

## YOU'VE MET WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR. NOW WHAT?

### 1. Tell us about your meeting.

- From your group, pick one individual to fill out the survey for each office you visited.
- A survey link will be sent out via Socious, and is in the convening App, to capture who you met with, which “asks” you talked about, any commitments made by the office and any follow-ups needed.

### 2. Send a thank you email.

- Template language will be available and sent to you via Socious.
- Send your email *within one week* to each office you met with.

### 3. Continue engagement at home.

Here are a few ideas to continue building relationships with your legislators after your meetings in DC. Always feel free to reach out to the Policy NRT for any support or additional resources.

- Introduce yourself to the legislator’s local office and share any services or resources that your organization provides. Let them know you’re a resource for oral health.
- Invite your legislator to visit your center or to attend an event.
- If a relevant bill passes, send a quick thank you to the legislator.
- Lift oral health as a topic during election season at presidential or congressional campaign events by asking questions during a town hall or candidate event.





## HILL DAY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### Q: What is Hill Day and why is it important?

A: A "Hill Day" is a coordinated visit to Capitol Hill, providing an organization and its members an opportunity to meet with members of Congress from their States and Congressional Districts, and present a unified message about an important issue. It is important because an effective Hill Day can be a powerful advocacy tool.

### Q: Who can advocate?

A: Almost anyone can serve as an advocate for improving oral health by engaging their Members of Congress. All private citizens and most 501(c)3 employees are able to advocate and to lobby. However, if you are employed by the Federal government or by State government, you may be prohibited from participating in any activity that could be perceived as "lobbying." That said, there may be some opportunities for you to educate your Member on the state of oral health in your community/state without discussing specific policies. If you are not sure about what you are allowed to do, check with your employer.

### Q: How will Hill Day participants be getting from Baltimore to DC?

A: OPEN will be providing buses to get people from the Hotel to Capitol Hill and back. Buses leave the hotel on Thursday, October 24th at 7:30am and arrive at Capitol Hill at Garfield Circle. Buses will depart Capitol Hill from Peace Circle at 3:30pm. You can bring food on the buses and there are bathrooms on board.

### Q: What are the OPEN "asks" and how did they originate?

A: OPEN's overarching goal is to achieve improved oral health for all populations, and have three "asks" we intend to make at our Hill Day to most effectively allow us to make progress toward our goal. A diverse sub-team of OPEN members, representing diversity across blade levels, geography, age, gender, race/ethnicity etc. developed the three asks because they are:

- a) decisions that Congress can make
- b) timely and have potential to move forward because they build on existing interests and opportunities in Congress

- c) are relevant to OPEN members across the country across targets, and across blade levels, and
- c) are specific enough that a Member of Congress has enough information to take action.

Here are the three "asks:"

1. Congress should add oral health coverage under Medicare Part B covered services.  
Consider co-sponsoring/introducing a companion to:
  - S.22/H.R. 2951 Medicare Dental Benefit Act of 2019 (Sen. Cardin/Rep. Barragan)
  - S.1423 Medicare and Medicaid Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act (Sen. Casey)
  - H.R.1393 - Medicare Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act of 2019 (Rep. Doggett)
2. Congress should make oral health care a mandatory component of pregnancy-related benefits in Medicaid.  
Consider co-sponsoring/introducing a companion to:
  - S.1343/H.R. 2602 MOMMIES Act (Sen. Booker/Rep. Pressley)
  - S.916/H.R.1897 MOMMA's Act (Sen. Durbin/Rep. Kelly)
3. Congress should appropriate an additional \$17.5 million to the CDC Division of Oral Health to support an oral health program in every state.  
Consider supporting:
  - An appropriation of not less than \$36.5 million annually to fully fund the state-based oral health programs of the CDC Division of Oral Health for FY2020 and going forward.

### Q: What is a 'State Lead'?

A: State Leads support network members from your state during OPEN Hill Day. They assist with preparation including identifying legislators to meet with, scheduling and coordinating legislator appointments, and serving as the point person for other OPEN members from their state going on visits. If you have not heard from your state lead, please contact your Regional Liaison (see next question) as soon as possible.

