

From **AWARENESS** to **ACTION**

A Guide to Women's Health Advocacy

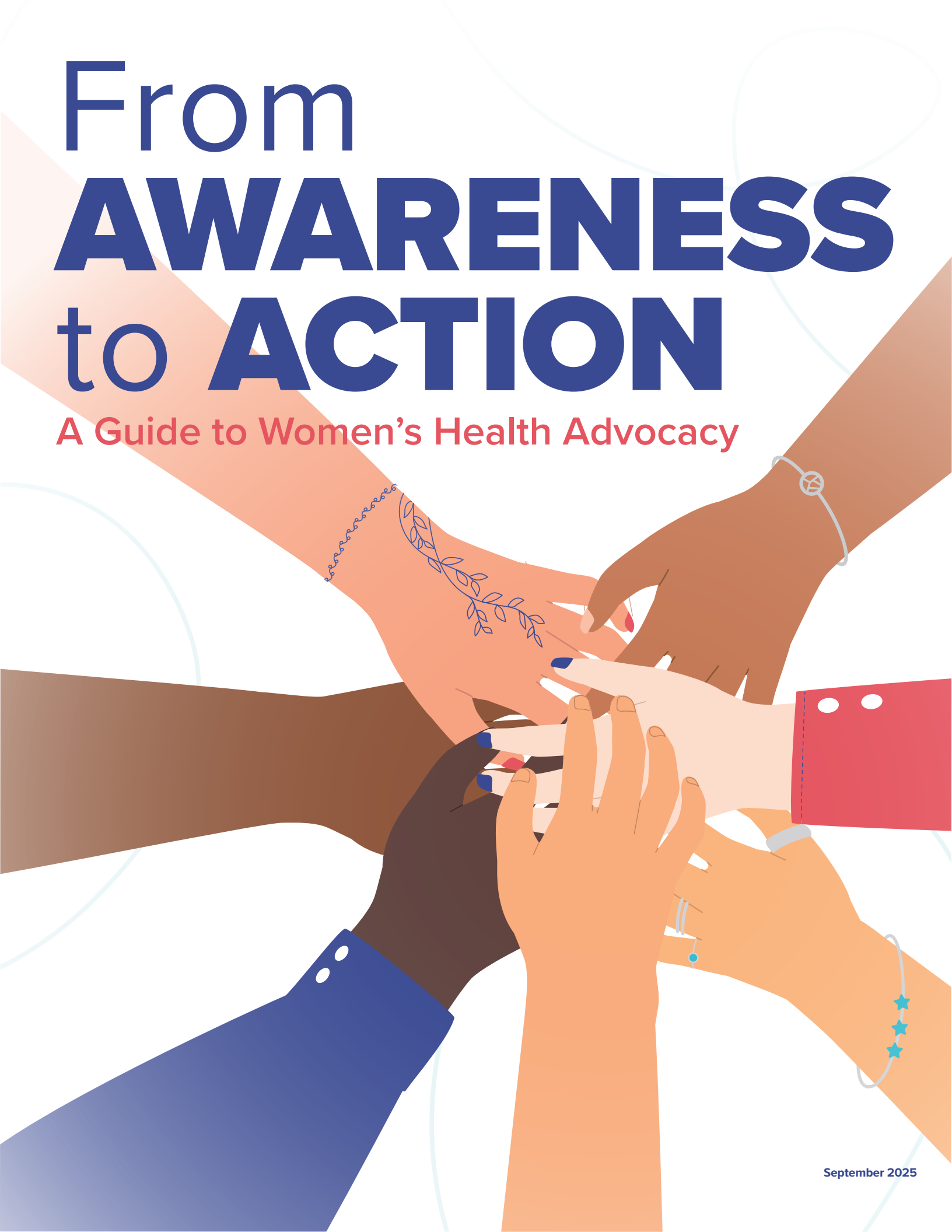


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About Society for Women's Health Research

As a national thought leader dedicated to advancing women's health and promoting research on sex differences to optimize women's health, the Society for Women's Health Research (SWHR) plays a critical role in identifying clinical and research gaps; raising awareness of diseases, conditions, and life stages that differently, disproportionately, or exclusively affect women; and promoting policies that could positively shape health outcomes for women. Over its more than 30-year history, SWHR has been advancing women's health through its core functions of science, policy, and education.

