

Congress at Home Quick Guide 2025

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OVERVIEW

In August, members of Congress return to their home districts, providing a unique opportunity for Diabetes and Obesity Advocates to make a significant impact. Congress at Home 2025 kicks off during the Congressional summer recess – the Senate will be out from August 2 through September 1, and the House from July 25 through September 1. From that point, every Diabetes Advocate has an opportunity to get involved and take ownership of the issues impacting people living with diabetes, harnessing our collective power to achieve our common goals.

This guide is full of tips and tricks on how to begin thinking through the federal ADA policy priorities and how to best engage your legislators, home communities and networks. But participating in Congress at Home is just the first step. With all Diabetes Advocates working together, we will continue our collective efforts to advance those policy priorities throughout the Congressional session, building on the interest generated across the nation, asking others to stand with us. Together, we fight!

RESOURCES

This toolkit serves as a guide to help think through how to advocate for diabetes and obesity priority initiatives to your legislators, the media and your networks. To aid in those efforts, the ADA is providing this guide and other materials to use in your 2025 Congress at Home activities. Materials can be found on the [Advocacy Resources webpage](#) and below:

- [National issue fact sheet](#)
- [State fact sheets](#)
- Letter to the editor (LTE) tips (*located in this guide*)
- Sample social media posts (*located in this guide*)
- [Training webinar](#)
- [Meeting planner](#)

ISSUE UPDATES AND TALKING POINTS

Protect federal diabetes research and prevention funding

Status Update (as of 8/6/25): In late July, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed the next years, Fiscal Year 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services (LHHS) bill, that preserved federal funding levels for National Institute of Diabetes, and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) and CDC's Division of Diabetes Translation and National Diabetes Prevention Program (NDDP), reflecting ADA's requests. The full ADA press statement can be found [here](#).

Talking Points

- **Research and prevention is critical in the fight for a cure.** Federal programs across the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are essential to America's fight to end diabetes.
- **Funding cuts would be detrimental.** Funding cuts would undermine the research, prevention, and infrastructure supporting the over 38 million Americans living with diabetes—and 98 million more with prediabetes.
- **Advancements in technology and care are a result of this essential funding.** Research at the NIH's National Institute of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) has played a critical role in developing and improving technologies like the continuous glucose monitor (CGM) and artificial pancreas.
- **The ADA appreciates and applauds the Senate proposal to preserve funding.** We appreciate and thank the Senate Appropriations Committee for their bipartisan support for NIDDK and CDC and urge all members of Congress to continue to support the Committee's recommendations for FY26.
- **Funding is critical and must be at a minimum preserved.** These funding levels are critical for continued advancement of diabetes research and prevention with the goal of finding a cure for diabetes.

WHERE TO START

You can begin taking steps now to plan for how you will engage with your legislators during the Congressional recess.

Know Your Audiences - With whom will you share the federal priorities?

- **Legislators** are key decision makers who can advance the policies that are important to people living with diabetes and obesity.
- **Media**, including newsprint, television, social media, podcasts and radio, can provide a forum for you to tell your story and why the ADA federal priorities are important to you and others not only in your community, but across the nation.
- **Networks** – Engaging your friends, family, clients, local businesses, organizations, and other partners can help build a larger conversation and voice to support initiative critical to those living with diabetes and obesity.

Choose Your Activities

This guide contains ideas and suggestions for reaching your chosen audiences; some of the suggested activities may even serve a dual purpose in reaching multiple audiences at once.

- Meet with your U.S. House member

- Publish an editorial
- Share issues and calls to action on social media

Choose Your Timing

The Congressional recess is when legislators return to their home districts and official policy actions halt until session resumes later in the fall. The recess is an ideal time to meet with those legislators as one of their constituents when their offices are not being flooded with advocacy groups in D.C. You can start now to pick potential dates for legislative meetings and issue invitations, reach out to your local media representatives and build anticipation for your activities.

Share Your Story

The ADA believes in the power of your voice. Diabetes Advocate stories help the ADA share real lived experiences and the human impact of policy decisions on those affected by diabetes to lawmakers. By sharing your story, you can help change the lives of the millions of people in the U.S. living with diabetes.

- Why does diabetes research matter to you?
- What's at risk if we lose federal funding for diabetes research?
- How has diabetes care improved because of technology?

Feedback: Let ADA Know About Your Efforts – RaiseYourVoice@diabetes.org

Please let us know who you are meeting with and when and we can help provide details on the Congressional member to help you with your meeting by contacting RaiseYourVoice@diabetes.org. Additionally, please let us know how the meeting went by completing this form: <https://forms.office.com/r/naiYqvNDwc>. If you publish an op-ed, please send that to us as well so we can share and promote the piece.