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**Q: Who are the 'Regional Liaisons'?**

A: Regional Liaisons provide one-on-one support to State Leads to make their responsibilities during Hill Day as easy as possible. They are:

- Northeast/Mid-Atlantic: Melissa Burroughs (mburroughs@familiesusa.org)
- Mid-West: Bianca Rogers (bianca.n.rogers@gmail.com)
- South: Pat Finnerty (patrick@pwfconsulting.net)
- West: Marcia Brand (Marcia.brand8@gmail.com)

**Q: Who is scheduling my Legislator appointments and who will I be meeting with?**

A: State Leads will be scheduling Legislator appointments. The goal is to meet with the offices of your two senators and one house representative. You will be attending appointments with other participants from your state. You will not attend appointments alone unless you are the only person from your state. If you would like a "buddy" from a national group with more experience doing visits to join your meeting, please contact your Regional Liaison. You will receive your appointment schedule the night before the Hill Day at the National Convening, but your state lead can share that information sooner.

**Q: How can I prepare for my Legislator appointment?**

A: You can:

- Make sure you are comfortable with the three Hill Day "asks"
- Prepare stories and data to share! Think about relevant stories from your on-the-ground work that relate to the asks and can provide additional backing to support the ask.
- Do your research! Get to know your legislator by using their official website and/or Google and/or the Congressional Matrix to learn about their party, interests, and relevant committee assignments. For our asks, the relevant committees are: Senate HELP, Finance, Aging, and Appropriations; House Ways & Means, Energy & Commerce, and Appropriations.
- Make a "game plan" with the other people in your state going on the visits. Who is going to say what? What stories/data do you want to cover? You will be given 30 minutes in your groups to plan some of this the day before, but you can get a head start!

**Q: What materials will I get to help me prepare and to share with Congressional offices as leave-behinds?**

A: You will get a packet of materials to leave-behind, including a one pager covering all three OPEN asks, background materials on each of the asks, and a description of OPEN. You are also welcome to leave

behind materials about your own organization. To help you prepare, you will also receive your meeting schedule/schedule of the day's events, a sample script of what you could say in your meetings, a social media guide to help you amplify your impact, instructions for following up, and a copy of this FAQ.

**Q: When will I receive training on how to conduct a successful meeting with legislators and talking points for the asks?**

A: The Planning Team has been hosting a series of Take 20s leading up to the National Convening, which have been recorded and are on Socius. There will be in-person time to prepare will be held on Wednesday, Oct 23rd at the National Convening. Here you will also receive your appointment schedule and have an opportunity to connect with network members you are attending appointments with.

**Q: Who will I have the opportunity to meet with during my visit? Will I meet my Legislator?**

A: Depending on their schedule, you may get the opportunity to meet with your Legislator. If they are unavailable, you will be meeting with their staffer that oversees health policy. Meeting with a health staffer is just as influential as the Legislator themselves! They are the individuals responsible for advising the Legislator on which policies to prioritize, writing legislation, and they are usually paying much closer attention to the issues we care about than the Legislator who may be distracted by other issues.

**Q: How will I document what was discussed in my Legislator Appointment?**

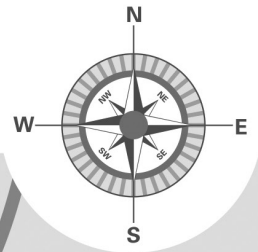
A: You will be responsible for documenting what was discussed in your appointment, both for your own follow-up and also so OPEN can track our impact. A form will be available and distributed at the National Convening.

**Q: How do I thank/follow up with the individual I met with?**

A: After your meeting, you should send a thank you/ follow-up email to the staff you met within one week of the Hill Day. You will receive a template thank you email to send. Staff will share their business cards with you, so hang on to them so that you can follow up.