Mission

Advance women's health through science, policy, and education while promoting research on sex differences to optimize women's health.

Vision

Make women's health mainstream.

About this Guide

This guide is designed to empower advocates — whether you're just getting started or already deeply engaged — with the tools, strategies, and information needed to effectively champion women's health.

While the primary focus is on advocacy at the federal level, much of the guidance included here is equally relevant and applicable to efforts at the local and state level. No matter where or how you're advocating, you'll find valuable insights and actionable advice to support your work.

Inside, you'll discover:

- ▶ A comprehensive overview of the many ways to advocate, from grassroots outreach to engaging with policymakers
- ▶ Practical tips on how to connect with your Member of Congress and make your message heard
- ▶ Ready-to-use talking points, compelling statistics, and messaging strategies to strengthen your case
- ▶ An appendix with customizable templates, sample emails, and other resources to streamline and support your advocacy efforts

Whether you're visiting Capitol Hill, speaking at a community event, or writing a letter to the editor, this guide is your go-to resource for advocating effectively for women's health.

Advocacy 101

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is the act of **speaking out**, **taking action**, or **organizing** to promote or protest an issue that affects individuals, communities, or society at large. It may involve raising awareness, educating lawmakers on a certain issue, or pushing for change, whether at the local, state, or national level. At its core, advocacy ensures that different voices can be heard. It's how people bring attention to their lived experiences and demand the changes they need to thrive.

Advocacy can take many forms. It might look like marching in the streets, calling or writing to your elected officials, testifying at a public hearing, organizing a community event, or using social media to amplify an issue. Often, effective advocacy involves a combination of these strategies and more.

Advocacy is not new. It's been a part of human society for as long as people have gathered to share concerns, build community, and challenge injustice. In the United States, the right to advocate is protected by the [First Amendment of the Constitution](#), which guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of the press, peaceful assembly, and the right to petition the government for change. These are not just rights — they are tools for action!

Advocacy is one of the most powerful tools we have to shape a more just and equitable world. When it comes to women's health, advocacy has been critical in areas like improving the inclusion of women in clinical trial research and expanding access to health care. Without advocacy, many of the rights and services we rely on today would not exist.

Why is advocacy important?

Change doesn't happen on its own. Advocacy moves new policies forward, proposes changes to improve federal programs and systems, and brings communities together to demand better. Advocacy ensures policymakers know how local, state, and national programs are working—or not working—for the people they were elected to serve; in other words, it informs policy.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."



Advocacy v. Lobbying

Lobbying often carries negative connotations but at its core, it's simply one form of advocacy. While all lobbying is advocacy, not all advocacy is lobbying.

What exactly is lobbying?

Lobbying is a specific type of advocacy that involves attempting to influence legislation. It typically means engaging directly with lawmakers or their staff to support or oppose specific bills, policies, or regulations. In its simplest terms, lobbying involves asking a lawmaker to vote “yes” or “no” on a piece of legislation, but it can also mean asking a lawmaker to fund a certain program or provide a certain amount of funding to an agency.

While anyone can lobby, there are people who advocate professionally. These individuals are called lobbyists. According to the [U.S. Senate](#), a lobbyist is defined as:

“Any individual who is employed or retained by a client for financial or other compensation for services that include more than one lobbying contact, other than an individual whose lobbying activities constitute less than 20 percent of the time engaged in the services provided by such individual to that client over a 3-month period.”

In short:

- ▶ Lobbying is focused on legislative change.
- ▶ Lobbyists who meet certain criteria must register and report on their activities.
- ▶ Professional lobbying is a regulated process to ensure transparency in policymaking.

What about nonprofits — can they lobby?

[Yes, but with limits.](#) Nonprofit organizations registered under 501(c)(3) status can engage in lobbying activities, but only to a limited extent. If a nonprofit does too much lobbying, it risks losing its tax-exempt status.

This limit is generally measured by what's called the “substantial part test,” which evaluates how much of the organization's overall activity is devoted to lobbying. Some nonprofits choose to take the 501(h) election, which provides clear financial thresholds for how much lobbying is permitted based on the size of the organization.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Lobbying is just one tool in the advocacy toolbox. While it's more formal and regulated, it can play a crucial role in advancing legislation and ensuring that communities and causes have a voice in the policymaking process.



