

Guide to Meeting with Your Members

Meeting with your Members of Congress (or legislators) is a great way to build a relationship with their office and staff. They might not know of your Center and programs. You can tell them about what's happening to people with disabilities in your state. It helps them know why it is important to fund disability programs and how it helps people with disabilities.



Use these talking points as guide when meeting with your legislators:

1. Describe your Center:



[*Your Center's Name*] connects the university to the community. Our job is to meet the needs of people with disabilities through research, education, and service. Some of our work include [*highlight key projects*]. [*Your Center's Name*] is one of [67 UCEDDs, 52 LENDs, 14 IDDRCs, over 275 Inclusive Higher Ed Programs for students with ID] that form a national network. The network works on many topics that affect the lives of people with disabilities. Our work supports families in all our communities, since disability is a natural part of being human.

2. Educate Your Members:

There are many disability priority areas. Share with the office what the legislation is, why it's important, and its impact on your state for people with disabilities. It is important to always share with your members' offices about appropriations. It tells them what is important to you in the federal budget. *Share the included appropriations factsheets and what law authorizes funds to your Center:*



- **UCEDDS** – Developmental Disabilities Act
- **LENDs** – Autism CARES Act
- **IDDRCs** – Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
- **Projects of National Significance** – Developmental Disabilities Act
- **TPSIDs** – Higher Education Act

3. Share Your Stories:



Talk about your personal stories with disability. Connecting policies to people helps policymakers understand the real-world effects. Bring local or state specific information and facts. Make yourself a long-term resource to them on disability policy issues.