss are up to four times more likely to be Black than white, one and a half times more likely to be Latinx than white, and more likely to be lower income than higher income.

Who is the Amputee Coalition?

- The Amputee Coalition is the only national non-profit representing the limb loss and limb difference community in Washington, D.C.
- We are the independent, unbiased voice of the community.
- We work to improve care through education, support, advocacy, and prevention.
- We are non-partisan. We focus on policy, not politics. No matter who is in office, we work with them to improve care for the limb loss and limb difference community.

What is the National Limb Loss Resource Center?

- The Amputee Coalition runs the National Limb Loss Resource Center® (NLLRC) through a cooperative agreement with the Administration for Community Living (ACL) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).
- The NLLRC makes possible services and supports, including:
 - Certified Peer Visitor (CPV) Program
 - Support group national network
 - Information and referral services
 - Hospital partner network
 - Partnerships with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD)
 - ...and more!
- The NLLRC is funded every year through the Congressional appropriations process.

Our Policy Priorities

Fund the National Limb Loss Resource Center®

Have you ever had a peer visit? Joined a support group? Attended the Amputee Coalition's annual National Conference or a Limb Loss Education Day? Has your child spent a week at Youth Camp? Have you ever read one of our award-winning publications, like *First Step* or *Take a Seat, Check Your Feet*? Those resources are made possible by funding for the National Limb Loss Resource Center®.

The Amputee Coalition runs the National Limb Loss Resource Center® through a cooperative agreement with the Administration for Community Living (ACL) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Funding for the National Limb Loss Resource Center is decided every year through the Congressional appropriations process.

If you want to ensure that the Amputee Coalition can continue to provide the support services, informational materials, and events you've come to count on, we need to you to ask your Senators and Representative to support funding for the National Limb Loss Resource Center®!

Advance the Triple A Study Act

The Triple A Study Act will identify the best care practices for people living with limb loss and limb differences so they can be replicated across health systems to improve the health of our community.

The problem is that two-thirds of Americans who experience limb loss or limb difference never receive a prosthetic device. But there isn't good analysis to explain why. The analysis that does exist is difficult to compare across providers.

The Triple A Study Act solves that problem by directing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study barriers to care for assistive technologies and evaluate how those affect patient outcomes by comparing results across Medicare, the VA, and private insurers. It examines specific challenges, including the affordability of devices, how often people are denied coverage, and if patients can return to work.

The GAO is an independent, non-partisan federal agency that is well positioned to study and evaluate these important policy questions. Policymakers and others can use these credible findings to improve care for all Americans living with limb loss and limb difference.

Ask your Senators and Representative to support the Triple A Study Act!

EXERCISE: LET'S PRACTICE "PITCHING" THE AMPUTEE COALITION

Find someone with whom you can practice your talking points.

Incorporate answers to the following questions in your pitch:

- 1. Who is the Amputee Coalition?**
- 2. What is important to know about the limb loss community?**
- 3. What issues are the Amputee Coalition working on?**

III. What Does It Mean to be an Advocate?

You don't need to be a government relations professional to be an advocate. You just need to be able to tell your story. In this section, we'll learn about different ways you can get involved.

Advocates

You become an advocate just by taking action with the Amputee Coalition. That can be as simple as responding to an action alert sent by the Amputee Coalition or sending a letter or making a phone call to your Members of Congress letting them know why an issue is important to you. If you let your voice be heard by your lawmakers, you're an advocate.

Lead Advocates

If you want to get more involved, join our Lead Advocate program! Lead Advocates are advocacy volunteers who have gone through specific training about the issues facing the limb loss and limb difference community, our policy priorities, and skills to be effective advocates.

Lead Advocates build relationships with their Senators and Representative as well as their staffs. They build those connections in different ways, by writing emails, picking up the phone, or visiting them in person when possible. By reaching out regularly and being a reliable resource of useful information, Lead Advocates create connections and educate policymakers about what it is like to live with limb loss and limb difference.