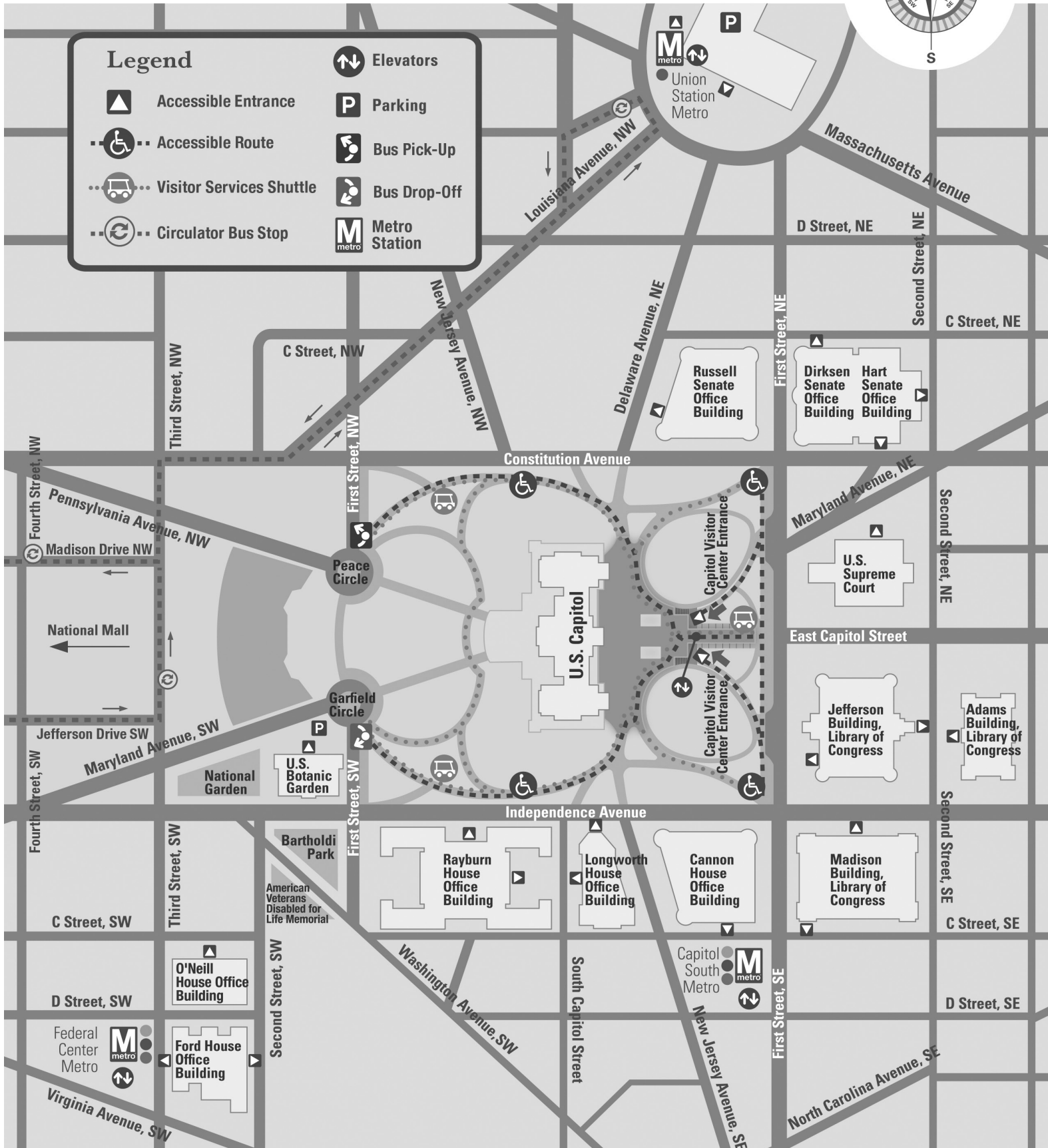
# U.S. CAPITOL

## Visitor Center



### Legend

- |  |                          |  |               |
|--|--------------------------|--|---------------|
|  | Accessible Entrance      |  | Elevators     |
|  | Accessible Route         |  | Parking       |
|  | Visitor Services Shuttle |  | Bus Pick-Up   |
|  | Circulator Bus Stop      |  | Bus Drop-Off  |
|  |                          |  | Metro Station |

