



Make Effective Storytelling Your Advocacy Ally

Sharing your personal story with policymakers is influential because it puts a “face” on an issue and will resonate more than simply sharing facts and figures. Constituents who take the time to carefully craft a concise, compelling story have the best chance at being remembered by policymakers and their staff. SfN staff can help prepare you to share your story quickly and effectively.

To get started:

- Explain who you are, what you do, and where you work and/or live in their district/state
- Share a one–two-minute description of:
 - ▶ Your connection to neuroscience and your current work; be sure to avoid using jargon or extremely technical terms. This is a good place to share your personal story. For example, sharing why you got involved in neuroscience or your specialty, the impacts you’ve seen as a result of your research, how you have connected with patients or families in your research, and the real impact of research and discovery on human lives.
 - ▶ Why this specific bill or policy is important to you and how it would affect your work and/or the people you care about. You may also mention how you are part of a global community of neuroscientists with SfN and share that the entire community of researchers and their work is as valuable as yours and also benefit or suffer under those policies.
- Always thank policymakers for their leadership and attention to issues that are important to research and science as part of your story — look for a way to make a connection with issues they already have been vocal about.

Remember, telling your personal story does not mean you need to understand every detail of the legislation you are advocating for or against. Involving your SfN partners will ease the process as they are able to provide background materials and will help you fill in details for subsequent interactions with the policymaker.

SfN staff is available at advocacy@sfn.org to help you prepare for advocacy activities, including identifying the elements of your story which will resonate with policymakers. After your advocacy activities, be sure to update SfN staff who can follow up with policymakers and share your activities with other SfN members to expand your impact.