Lead Advocates don't work alone. The Amputee Coalition wants to have a Lead Advocate for all 435 Congressional districts and 50 states across the country – but that's only a start! The more advocates and Lead Advocates we have working together in every state and district across the country, the more effective we'll be. Lead Advocates help connect and coordinate advocates in their districts and states to be as effective as possible.

Lead Advocates also reach out to others in their networks to take action with the Amputee Coalition. Do you have family, friends, or colleagues who have shared your journey with limb loss or limb difference? Do you know folks in your support group who could share their story? Or friends in other groups or organizations you belong to? Lead Advocates make sure to amplify the voices of those in their networks.

By advocating with us, you can make sure your voice gets heard – and help others get their voice heard, too!

EXERCISE: REMEMBER WHY YOU GOT INVOLVED

Take a few moments to remember why you are involved with the Amputee Coalition by thinking about these questions:

- **Do you live with limb loss or limb difference, or are you a friend or family member of someone living with limb loss or limb difference? If so, how has that experience influenced your work with the Amputee Coalition?**
- **Did someone recruit you to get involved? If so, what did that person do or say to convince you how much your work was needed?**
- **Do you have friends or family who could become passionate Amputee Coalition volunteers, but haven't been asked properly or by the right person?**
- **What events or activities offer great opportunities for people to get involved?**

Just like a personal story can be effective in motivating people on Capitol Hill, it can be effective in recruiting new volunteers and advocates. Discuss your answers with others to practice talking about *your* passion for the limb loss and limb difference community.

IV. Advocacy 101

Advocacy Basics

Advocacy is as simple as telling your story. Sharing your story puts a very real face on abstract issues or legislation. Hearing your story helps your lawmakers understand how their votes affect the lives of their constituents, like you, living with limb loss and limb difference.

To understand the crucial role you play, it can be helpful to understand how the legislative process works. In this section, we'll learn about how a bill becomes a law, how to think about engaging your lawmakers, and ways to be most effective when you do.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Let's refresh our memories on the basics of the legislative process. Familiarity with the process will help you engage your lawmakers and their staffs. The legislative process is the same whether you're engaging with your Members of Congress in Washington, DC, or your state legislators in your capitol at home. For this exercise, we'll use the example of Congress.

- First, a bill is introduced in one or both chambers of the legislature. Congress has two chambers, the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- Next, it is assigned to the relevant committee or committees who oversee issues the legislation addresses.
- Then, the bill is referred to specific subcommittees which have expertise in that issue. In our case, that is often a subcommittee focused on health issues.
- From there, the subcommittee decides whether to approve, amend, defeat, or table the legislation.
- Next, the bill goes through the same process before the full committee.
- After that, if the bill moves forward, either amended or in its original form, the legislation is considered by the full chamber.
- Then, if both chambers – the House and Senate – approve the legislation, it goes to a conference committee, made up of Members from both the House and Senate, who work out and differences between the two pieces of legislation.

- After that, this final bill goes back to each chamber for a final vote.
- From there, if both chambers approve the final bill, it goes to President (or Governor at the state level) to sign or veto.
- Then, if signed, the bill becomes law. If vetoed, it goes back to Congress, who has the opportunity to override the veto by a vote of two-thirds of the chamber.

When you're engaging your lawmaker, it helps to know where they are in the legislative process. Is this a brand new piece of legislation? Is it being considered by a committee they sit on? Does the bill need cosponsors to move forward? Knowing how the legislative process works help you make your ask more precise and effective.

Engaging Your Lawmakers

Advocating to your lawmakers is about persuading them to take action. To persuade them, it helps to know their position on the issues. Remember, limb loss isn't partisan. We engage our lawmakers on policy, not politics. Here are a few things to consider as you prepare for your conversation with your lawmaker.

What is their background?

- Do they have a personal connection to limb loss or limb difference community?
- Have they engaged with our issues in the past, maybe by cosponsoring a piece of legislation?
- What committees do they serve on? Do they oversee our issues?
- Do you have a personal connection with them?

Where do they stand on the issues?

- **Champion:** Are they an active champion of this legislation, know a lot about our issues, and are a leader for the limb loss and limb difference community?
- **Supporter:** Have they supported these issues in the past by cosponsoring legislation and would appreciate hearing about opportunities to help now?