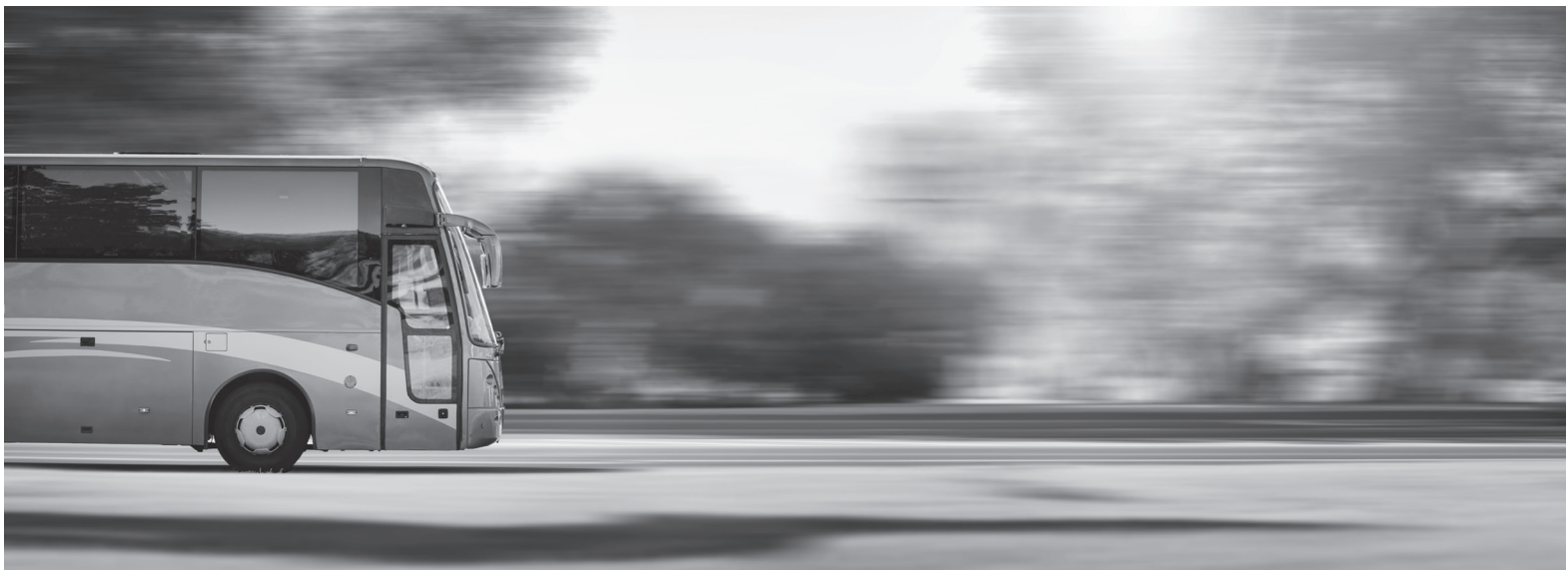






## HILL DAY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

<b>6:30 AM</b>	Breakfast at hotel- grab and go style <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Don't forget to pack your OPEN bag, leave behind materials, and participant materials!</i></li></ul>
<b>7:00 – 7:30 AM</b>	Buses arrive at hotel and load passengers
<b>7:30 AM</b>	Buses leave Baltimore
<b>9:30 AM</b>	Buses arrive in DC at Garfield Circle
<b>9:35 – 9:45 AM</b>	Group picture
<b>11:00 AM – 1:00 PM</b>	Lunch reception in Hart Senate Building, Room 902 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 11:30 AM: Senator Cardin speaks at Lunch Reception; other Members of Congress may join at other times—invitations still pending</li></ul>
<b>3:15 – 3:30 PM</b>	Buses load at Peace Circle
<b>3:30 PM</b>	Buses leave DC <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please try to schedule your meetings so that you can make it to the buses by 3:15/3:30. However, there may be transportation options if we know in advance that you will need a slightly later departure time due to your meeting schedule.</li></ul>
<b>5:30 PM</b>	Buses arrive at hotel in Baltimore