Advocacy as a Tool for Shaping Policy

Advocacy is a powerful and essential part of the policy-making process. It allows individuals, communities, and organizations to influence decisions that affect their lives, and it has been central to shaping legislation, regulations, and public priorities throughout U.S. history.

In fact, advocacy is embedded in formal government processes. For example, the federal government is required to offer public comment periods on certain proposed rules and regulations, giving the public a direct opportunity to weigh in. Another example is congressional hearings, where advocates can provide testimony to inform legislative decisions.

Advocates have played a crucial role in shaping outcomes across all three branches of the federal government:

- ▶ In Congress, advocacy campaigns can influence which bills are introduced, amended, or passed
- ▶ In the executive branch, public pressure can shape agency priorities and regulations
- ▶ In the judicial branch, legal advocacy can impact landmark court decisions and interpretations of constitutional rights

From grassroots movements to formal lobbying efforts, advocacy continues to be one of the most effective ways to drive change and hold institutions accountable.

Ways to Advocate

Advocacy can take many forms, and the approach you choose will often depend on the issue at hand, as well as the time, capacity, and resources available to you. Some strategies may have a greater impact than others, depending on the context and goals of your advocacy.

- ▶ Contacting Media Outlets
- ▶ Donating
- ▶ Engaging in Protests and Demonstrations
- ▶ Organizing a Petition/Signing onto Petitions for Specific Causes
- ▶ Participating in Advocacy Days
- ▶ Participating in Town Hall Meetings
- ▶ Public Speaking or Hosting Events
- ▶ Social Media Campaigns
- ▶ Supporting Boycotts
- ▶ Volunteering
- ▶ Voting in Local, State, and National Elections
- ▶ Writing Opinion Pieces, Letters to the Editor, or Blog Posts
- ▶ Writing to or Calling Elected Officials

BREAKING THE SILENCE ON MENOPAUSE: FROM TABOO TO BIPARTISAN ACTION

For years, menopause was a whisper in the back of the room — an experience shared by millions, yet rarely spoken of in the halls of power. That changed in the 118th Congress, when advocates and lawmakers from both sides of the aisle united to spotlight this long-overlooked phase of women's health. Thanks to tireless advocacy, menopause finally gained legislative attention, with new bills introduced — like the Advancing Menopause Care and Mid-Life Women's Health Act and the Servicewomen and Veterans Menopause Research Act — to provide improved research, education, and support for women undergoing the menopause transition. It proved that even historically stigmatized topics can spark bipartisan momentum when real stories meet real advocacy.



Getting Started: Plan with Purpose

Before you can effectively advocate for an issue, it's essential to have a solid plan, a clear goal, and a strategy for how to get there. Successful advocacy doesn't happen by accident — it's guided by intention.

[Appendix 1](#) includes a fill-in-the-blank planning tool to help you map out your advocacy efforts step by step. You'll find an example below to guide you as you create your own plan.

STEP 1: Establish a Goal

What is the issue you care about?	Maternal health
What specific change do you want to see?	Greater investments in maternal health research and support through federal programs
Does this goal have a deadline?	I'd like to see greater investments as part of fiscal year 2027 federal appropriations

STEP 2: Identify the Best Path to Achieve That Goal

What strategies or tactics are most likely to lead to change (e.g., public education, legislative lobbying, coalition-building)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public education around maternal health disparities, maternal mortality and morbidity rates, and how access to maternal health care impacts outcomes for mothers, babies, and families will be key for getting our message across for policymakersAn economic argument in favor of investing in maternal health will also help make our caseCoalition building with partners, advocates, and organizations working in the space is necessary for a unified message
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STEP 3: Define Your Target Audience

Who has the power to make the change you're seeking (e.g., lawmakers, agency officials, community leaders)?	Bipartisan engagement with lawmakers will be necessary. Congressional oversight of maternal health program funding primarily falls to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, particularly their Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittees, which fund agencies like the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health. Additionally, the House Energy and Commerce; House Ways and Means; Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; and Senate Finance Committees oversee related public health policy and entitlement programs like Medicaid.
Who needs to be persuaded?	Congressmembers and their staff! Especially those with health and appropriations appointments.