- **Undecided:** Are they undecided about an issue or piece of legislation, maybe because they need to learn more?
- **Skeptical:** Do they have questions or concerns about an issue or specific piece of legislation you can answer?
- **Opponent:** Do they vocally oppose your issue or legislation?

Knowing where your lawmaker stands on our issues helps you respectful, engaging, and effective.

Building a Relationship

Effective advocacy is about building a relationship with your lawmaker and their staff. It is about continuous engagement to create a connection throughout the year. Here are a few tips for effective engagement.

- **Reach out when you have something to say.** Is there a specific piece of legislation you'd like them to support? Or an issue coming before their committee soon?
- **Let them know you're a constituent.** Your elected officials are there to serve their constituents, like you.
- **Don't overdo it.** Make sure you provide them with value when you connect. Remember that Congressional offices are busy. They are working on lots of issues at any given time.
- **Always be positive, courteous, and as helpful as possible.** The more they enjoy working with you, the more likely you will be able to accomplish your goals. As the old saying goes, "You catch more flies with honey..."
- **Put a human face on the issue.** Share your story. Explain how this issue or legislation affects real people, like their constituents living with limb loss or limb difference.
- **Say thank you.** Always be sure to thank your lawmaker and their staff when you connect with them, especially when they take action on your issues. If you can thank them publicly for a job well done in an op-ed or letter to the editor of your local newspaper, even better. Your elected officials will appreciate and remember it.

EXERCISE: ENGAGING YOUR LAWMAKER

Take a few moments think about engaging your lawmaker. Ask yourself these questions:

- **Does your lawmaker have a personal connection to the limb loss or limb difference community?**
- **Do they sit on a committee or subcommittee that oversees our issues?**
- **Have they engaged with our issues or legislation in the past?**
- **Do you have a personal connection to your lawmaker? Are you a constituent?**

The answers to these questions can help you understand how best to engage your lawmaker and staff when you contact them.

V. Telling Your Story

Why do we talk so much about telling your story? Because people are persuaded by data, but they remember stories. When your lawmaker and their staff hear about a limb loss or limb difference issue, you want them to think of you and remember your story. In this section we'll learn more about how to tell your story.

Your Story Brings an Issue to Life

Remember the old saying, "Show, don't tell?" You can tell them why an issue or piece of legislation is important, but your story *shows* them why it's important. Your story provides the context for why you're contacting them. For example, if you reach out asking your lawmaker to support a specific piece of legislation, your story gives that piece of legislation a name, face, and shows how it affects real people, like you, their constituent. That's especially important if your lawmaker is new to the issue.

Preparing Your Story

Here are a few helpful tips to consider when you're preparing to tell your story.

- **Who is your audience?** That is always the first place to start. You might tell your story differently depending on who you're talking to, like which words or examples you choose, even if all the parts of your story are the same. Think about what your lawmaker or their staff need to know and what is the right language or examples to use to convey it.
- **Know your message or ask.** Knowing what you want to convey helps you figure out what parts of your story are most valuable. Focus on those. Your story should support your message or ask, not distract from it.
- **Find the right example in your story to illustrate your message or ask.** Can you tell them about a specific moment when this issue was most relevant to you? (Remember, show, don't tell!)
- **Make your story personal – stories are about feelings.** Giving specific examples of why this important to your life helps your audience feel why this issue is so important to you.
- **Support your story with facts.** Facts and data show why your story is just one of many, and why a piece of legislation is needed to help all of you. Facts and data show lawmakers how they can solve a problem. As we said earlier, people remember stories, but they're convinced by facts and data.
- **Keep it simple.** You could share lots of facts and figures or lots of details from your story. Remember to keep simple, memorable, and engaging.

Practicing Your Story

It can be helpful to practice telling your story in different ways.

- **Write it out.** Writing something down can be a great way to sort out the details of your thinking. You might notice a place that you could shorten or another where you want to add more personal details.
- **Practice with someone else.** Sometimes we know the details of our story so well we forget to practice it. By practicing your story with someone else, you will become more comfortable telling your story. You also may get some helpful feedback about how to tell it even better.