Contact ADA For Assistance

Have questions or need additional information? A list of additional resources can be found in this planning guide, or you can contact RaiseYourVoice@diabetes.org for further assistance.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an important way for the American Diabetes Association® (ADA) to spread awareness and support for our advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels. It's also a great opportunity to connect with other Diabetes Advocates. Below you'll find an overview of how you can make a difference through social media.

The ADA's Social Media (Follow, Like)

Facebook, X, YouTube, Instagram, Threads, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and blogs are excellent platforms for fostering discussions and building communities around diabetes. We highly encourage you to engage with our social media accounts, demonstrating your support as a passionate advocate for the diabetes community.

While the ADA's X account (@AmDiabetesAssn) is the primary advocacy social media account, all ADA national social media accounts offer opportunities to focus on advocacy-related topics and engage with other Diabetes Advocates.

Social Media Tips & Tricks

- Use hashtags (#) to connect your message to the larger diabetes conversation. ADA often uses #WeFight #DiabetesAdvocate
- Photos and videos are a great way to increase engagement on all platforms! When possible, include a link to more information, like a photo or short video.
- Remember, X only allows 280 characters per message—so be brief. Links take up character space, too, so shorten your links by going to bitly.com.
- Urge your friends to help share your message.
- Not every post is seen in your friends' feeds. To increase the number of people who see your posts, keep them timely and use a friendly, relaxed, and conversational tone.
- Mention others, including the ADA, in your posts so the messages can be seen and shared more widely. Make sure to tag the friends, family, and/or member of Congress in your posts so they have the opportunity to engage with you.

Suggestions for Engaging Your Social Media Followers in Diabetes Advocacy

- **Use your social networks to promote becoming a Diabetes Advocate!** Urge your followers to become Diabetes Advocates. Ask your friends to sign up today using this link: diabetes.org/advocatesignup.
- **Return the favor.** Social media is a two-way conversation. Engage in the larger diabetes discussion by tagging, commenting on, and sharing others' posts, photos, and diabetes stories. Engage with other Diabetes Advocates, the ADA, and your legislators to keep the conversation going.

- **It's okay to start small.** If you're new to social media advocacy and not yet comfortable with posting original content, the best way to get your feet wet is to follow existing conversation around diabetes policy and share content that speaks to you. As you become more comfortable, you can add in your own voice and highlight the ADA's policy priorities.

Sample Social Media Posts – Research and Prevention Funding

- Federal funding for diabetes research transforms lives through advances in treatments and technology. [insert lawmaker], will you stand with the diabetes community and oppose cuts to research and #SaveResearch?
- Cuts to federal research will devastate Americans with diabetes and their futures. [insert lawmaker], stop the cuts and #SaveResearch.
- Americans want programs to prevent diabetes and research towards a cure. Save federal funding for research, [insert lawmaker]. Oppose federal cuts. #SaveResearch
- America should continue to lead the world in research breakthroughs for those with diabetes. [insert lawmaker], oppose the cuts and #SaveResearch.
- Americans with diabetes want to live healthy lives. Save federal funding for research, [insert lawmaker]. Oppose the cuts and #SaveResearch.
- Americans with diabetes want a cure, [insert lawmaker]. Stop research cuts and #SaveResearch.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR (LTE)

A letter to the editor (LTE) is the simplest way to communicate an opinion to the general public. LTEs can be used to correct and clarify facts in a previous news story; oppose or support the actions of an elected official or agency; direct attention to a problem; spur news editors to cover an issue that is being overlooked; or urge readers to support your cause.

To prepare for drafting an LTE, be sure to read your local newspapers, listen to the local talk radio news shows, and watch your local television news reports to monitor their coverage of the ADA's key advocacy priorities.

The chances of having the letter printed increases at smaller, rural and/or community

newspapers or online outlets. On average, many local papers publish up to 80% of the letters they receive. Look at the editorial page in your local paper or visit the newspaper's website for more information about their submission process.

Steps for Effectively Placing a Letter to the Editor

- **Pick a timely topic.** Newspapers are more likely to publish letters that are connected to topics they have already covered in their publication. You can use information from ADA Action Alerts for the basis of your letter to the editor.
- **Find a local angle.** Readers are more interested in an issue when they see how it affects their lives and local communities. Include local statistics about the impact and costs of diabetes.
- **Assume nothing.** Do not assume that readers are informed about diabetes and the issue you are concerned about. Give a concise but informative background before plunging into the main issue.
- **Be brief.** LTE submissions are usually limited to 150-250 words. Check with the publication to find out their publication guidelines and length limit for LTEs.
- **Personalize your letter.** Customize the letters and, if you are using a template, be sure to fill in any blanks appropriately. ***IMPORTANT NOTE: Do not send the exact same letter to two or more newspapers in the same circulation area.***
- **Review the guidelines.** Lastly, make sure to visit the publication's website or contact the opinion desk by phone to review their guidelines and rules around LTE submissions. When in doubt, ask questions!