STEP 4: Map the Stakeholders

Who is already involved? What perspectives are currently represented?	Major maternal health organizations and industry stakeholders
Who is missing from the conversation?	We need more diverse storytelling in this space and the perspectives of those with lived experience
Who would be the most effective and credible messenger?	Patient perspectives — including mothers who have compelling stories related to their own maternal health journeys — and medical providers like OB-GYNs and midwives can help attest to the real-life impacts of maternal health funding

STEP 5: Assess Your Resources

What financial or in-kind resources are available?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We currently have \$2,000 from a local grant program to do advocacy work throughout 2026• A team of 10-15 volunteers who are willing to create resources and to take on meetings with congressional staff
What tools, networks, and skills do you have access to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social media accounts for digital campaigns• Colleagues with public health expertise and clinical experience• Project management tools for tracking advocacy goals and deliverables• Media relations skills for things like op-eds and spreading the word with journalists• Access to the local community center — maybe we can schedule a town hall?
How much time can you commit?	Time commitments may vary throughout the year but generally, we can allocate up to 15 hours/month on this (sometimes more, sometimes less!)

Advocating with the U.S. Congress: Things to Keep in Mind

Engaging effectively with members of Congress can help drive meaningful change. Here's how to make your advocacy count:

- ▶ **Your voice matters most as a constituent.** Members of Congress are elected to represent their constituents (the people in their district or in their state), so your personal story and concerns that are tied directly to their district carry more weight than those perspectives from people who are not constituents.
- ▶ **Be strategic with your timing.** Congress follows a legislative calendar. Depending on your goal, advocacy efforts may be more effective during certain times of year (e.g., when appropriations bills are being drafted) or when specific bills are being considered.
- ▶ **Know your audience.** If you're looking to engage with a specific member of Congress:
 - Research their background and priorities.
 - Identify the **committees they serve on**, especially those with jurisdiction over health or appropriations.
 - Look at **bills they've sponsored, supported, or opposed**, which can provide insight into what drives them and how to align your message.
- ▶ **Understand committee influence.** Bills are shaped in committees before reaching a vote. Engaging with members of key committees (e.g., Energy and Commerce, Appropriations, Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions) can amplify your impact.
- ▶ **Keep your message focused and clear.** Whether by phone, email, or in a meeting:
 - Be respectful and concise.
 - Share your story or concern.
 - Make a **specific, actionable ask**, such as supporting a bill or increasing funding for a particular health issue.

MAJOR CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Several key congressional committees are responsible for developing and overseeing legislation related to health policy, public health programs, and biomedical research. Below are some of the most influential:



- **House and Senate Appropriations Committees — Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS):** Responsible for funding federal health agencies, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).
- **Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP):** Oversees most federal health programs, including public health, biomedical research, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the NIH.
- **Senate Committee on Finance:** Shares jurisdiction over health care programs like Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), particularly with regard to financing and tax policy.
- **House Committee on Energy and Commerce — Subcommittee on Health:** Handles legislation involving health care policy, including Medicaid, Medicare, and public health preparedness.
- **House Committee on Ways and Means — Subcommittee on Health:** Focuses on payment systems for Medicare and Medicaid, health-related tax provisions, and other financial aspects of health care policy.

How to Schedule a Meeting with a Member of Congress

1. Identify the Right Office

Decide if you want to meet with the member's staff in their Washington, D.C. office or a district/state office. You can find this information on the member's official website.

2. Locate the Scheduler's Contact Info

Each office has a scheduler who handles meeting requests. You can usually find the scheduler's name and email on the member's website or by calling the office directly.

3. Prepare Your Request

Be clear, concise, and specific. Include:

- Who you are (and who else will attend, if applicable)
- The purpose of the meeting (brief and focused)
- Your availability and preferred dates
- Contact information

4. Follow Up

If you don't receive a response within a week, send a polite follow-up email or call the office.

See [Appendix 2](#) for an email template.

TIP!

BE MINDFUL OF THE CONGRESSIONAL CALENDAR

This is the official schedule that outlines the days that the U.S. Congress — both House and Senate — are in session and when the respective chambers are in recess. It is published annually and is used to organize legislative business, committee work, and other official activities. While it can be exciting to do meetings while Congress is in session, you can have meetings any time of year; their staff will still be available for constituent meetings.