## SAMPLE SCRIPTS FOR LEGISLATIVE VISITS

**ROLES!** Fill in the blanks for the specific roles each team member will play during your visit(s).

Meeting lead/facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_

### Issue 1 (Medicare Part B benefit)

Background briefer: \_\_\_\_\_

Storyteller/state relevance: \_\_\_\_\_

Makes the ask: \_\_\_\_\_

### Issue 2 (Maternal oral health benefit in Medicaid)

Background briefer: \_\_\_\_\_

Storyteller/state relevance: \_\_\_\_\_

Makes the ask: \_\_\_\_\_

### Issue 3 (Investing in CDC Division of Oral Health for state oral health programs)

Background briefer: \_\_\_\_\_

Storyteller/state relevance: \_\_\_\_\_

Makes the ask: \_\_\_\_\_

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

- Thank you for meeting with us today. We are all here representing different organizations from [STATE] [or to provide support as a national org.]
- Before we dive in to the three issues we are here to discuss, let's introduce ourselves... [Each person shares where they're based, their org, unique interest.]

### THE ORAL HEALTH PROGRESS AND EQUITY NETWORK (OPEN) AND OUR ISSUES (5 minutes)

- While we each bring unique concerns to this meeting, we are united as members of the Oral Health Progress and Equity Network, or OPEN.
  - OPEN is a broad coalition of organizations and individuals from every state.
  - We organize around the fact that dental disease is preventable. Yet, today's health policies leave many children and adults facing barriers, like locked doors, and they don't have the keys they need to open those doors to good oral health.
  - There are policy solutions to support good oral health at every age, in every community, in ways that make the most of public dollars and avoid unnecessary expense. We can reduce the cost of oral health by stopping problems before they start.
- We ultimately envision a nation that ensures each person can access the comprehensive oral health coverage and care they need to thrive.
- Today, we have three policy issues we ask [Rep X/Senator Y] to consider, which are meaningful steps to move toward this vision. They are described in this folder:

1. **Support the oral health and wellbeing of older adults and people with disabilities** – by adding an oral health benefit to Medicare Part B
2. **Encourage healthy pregnancies and put newborns on a path to success**– by making oral health care a mandatory component of pregnancy-related Medicaid benefits
3. **Invest in efforts to prevent dental disease in every state** – by fully funding the CDC Division of Oral Health's ability to support state oral health programs increasing appropriations by \$17.5 million dollars.

*Transition: Now we'd like to share a bit more information and some stories around each of these three "asks."*

## ISSUE 1 – ADDING ORAL HEALTH COVERAGE AS A BENEFIT TO MEDICARE PART B (5 minutes)

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- **Background data/state of play:**

- **Our overall health is inextricably linked to oral health.** People with poor oral health face higher risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, complications in pregnancy and childbirth, and other conditions.
- **These risks are particularly felt by the 60 million older adults and people with disabilities** who count on Medicare, which lacks a comprehensive dental benefit. Locked out of coverage options, many can't afford the care they need to be healthy.
- **We can improve health and yield savings for the health system by opening the door to Medicare dental coverage.** Oral health is the number one service that American's report not being able to get due to cost, even more so than prescription drugs and other medical services. Without preventive care and timely treatment, we often see more serious issues at increased personal and societal cost. Oral health coverage would ensure that the older adults and people with disabilities who rely on Medicare can get the care they need to stay healthy, and avoid unnecessary medical expenses.

- **Story on importance of the issue:**

- [SHARE STORY FROM YOUR STATE.] The Domino Effect. Three in five older adults like [like Cheryl from Olympia, WA,] can't afford the dental care they need. Cheryl shared, *"My lost teeth could have been avoided if I'd had root canals and crowns I needed. I'd like to be able to get bridges... but they are very expensive. Dentures are less expensive, but still out of my price range. I have digestive issues which I feel are directly related to not being able to chew my food well."*
- Fixing the gap faced by people like [Cheryl] is widely supported, as 7 in 10 likely voters favor adding a dental benefit to Medicare.