EXERCISE: PRACTICE TELLING YOUR STORY

On paper or with someone else, practice telling your story. As you tell your story, think about these questions:

- **Who is your audience? What do they need to know?**
- **What is your message or ask?**
- **What example from your life best illustrates this issue?**
- **What are specific examples to help your audience connect to your story?**
- **What facts can support your story?**

VI. Making the Ask

Now that you know how to tell your story, how do you connect it to your ask? In this section, you'll learn the "Hook, Line, and Sinker" method of framing your ask to get the best results.

Hook, Line, and Sinker

Hook, Line, and Sinker is a simple strategy to help you make an ask. It uses three simple steps to help you cover the most important points to make a strong ask. How does it work?

1. Hook

Your hook is your introduction. Briefly introduce yourself (and have others introduce themselves if you're going as a group) to start the conversation. It can be helpful to share if you're a constituent, what organization you're with, the community you represent, and what you plan to talk to them about today.

2. Line

This is where you share your story and facts you practiced earlier. Your story helps your lawmaker or their staff make a personal connection with the issue or legislation, and it helps them understand why it's important to you and the limb loss and limb difference community.

3. Sinker

This where you bring it home. Make a clear ask from them. Will they support this issue or piece of legislation? Listen carefully to what they say. Even if they need some time to consider your request and get back to you, they may share insights into their thinking. No matter the answer, remember to be gracious and thank them for their time.

After Your Meeting

You had a great meeting. Now what? You're not done yet!

- **Be sure to follow-up after your meeting.** A simple Thank You note expressing your appreciation for your lawmaker's or staff member's time and their consideration of your ask can go a long way.
- **Use the Amputee Coalition's online Report Back form** on our website (www.amputee-coalition.org/ReportBack). Whenever you're in contact with your lawmaker's office, be sure to tell us. Let us know if you reached out to them and

what you discussed in your meeting, said on the phone, or wrote back in a letter or email. That helps us track real time progress toward our goals.

Hook, Line, and Sinker can be used in many advocacy situations, including:

- Meetings with your lawmakers and their staff
- Phone calls, email, and letters to your lawmakers
- Giving interviews or writing a letter to the editor
- Speaking to a group or testifying at a committee hearing
- Recruiting volunteers!

EXERCISE: PRACTICE HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

Just like you practiced telling your story, now let's practice adding in the Hook, Line, and Sinker.

- **First, practice introducing yourself, who you represent, and why you're here today.**
- **Next, share your story about why this issue is important to you.**
- **Finally, make your ask and listen to the response.**
- **Remember, whether you're new to advocacy or have done this countless times before, practice makes perfect!**

VII. Year-Round Advocacy

Advocating for the Amputee Coalition is fun and easy to do. You don't have to wait for an action alert to be engaged. We have activities year-round, and you can make a difference for the entire limb loss and limb difference community. In this section, we'll learn the different ways you can engage throughout the year.

- **Call your lawmaker's office.** A simple phone call is an effective way to let your lawmaker know about an issue that is important to you. Congressional offices track the number of calls they receive on every issue. Calling your Senators' and Representative's offices is a great way to be sure you get heard. You may even be able to get connected directly with the staff member who handles limb loss and limb difference issues, and you can get their contact information to follow up with them directly.
- **Write a letter to the editor.** Letters to the editor are a simple and effective way to publicly thank your lawmaker or ask them to support an issue or bill. You don't have to get published in *The New York Times* to get noticed. Your Congressional office tracks all the hometown newspapers, so your letter to the editor will get noticed. We have a helpful guide for writing an effective letter to the editor at the end of this toolkit.
- **Engage on social media.** Your lawmaker is on social media and they track it closely. Have they supported an issue you care about or sponsored a piece of legislation for the limb loss and limb difference community? You can thank them by tagging them in a post on social media. We have a helpful guide for engaging on social media at the end of this toolkit.
- **Attend a town hall meeting.** Your lawmaker hosts events at home to hear directly from their constituents. They also host "tele-townhalls" by phone or virtually. These are a great chance to speak with your Member of Congress, tell them your story, and ask for their support.
- **Build relationships with staff.** As we've mentioned, building a relationship is more than just a once-a-year meeting. Build a relationship by staying in touch when there is something relevant to share and being helpful. If you're good to work with, they will want to keep working with you.