- **House of Representatives:** Available through the [House Majority Leader's website](#)
- **Senate:** Available through the [Senate website](#)

“As a former congressional staffer and now an advocacy leader, I’ve seen firsthand how far kindness, thoughtfulness, and open-mindedness can go. Even when viewpoints differed, we always made time to meet with constituents — and those who approached the conversation with respect often became trusted voices we turned to for insight again and again. Building a relationship through courteous, intentional advocacy is one of the most powerful ways to create lasting impact.”

— Kathryn Schubert, MPP, CAE, SWHR President and CEO

Be a Women's Health Champion

Supporting women's health means advocating for conditions that disproportionately or differently impact women, or are uniquely experienced by them. Far too often, women face delays in diagnosis, misdiagnosis, or inadequate treatment due to gender disparities in research, clinical care, and access to resources.

If there's a specific condition that matters to you — whether it has affected you personally or someone you love — use the email script included in [Appendix 3](#) to tell your story and urge your lawmakers to take action. Feel free to take inspiration from the message below, but use the script to personalize it and make your message resonate.

Subject: Support for Women's Health — Autoimmune Disease

Dear Senator Doe:

My name is Taylor Changemaker, and I am a constituent living in your district. I am writing to urge you to support policies and funding that prioritize women's health — particularly in autoimmune disease, which disproportionately affects women and remains under-researched and underfunded. Many women in our community struggle to receive timely diagnoses, effective treatment, and quality care for this condition.

I've seen the impact of this firsthand. I was diagnosed with lupus at age 33 after years of unexplained fatigue, joint pain, and repeated doctor visits that yielded more questions than answers. For a long time, my symptoms were dismissed or misattributed. By the time I received a diagnosis, the disease had already affected my ability to work, care for my family, and live without daily pain. Lupus has no cure, and treatment options are limited — but that doesn't have to be the case. With greater investments in autoimmune research and better access to care, outcomes can improve dramatically for people like me. In fact, an estimated 3,500 women in your district are currently living with lupus — many without adequate access to specialized care or support services.

As your constituent, I ask that you advocate for greater investment in research, education, and health care resources dedicated to women's health in all its forms. Women deserve comprehensive care that reflects the full scope of their health needs.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I would greatly appreciate your leadership and support.

Sincerely,
Taylor Changemaker
Taylor@emailplatform.com

FIND
YOUR SENATORS

FIND YOUR
REPRESENTATIVE

Tips for Strengthening Your Message

- ▶ **Share a personal connection.** A heartfelt, concise story can be powerful. Just a short paragraph about your experience — or that of someone close to you — can help make the issue real and relatable. Another example: *“In my own case, it took over five years and multiple doctors to finally get diagnosed with endometriosis. The pain and uncertainty I endured during that time was overwhelming — and I’m not alone.”*
- ▶ **Make it matter to your members of Congress.** Help them understand why they should care. Use specific data or stats, especially ones that relate to your state or district, to show the scope and urgency of the issue locally.
- ▶ **Highlight the economic impact.** Alongside the human toll, include how this issue affects productivity, health care costs, or local economies. Lawmakers often weigh both the personal and financial stakes when deciding where to focus their support.
- ▶ **Tap into your professional associations.** Many organizations are working year-round to advance policies on issues that you care about. Consider visiting the advocacy/policy page of their website or reaching out to their policy team to see what they’re championing. Example: many health care groups advocate for a specific funding amount for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) each year. If you know that number, you can include it in your own outreach to members of Congress.

To stay informed about the latest federal bills that may impact women’s health and biomedical research, visit <https://swhr.org/policy>. The [SWHR Legislative Tracker](#) provides up-to-date information on key legislation you may wish to support or advocate for.



Key Facts to Support Your Advocacy on Women's Health

Here are important statistics and talking points you can incorporate into your message, tailored to some of the specific condition areas that differently, disproportionately, or uniquely impact women:

Autoimmune Disease

- ▶ Women make up **80% of all autoimmune disease patients**.¹
- ▶ There are **over 80 known autoimmune diseases**, most of which do not currently have a cure.²
- ▶ Women often experience **different types and severity of symptoms**, varying treatment responses, and face unique challenges accessing appropriate care.³
- ▶ The **economic burden** is staggering — **\$100 billion annually** in treatment costs.⁴

Bone Health

- ▶ **80% of the 10 million Americans** over age 50 with osteoporosis are women.⁵
- ▶ Up to **1 in 2 women over 50** will break a bone due to osteoporosis.⁶
- ▶ Among Medicare beneficiaries, **nearly 1 in 5** will die within 12 months of an osteoporotic fracture — **over 60% of these are women**.⁷