- **Ask:**

- You can help expand opportunities for older adults and people with disabilities to afford the care they need to be healthy, and responsibly manage public funds in the long-term.
- **Will you support adding a comprehensive oral health benefit to Medicare Part B?** Specifically, please consider co-sponsoring/introducing a companion to:
  - S.22/H.R. 2951 Medicare Dental Benefit Act of 2019 (Sen. Cardin/Rep. Barragan)
  - S.1423 Medicare and Medicaid Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act of 2019 (Sen. Casey)
  - H.R.1393 - Medicare Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act of 2019 (Rep. Doggett)
  - S.1423 Medicare and Medicaid Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act of 2019 (Sen. Casey)
  - H.R.1393 - Medicare Dental, Vision, and Hearing Benefit Act of 2019 (Rep. Doggett)

## ISSUE 2 – ADVANCING ORAL HEALTH CARE AS A MANDATORY PART OF PREGNANCY-RELATED BENEFITS IN MEDICAID (5 minutes)

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- **Background data/state of play:**

- **Dental care is an important aspect of prenatal care, all the more critical to prioritize as the U.S. grapples with a maternal mortality crisis.** Some pregnancy complications like preeclampsia (related to high blood pressure) may have links to poor oral health.
- **Advancing access to dental care in pregnancy and after birth is key for a woman's health – and puts her newborn on a path to success from day one.** Children are three times more likely to have dental disease when mom has untreated decay. That can strain family and state budgets as well as risk a child's ability to eat, learn, and grow up healthy. When parents are covered, kids fare better.
- **Despite its importance, federal Medicaid policy doesn't guarantee oral health coverage for pregnant women.** Benefits are up to a state's discretion. Even in states with dental coverage, they are often limited and cut off too soon after a woman gives birth, if offered at all.

- **Story on importance of the issue:**

- In [YOUR STATE], pregnant women struggling to get by [CAN/CAN'T] access dental coverage in Medicaid, compared to other states. [SHARE MORE OR A STORY FROM YOUR STATE.]
- The opportunity to achieve good oral health should not depend on where we live, particularly when so much is at stake for a woman and her family. Without the keys to good oral health that comprehensive coverage offers, a woman may not be able to get the care she needs, no matter how hard she tries.

- **Ask:**

- We can boost healthy pregnancies and place infants on a path to success by expanding access to maternal oral health.
- **Will you support adding oral health as a mandatory component of pregnancy-related benefits in Medicaid?** (Specifically, sign on to MOMMA Act and/or MOMMIES Act or XXXX bill? Encourage colleagues to cosponsor? Elevate with floor speech?)

## **ISSUE 2 – SUPPORT A \$17.5 MILLION DOLLAR INCREASE TO CDC'S DIVISION OF ORAL HEALTH PREVENTION IN ALL STATES** (5 minutes)

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- **Background data/state of play:**

- **The good news about dental disease is that it's preventable and we have many solutions** to help people unlock the door to good oral health. But we are missing an opportunity to take these strategies to scale.
- **The CDC Division of Oral health estimates that an additional \$17.5M is needed to boost state prevention programs nationwide.** Funding breakdown:
  - \$11.5M would fund statewide prevention programs in 30 more states, so every state has the infrastructure to help individuals and communities avoid the pain and economic costs of oral disease
  - \$3.5M would help provide technical assistance to programs, and support needed surveillance, evaluation, policy and communication activities
  - \$2.5M would support research, analysis, translation of science to action, infection prevention, and prevention guidance, key to program effectiveness
  - With strong prevention efforts in place, we can reduce costs by stopping more expensive problems before they start.

- **Story on importance of the issue:**

- [SHARE ABOUT ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM IN YOUR STATE, OR LACK THEREOF]
- This funding will be a smarter way to use our public resources. Preventing oral diseases gets a high return on investment, as it leads to better overall health, supports children's educational attainment, and boosts adults' earnings.

- **Ask:**

- We can conserve public dollars and reduce costs for families when we invest in prevention, and have the data to target resources where they are most needed.
- **Will you support a \$17.5 million increase to the CDC Division of Oral Health, so every state can invest in preventing dental disease?** This would mean an appropriation of not less than \$36.5 million annually to fully fund the state-based oral health programs of the CDC Division of Oral Health for FY2020 and going forward.

## **CLOSING** (5 minutes)

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- Do you have any questions or are there more resources we can provide?
- Thank you for considering our three policy requests so we live in a nation that ensures that each person can access the oral health coverage and care they need to thrive.



# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE FOR HILL DAY

## *Amplify the Impact of Your Advocacy*

Social media can be a great tool to build the movement for a better oral health system, particularly as we connect with lawmakers in Washington, D.C. Posts can serve to further elevate our policy asks, showcase our power, and deepen engagement with lawmakers about the day's priorities. Below are tips to help you use Twitter, Facebook, and other platforms effectively as part of OPEN's day on Capitol Hill.

### HASHTAGS

- Be sure to use the hashtag **#oralhealthequity** in all of your tweets.
- As a secondary hashtag, you can also use **#mouthsmatter**.

### HANDLES

- Follow and tag the OPEN network, **@OPENOralhealth**
- Follow the official account (rather than the political campaign account) of your members of Congress, and tag them in messages that reference your legislative visits.
- Find lawmaker Twitter handles at **<http://bit.ly/116TwitterAccts>** (thanks to the School-Based Health Alliance!) and/or on their website contact pages.

### TIPS FOR LEVERAGING KEY MOMENTS

- **Generate interest in the day's activity.**  
Post a message in the morning before your visits begin. Share why you're on your way to Capitol Hill to set the stage for what you'll highlight throughout the day.
- **Spotlight your legislative visits.**  
Mark your legislative meetings on social media by thanking lawmakers (tagging them) for taking time to meet with your group. You can highlight specific bills discussed in the meetings, and publicly urge lawmakers support our asks. Remember to keep it positive, so the focus remains on our key issues.
- **Take photos or video during the lunch reception.**  
Short video clips are another effective way to engage your social network, and lawmakers' remarks may feature messages that affirm the importance of oral health and our collective efforts. Tag and appreciate members of Congress who attend the reception. Post pictures with OPEN partners from coast to coast, showing the breadth of support for advancing oral health policy.
- **Highlight OPEN's three policy priorities.**  
Build support online for the issues we are

discussing with legislators. You could dedicate one tweet per issue, or consider a short thread that gets into greater detail about why one of the asks is particularly critical to you or your organization. Pull messages from the fact sheet or visit script.

### TIPS FOR DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE POSTS

- **Include images.**  
Posts perform better with visuals. When meeting with lawmakers or their staff, politely ask if you could take a group photo for social media. Before or after your meetings, take selfies in front of your lawmakers' offices. Their door plaques or state flags can serve as relevant backdrops.
- **Check for jargon.**  
People who are less familiar with oral health and health policy may not know some of the terms you use every day in your work, from "caries" to "value-based payment" to "federal appropriation." Try to describe what you mean in language that is broadly accessible, so it's easy for your audience to understand your point.
- **Share a link to resources to further educate your audience.**  
It will lend credibility and highlight the value of your organization's social media feed if you point your audience a site where they can learn more, perhaps a blog post, recent news article, or data brief. Try to include a link in your message when you post about one of our priority issues. An app like bit.ly can help to shorten long web addresses.
- **Strengthen the movement.**  
If you're in a state cohort with several different network partners, give each other a boost. Tag each other in your posts and encourage your audience to follow/like their group.

*Continued on other side*

## SAMPLE MESSAGES

- Getting pumped to meet with members of Congress from [#YOURSTATE] today. We'll be talking about policy ideas to improve #oralhealthequity. Follow along today as we meet with lawmakers in DC with @OPENoralhealth.
- Thank you [@LAWMAKER HANDLE] for meeting with us & [@HANDLES OF COALITION PARTNERS] today. We appreciated the chance to share how unlocking the door to #oralhealthequity could give all kids & adults in STATE & US an equitable chance to thrive.
- Thanks to [@LAWMAKER HANDLE] staff for talking to @OPENoralhealth partners today. We hope Rep. X/Sen. Y supports adding #oralhealth coverage to #Medicare Part B.
- Proud to have spoken with [@LAWMAKER] on behalf of [YOUR ORG] with @OPENoralhealth. Rep X/Sen Y, we urge you to boost the health of moms & families by adding #oralhealth as a mandatory part of #Medicaid pregnancy-related benefits #mouthsmatter.
- Just met with [@LAWMAKER] to talk about policy solutions that can conserve \$\$ and help more folks stay healthy. Thanks Rep. X/Sen. Y for your time! Pls support greater investment in CDC #OralHealth so we can better prevent dental disease across [YOUR STATE].