- **Connect with other advocates.** You can recruit other advocates in your area. Tell them about how they can get involved in advocacy and why their voice matters. You also can connect with other advocates across the country – which is easier than ever these days with so many video chat options and with Amputee Coalition advocacy calls. Share with them what you’re up to, hear what they’re doing, and learn from each other’s experience. They may have had success with the issues you’re working on now. You may pick up an interesting idea or two!

EXERCISE: YEAR-ROUND ADVOCACY

Pull out your calendar. Are there opportunities this year for you to engage your lawmakers?

- **See if your Senators or Representative are hosting a townhall in your area or a virtual or tele-townhall that you can. Add it to your calendar.**
- **Check when your lawmaker may be home during a Congressional recess. See if you can schedule a meeting at their office for that time.**
- **Write yourself a reminder to follow-up with the Congressional staffers you know.**
- **Schedule yourself different ways to engage. For example, are there any events coming up this year when you could time a good letter to the editor?**
- **Be sure to add the Amputee Coalition’s advocacy calls to your calendar!**

VIII. Guide: Write a Letter to the Editor

This short guide has information about why Letters to the Editor (LTEs) are important, some tips for drafting your letter, key facts you might include, and templates you can use. Remember, you can use your Hook, Line, and Sinker training to make an effective ask.

Letters to the Editor are Important!

Your Members of Congress and their staff read the newspapers from their state or district. Writing a letter to the editor – and mentioning your Member of Congress in it – helps bring attention to issues they need to know about. Your voice is a powerful tool, and we're here to help you use it. We'll use the Triple A Study Act as an example of how to craft an effective Letter to the Editor, which you can use as a template to write about any advocacy issue.

Using the guidelines and suggestions below, please write your Letter to the Editor about why the Triple A Study Act is so important to the limb loss and limb difference community. Before submitting your letter to the editor to your local paper, please share it with Dustin Perchal (dustin@amputee-coalition.org), who can help you make sure it is as effective as possible and most likely to get published. If you're having trouble finding the right email address, contact information, or online submission form for your local paper, please let Dustin know and he can help you.

Also, please remember to share the good news with us when your letter is published! We love to see your work in print and we'll want to celebrate it and share it on our social media channels and in our newsletter.

Tips for Drafting Letters to the Editor:

- **Keep it short:** Newspapers typically require letters to the editor to be no more than 200 words long, so be sure to check with your newspaper about their limit. You can find that information on the opinion page in print or on their website, or by calling the newspaper's main telephone number.
- **Be you:** You bring to the discussion what no one else can: your personal story. Through your personal story, you can explain how this legislation helps people like you and why it is so important for your lawmaker to support it.

- **Get local:** Remember to localize your letter as best you can. Editors are looking to show how bigger issues affect your local area. Consider sharing the number of people in your state affected by limb loss or limb difference each year, or other local statistics.
- **Keep it simple:** The person reading your letter may have never heard of this issue before, so write your letter as if you're explaining it to your neighbor for the first time. Avoid acronyms or jargon that readers won't understand. For example, you don't need to use bill numbers in your letter. Bill numbers are important for lawmakers, but not to the average newspaper reader.
- **Pick one or two key facts:** Please stick to one or two key facts. Because we're so passionate about these issues, we have a lot of information to share. But, if you give too many statistics or facts, they won't stick with your reader. Pick one or two you think are the most powerful to make your case.
- **Ask for what you want:** Remember to let readers know what you're asking your lawmaker to support and why. And encourage them to reach out, too!
- **Submit once:** Don't submit the same letter to multiple newspapers in the same city or town. Editors don't like to see something from their paper printed in a competing paper and it may hurt your chances of getting published now and in the future.

Key Facts to Include in a Letter to the Editor (remember, pick only one or two!)