Heart Health

- ▶ **75.4% of women** aged 60–79 have some form of cardiovascular disease.⁸
- ▶ **1 in 3 pregnancy-related deaths** in the U.S. is due to heart disease or stroke.⁹
- ▶ Cardiovascular disease costs the U.S. health care system **\$219 billion** annually.¹⁰

Endometriosis

- ▶ An estimated **6.5 million women** in the U.S., ages 15–44, are affected.¹¹
- ▶ Women with endometriosis lose an average of **6.3 hours of work productivity per week**, due to a combination of absenteeism and presenteeism.¹²
- ▶ The condition is also a **significant contributor to infertility** in women.¹³

Want to learn more? Discover in-depth information on these and other women's health conditions to support your advocacy at SWHR.org.

FIND RELATED BILLS

To find an updated list of bills related to women's health you may want to advocate for, visit SWHR's Legislative Tracker at www.swhr.org/policy.



Spotlight: Advocating for Women's Health Research

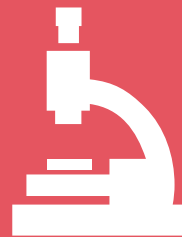
Women have historically been underrepresented in clinical research. For decades, many studies were conducted primarily on male subjects, overlooking critical biological and hormonal differences. Today, that is changing — and advocacy is a driving force behind the shift.

By including sex as a biological variable (SABV) in research, scientists are uncovering vital insights into how diseases impact women differently than men. For instance, women are more likely to live with autoimmune diseases, and cardiovascular symptoms often present differently in women than in men. Yet, treatment plans and drug dosages have long been based on data from male subjects. Incorporating SABV ensures that research outcomes are more inclusive and applicable to all patients.

A BOLD COMMITMENT: THE WHITE HOUSE INITIATIVE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

In 2023, history was made when the President launched the first-ever White House Initiative on Women's Health Research — an effort led by First Lady Dr. Jill Biden.

This federal initiative is working to transform the landscape of women's health research, ensuring that women are no longer underrepresented in science or sidelined in innovation, and it came about thanks to tireless action and support from nonpartisan women's health advocates who wanted to send a clear message that the health of half the population can't be an afterthought — it must be a national priority.



Key Federal Agencies Driving Women’s Health Research

Advocates and researchers alike rely on a network of federal agencies dedicated to promoting equity in health research and outcomes. Here’s a primer on the agencies at the forefront:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) — Offices of Women’s Health (OWH)

The HHS Office on Women’s Health, which was established in 1991, focuses on coordinating women’s health initiatives across HHS, and improving the health of women through policy, education, and evidence-based programs. It also addresses a wide range of health topics, from reproductive and maternal health to chronic disease prevention and health equity.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) — Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH)

Established in 1990, ORWH leads NIH efforts to ensure that women’s health research is a scientific priority. ORWH champions the inclusion of women in clinical trials and supports research on health conditions that affect women disproportionately or differently. It spearheaded the NIH Policy on SABV, which mandates that all NIH-funded researchers account for sex as a biological variable in preclinical and clinical studies.

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) — Office of Women’s Health (OWH)

The FDA OWH, established in 1994, advises the FDA Commissioner on scientific, ethical, and policy issues related to women’s health and leads the agency’s efforts to advance a comprehensive women’s health agenda. Its mission includes promoting the inclusion of women in clinical trials, addressing sex differences in research, and collaborating across sectors to support scientific and educational initiatives that improve women’s health outcomes.

HOW ADVOCACY HELPED INSTITUTIONALIZE WOMEN’S HEALTH

Advocates, working with a bipartisan group of women in Congress, played a pivotal role in establishing dedicated Offices of Women’s Health across key federal agencies, including HHS, FDA, NIH, and CDC. Their efforts ensured that women’s health received focused attention, funding, and research prioritization. These offices have since driven critical advancements in understanding sex and gender differences in health. This success highlights the power of sustained advocacy in shaping health policy and research infrastructure.