- The Triple A Study Act will identify the best care practices for people living with limb loss and limb difference so they can be replicated to improve the health of our community.
- The Triple A Study Act is the first legislation in seven years to be introduced in Congress for the limb loss and limb difference community, and it has bipartisan support.
- Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) introduced the Triple A Study Act in the Senate.

- Representative G.K. Butterfield (D-NC-01) and Representative Brett Guthrie (R-KY-02) introduced an identical Triple A Study Act in the House of Representatives.
- The Triple A Study Act addresses an important problem: two-thirds of people with limb loss or limb difference never receive a prosthetic device, and there is little analysis to explain how those decisions are made or if people are getting the care they need.
- The Triple A Study Act solves that by identifying the best ways to improve patient outcomes.
- It will study specific challenges, including the affordability of devices, how often people are denied coverage, and if patients can return to work.
- It is important to pass this bill before the end of the year so our country can begin to provide the best care for people living with limb loss and limb difference.

Template Letters to the Editor

TEMPLATE: Ask Your Senators and Representative to Co-Sponsor the Bill

Having an Arm or Leg Should Not be a Luxury

Over 2 million Americans live with limb loss or limb difference, but two-thirds won't receive a prosthetic device. There is not much information to explain why or if people are getting access to the care they need. That's why I'm urging [SEN/REP NAME] to cosponsor the Triple A Study Act.

The Triple A Study Act solves this problem by identifying the best care practices for people with living with limb loss and limb difference so they can be replicated to improve the health of our community. It studies specific challenges, including how often people are denied coverage for devices and outcomes like whether patients can return to work. Medicare, the VA system, and private insurers will all benefit from this information.

[As a member of the limb loss and limb difference community, my experience obtaining a prosthetic device was (fill in the blank) and I want other people living with limb loss to have the same opportunity so they can live the life they want to live.]

The Triple A Study Act is important because it will improve the health of millions of people living with limb loss or limb difference.

[NAME]

Volunteer, Amputee Coalition

[HOMETOWN, STATE]

TEMPLATE: Thank Your Representative or Senators for Co-sponsoring the Bill

Thank You, [Sen/Rep NAME], for being a true champion for our community!

Over 2 million Americans live with limb loss or limb difference, but two-thirds won't receive a prosthetic device. There is not much information to explain why or if people are getting access to the care they need. That is why I am very grateful [SEN/REP NAME] [cosponsored/introduced] the Triple A study Act.

The Triple A Study Act solves this problem by identifying the best care practices for people with living with limb loss and limb difference so they can be replicated to improve the health of our community. It studies specific challenges, including how often people are denied coverage for devices and outcomes like whether patients can return to work. Medicare, the VA system, and private insurers will all benefit from this information.

[As a member of the limb loss and limb difference community, my experience obtaining a prosthetic device was (fill in the blank) and I want other people living with limb loss to have the same opportunity so they can live the life they want to live.]

The Triple A Study Act is important because it will improve the health of millions of people living with limb loss or limb difference.

[NAME]

Volunteer, Amputee Coalition

[HOMETOWN, STATE]

IX. Guide: Call Your Lawmaker

A simple phone call is an effective way to let your lawmaker know about an issue that is important to you. Congressional offices track the number of calls they receive on every issue. Calling your Senators' and Representative's office is a great way to be sure you get heard. You may even be able to get connected directly with the staff member who handles limb loss and limb difference issues, and you can get their contact information to follow up with them directly.

You can find your lawmaker's phone number on their official government website or through our online "Find My Lawmaker" tool at:
<http://www.amputee-coalition.org/FindMyLawmaker>.

Remember your training from Hook, Line, and Sinker:

- Introduce yourself.
- Tell them who you are and why you're calling.
- Mention that you're a constituent.
- Share with them a little about your story and why this issue or legislation is important to you.
- Make a clear ask.
- Be sure to thank them!

Below is a template call script about the Triple A Study Act you can customize or use as an example for other issues...