Additional Resources

Autoimmune Disease

- ▶ [American College of Rheumatology](#)
- ▶ [Arthritis Foundation](#)
- ▶ [Autoimmune Association](#)
- ▶ [Global Autoimmune Institute](#)
- ▶ [Office of Autoimmune Disease Research](#)
- ▶ [National Psoriasis Foundation](#)

Bone Health

- ▶ [American Society for Bone and Mineral Research](#)
- ▶ [Bone Health and Osteoporosis Foundation](#)

Brain Health

- ▶ [Alliance for Aging Research](#)
- ▶ [Alzheimer's Association](#)
- ▶ [Voices of Alzheimer's](#)
- ▶ [UsAgainstAlzheimer's](#)
- ▶ [Women's Alzheimer's Movement at Cleveland Clinic](#)
- ▶ [Women's Brain Health Initiative](#)

Heart Health

- ▶ [American Heart Association](#)
- ▶ [WomenHeart](#)

Maternal & Reproductive Health

- ▶ [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#)
- ▶ [Fibroid Foundation](#)
- ▶ [March of Dimes](#)
- ▶ [Maternal Mental Health Alliance](#)
- ▶ [Preeclampsia Foundation](#)

Menopause

- ▶ [Let's Talk Menopause](#)
- ▶ [The Menopause Society](#)

Obesity

- ▶ [Obesity Action Coalition](#)
- ▶ [Obesity Care Advocacy Network](#)
- ▶ [STOP Obesity Alliance](#)

Women's Health Advocacy & Research

- ▶ [American Medical Women's Association](#)
- ▶ [Black Women's Health Imperative](#)
- ▶ [Endocrine Society](#)
- ▶ [HealthyWomen](#)
- ▶ [Office of Research on Women's Health](#)
- ▶ [Society for Women's Health Research](#)
- ▶ [Women's Health Access Matters](#)

Appendix 1:

Tool for Planning with Purpose

STEP 1: Establish a Goal

What is the issue you care about?

What specific change do you want to see?

Does this goal have a deadline?

STEP 2: Identify the Best Path to Achieve That Goal

What strategies or tactics are most likely to lead to change (e.g., public education, legislative lobbying, coalition-building)?

STEP 3: Define Your Target Audience

Who has the power to make the change you're seeking (e.g., lawmakers, agency officials, community leaders)?

Who needs to be persuaded?

STEP 4: Map the Stakeholders

Who is already involved? What perspectives are currently represented?

Who is missing from the conversation?

Who would be the most effective and credible messenger?

STEP 5: Assess Your Resources

What financial or in-kind resources are available?

What tools, networks, and skills do you have access to?

How much time can you commit?

Appendix 2:

Email template for scheduling a meeting with congressional staff

Subject: Meeting Request with **[Your Name/Organization]** — Constituent from **[City, State]**

Dear **[Scheduler's Name]**,

My name is **[Your Full Name]**, and I am a constituent from **[City, State]**. I am writing to request a meeting with your office to discuss **[brief topic — e.g., women's health policy, support for biomedical research, etc.]**.

I am available **[insert date options or date range]**, and I would be happy to meet either in person at the **[D.C./district]** office or virtually. I will be joined by **[name(s) and affiliation(s), if applicable]**. We would be grateful for the opportunity to share our perspective on **[issue]**.

Please let me know if there is a form we should complete or if you require any additional information.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Your Address or City/State]

[Your Organization, if applicable]

[Email Address]

[Phone Number]

Appendix 3:

Email template for contacting your legislators about an issue

Subject: Support for Women's Health – **[Insert Specific Condition or Concern]**

Dear Senator / Representative **[Congress Member's Name]**:

My name is **[Your Name]**, and I am a constituent living in **[Your City/State]**. I am writing to urge you to support policies and funding that prioritize women's health — particularly in **[insert specific condition area]**, which **[disproportionately/uniquely/differently]** affects women and is often under-researched and underfunded. Many women in our community struggle to receive timely diagnoses, effective treatment, and quality care for this condition.

I've seen the real impact of this firsthand. **[Insert your personal story here. Share a brief account of your own experience, a loved one's struggle, or how this issue has affected your community.]**

As your constituent, I ask that you advocate for greater investment in research, education, and health care resources dedicated to women's health in all its forms. Women deserve comprehensive care that reflects the full scope of their health needs.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I would greatly appreciate your leadership and support.

Sincerely,

[Your Full Name]

[Your Address or Zip Code]

[Optional: Your Phone Number or Email]

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