TEMPLATE: Call Script

- Hello! My name is XXXXXX and I'm calling from [INSERT THE NAME OF YOUR HOMETOWN.]
- I'm calling today to urge the Senator/Representative to cosponsor S. ####/H.R. ####, the Triple A Study Act.
- Over 2 million Americans live with limb loss or limb difference, but two-thirds won't receive a prosthetic device. There is not much information to explain why or if people are getting access to the care they need. The Triple A Study Act solves this problem by identifying the best care practices for people living with limb loss and limb difference so they can be replicated to improve the health of our community.
- As a member of the limb loss and limb difference community, my experience obtaining a prosthetic device was (XXXXXXX) and I want other people living with limb loss to have the same opportunity so they can live the life they want to live.
- Can I count on the Senator/Representative to cosponsor S. ###/H.R.####, the Triple A Study Act?
- Thank you!

Once you have made your calls, please let us know by using our online Report Back form (www.amputee-coalition.org/ReportBack) to let us know you contacted, when, and share what response you received.

X. Guide: Engage on Social Media

Social media can be an effective advocacy tool. Your lawmakers are active on sites like Facebook and Twitter, and they track engagement closely. Have they supported an issue you care about or sponsored a piece of legislation for the limb loss and limb difference community? You can thank them by tagging them in a post on social media.

Each platform has different strengths. Facebook can be better for sharing longer posts or joining live online events. Twitter is only 280 characters, so it can be better for sharing real time photos or joining a hashtag. Either way, be sure to tag your Member of Congress' official account when you do. You also can 'Like' and share posts from the Amputee Coalition's official accounts:

- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/AmputeeCoalition
- **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/AmputeesUSA

Here are some examples of posts from the Amputee Coalition:



Amputee Coalition @AmputeesUSA · Oct 15, 2020

Thank you, @GKButterfield for your leadership on this issue. Our community is so thankful, and we look forward to passage of this bill!



G. K. Butterfield @GKButterfield · Oct 13, 2020

"The loss of a limb can be a devastating and drastic life-changing occurrence and individuals with limb loss need and deserve access to quality care."

-Butterfield Introduces Bipartisan Bill to Require Study on Coverage for Amputee Services | butterfield.house.gov/media-center/p...



Amputee Coalition @AmputeesUSA · Oct 15, 2020

Thank you, @RepGuthrie, for your leadership on this issue. Our community is so thankful, and we look forward to passage of this bill!



Rep. Brett Guthrie @RepGuthrie · Oct 14, 2020

Millions of Americans are currently living with limb loss, and over 2,000 amputations are performed in Kentucky every year. I introduced the Triple A Study Act with Congressman @GKButterfield to better care for amputees: guthrie.house.gov/news/documents...



7



Glossary of Advocacy Terms

Act: Legislation that has passed both chambers of Congress in identical form and been signed into law by the president. This term also can refer to a bill that has been passed by one chamber of Congress (the House or the Senate) and will be sent to the other chamber for a vote.

Administration for Community Living: A federal organization within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that maximizes the independence, well-being, and health of older adults, people with disabilities across the lifespan, and their families and caregivers.

Appropriation: Legislation that provides funds for an authorized agency, program, or activity. The formal federal spending process consists of two steps: authorization and then appropriation.

Authorization: Legislation to create or continue an agency, program, or activity. The formal federal spending process consists of two steps: authorization and then appropriation.

Bill: A legislative proposal before Congress. A bill is labeled “H.R.” if it originates in the House of Representatives and “S.” if it originates in the Senate.

Budget Resolution: A document passed by both chambers of Congress that sets overall spending limits but does not decide funding for specific programs. It does not have the force of law; it acts as a blueprint for the appropriations process.

Caucus: An informal organization of members from the House and Senate (or both) with the purpose of focusing on an issue of mutual concern.

CBO: The Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan arm of Congress that provides economic analyses of legislation and programs covered by the federal budget.

CDC: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a federal agency that conducts and supports health promotion, prevention, and preparedness activities with the goal of improving overall public health.

Chairman and Ranking Member: The leaders of the majority and minority party, respectively, in committees and subcommittees.

Committee: Committees organize the work of Congress. Laws and federal funding decisions begin their lives in committees, and committees hold hearings at which they invite experts and others to testify about the issues or legislation a committee oversees or is considering. After each congressional election, political parties assign newly elected representatives and senators to committees.

Congress: Consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Congress has 535 voting members: 100 in the Senate and 435 in the House.

Continuing Resolution: Legislation that permits federal agencies to continue operating at existing funding levels if their funding bill has not been adopted by the start of the fiscal year (October 1).

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): A cabinet agency in the federal government that is charged with enhancing and protecting the health and well-being of all Americans.

Discretionary Spending: Also known as appropriated spending; must be renewed each year in order for programs to continue operating. It includes medical research, health care programs, defense, and education, among others.

FDA: The Food and Drug Administration, a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The FDA protects and promotes health through the approval and regulation of medications, medical devices, and other therapies.

Filibuster: A process only in the Senate that allows senators to stall movement on legislation or nominations.

FY: Fiscal year, the accounting period for the federal government, which runs October 1 through September 30.

House of Representatives: The lower chamber of Congress, which, combined with the Senate, makes up the legislative branch of the United States. There are 435 representatives in the House.

LC, LA, LD: Legislative Correspondent, Legislative Assistant, Legislative Director; these are staff positions in congressional offices in ascending order of seniority.

Legislation: Laws or bills that have been enacted or are still in the process of being developed or enacted. Legislation can regulate, authorize, outlaw, provide funds for, sanction, grant, declare, or restrict.

Majority Leader: The head of the majority party in the Senate or House of Representatives. The majority party is the political party that has the most members in each of the legislative bodies.

Mandatory Spending: This type of spending pays for programs established by law that Congress is required to fund each year. It includes Social Security and Medicare, which are classified as “entitlement” programs because people meeting relevant eligibility requirements are legally entitled to them. Mandatory spending is not part of the annual appropriations process.

Medicaid: A health care program that assists low-income families or individuals in paying for long-term medical and custodial care costs. Medicaid is funded primarily by the federal government and run at the state level, where coverage may vary depending on per capita income and other criteria.

Medicare: The federal health insurance program for people 65 and older, certain younger people with disabilities, and people with end-stage kidney disease.

- **Part A** (federal) covers inpatient hospital stays, skilled nursing facility stays, part of home health services, and hospice care.
- **Part B** (federal) covers physician visits and lab services, allied services, preventive services, durable medical equipment, and drugs administered by providers.
- **Part D** (commercial) covers both brand-name and generic prescription drugs.
- **Medicare Advantage** (sometimes referred to as Medicare Part C) is a program through which individuals can enroll in a private health plan and receive all Medicare Part A/B-covered benefits.
- **Medicare supplement** (Medigap) is insurance sold by private companies that can help pay for health care costs not covered by Medicare Part A/B.

Minority Leader: The head of the minority party in the Senate or House of Representatives. The minority party is the political party that has fewer members than the majority party in each of the legislative bodies.

NIH: National Institutes of Health, a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). NIH is America’s medical research agency and the largest funder of biomedical research in the world. It is composed of 27 institutes and centers focused on different biomedical disciplines that research new treatments and cures.

Omnibus Bill: Combined package of appropriation bills that leadership in both chambers negotiate in order to pass as a single bill rather than many separate bills.

President's Budget: The document sent by the president to Congress each year, estimating government revenue and expenditures for each federal department the coming fiscal year. While the proposal makes budget recommendations, it does not automatically become law. It is the job of Congress to create the final federal budget and appropriations each year.

Senate: The upper chamber of Congress that comprises the legislative branch of the United States. There are 100 Senators, two from each state. The presiding officer of the Senate is the vice president.

Speaker of the House: The presiding officer over the House of Representatives. The Speaker is elected by members of the House of Representatives at the beginning of each new Congress (every two years).

Subcommittee: A subdivision of a congressional committee that considers specific matters and reports back to the full committee with recommendations.

Veto: The power of the president to block legislation passed by Congress. A veto can be overridden with a two-thirds majority vote in both houses of Congress.



**amputee
coalition™**

**Amputee Coalition
601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 600, South Building
Washington, DC 20004**

**advocacy@amputee-coalition.org
888.267.5669
amputee-coalition.org**