



**ADVOCACY TOOLKIT
&
PRIORITY BILLS**

2026

ADVOCACY OVERVIEW



HOW CAN YOU ADVOCATE FOR LOVED ONES?

EDUCATE OTHERS
ENGAGE WITH LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
SHARE YOUR STORY

WHAT DOES BEING AN ADVOCATE MEAN?

In this toolkit, you will learn what Alzheimer's San Diego is doing to advocate for those with Alzheimer's and their loved ones in San Diego County through tracking and support for proposed state level bills that are considered a priority, voicing concerns for budget cuts, and engaging with changemakers. You will learn how to do this yourself through:

- Developing Your Personal Story
- Learning About Proposed Bills
- Learning How to Call Your Representatives



HOW TO CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVES

Click to find your Board of Supervisors, State Representatives, and U.S. Representatives

WHY WE CALL

Calling your elected officials is *easy, accessible, and important*! At any given time there are a number of Bills in circulation that have the potential to help thousands of San Diegans with Alzheimer's and dementia and their families. Expressing your support for these bills lets your elected officials know that the people they represent care, and so should they! You can find your officials here. When you call them, just follow the script we've given you with the personal story you've made, and you're set! Every call makes a difference.

THE SCRIPT

Intro:

"Hello, my name is ____ and I am calling [Rep's Name]'s office to express my support for [Bill Name].

Personal Story Section

Here is where you will insert your personal story (see worksheet above)

Bill Specific

[Bill Name] would change the life of [myself/someone I know/a loved one] by ----, -----, and ----- . It is critical that this bill passes because if it doesn't, ----- . (find blurbs on bills below)

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to listen to my story, and I hope to see [Rep's Name] vote for [Bills Name] on [Next Step of Bill].



HOW TO CREATE YOUR PERSONAL STORY

When you share with an elected official a bill or cause you are supporting, you want to convey to them **why**, and why as your representative, they should care about it too. We call this conveying your personal story. This can be as “personal” as you want it to be but should have a compelling emotional hold on the listener. Use this worksheet to craft your own personal story!

QUESTIONS TO BRAINSTORM

1. Why did you start volunteering for Alzheimer’s San Diego?
2. Do you know someone who has Alzheimer’s?
 - a. What sort of difficulties have they or their loved ones faced? Can any of those relate back to public policy, government, or institutional challenges?
 - b. What sort of emotional difficulties have they or their loved ones faced?
3. How would the bill you are supporting impact your life?
 - a. If it would not impact your life directly, how would it impact someone who has Alzheimer’s, their loved ones, or their caretakers?
4. Why did you take the time out of your day to call this office?
5. What will happen to you/someone you know/a loved one if this bill doesn’t pass?

PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

Once you’ve written down your answers to these questions, it will be easier to convey why you are calling your elected officials. Combine your answers to make a personal story. Here’s an example:



HOW TO CREATE YOUR PERSONAL STORY (CONT)

EXAMPLE

My name is Amelia and I am calling you today because I am concerned my grandfather, who has Alzheimer's, is at a higher risk of losing access to Medi-cal that provides coverage for his healthcare. He has difficulty completing his paperwork for annual eligibility re-determinations. Bill AB 2201 would strengthen safeguards to ensure he is not at risk of losing coverage by requiring a county representative to gather information available without requesting it from the individual and I am in support of this bill.

YOUR TURN

Try writing your personal story below:

BILL LANGUAGE FOR CALLS

BILL SB1149

This bill should be passed because it expands bereavement leave protections to those who are not legally recognized as relatives including LGBTQ+ individuals, partners, friends and paid caregivers. It allows for up to five days of bereavement leave so these caregivers do not have to choose between grieving and keeping their job. It is important that these individuals have access to this protection.

BILL AB2201

This is an important bill as it strengthens safeguards to ensure California residents do not lose their publicly funded healthcare benefits. This bill would require the county to gather information that is available to them without requesting documentation from the individual for re-determinations of benefits. Individuals with dementia can be at higher risk for losing their healthcare coverage due to not being cognitively able to meet deadlines or turn in required documentation. Completing complicated paperwork and staying on top of frequent deadlines are challenging for people living with memory loss.

BILL AB2348

Passing this bill is crucial as it makes parts of the CalAIM expansion permanent under Medi-cal starting in 2027 as the CalAIM initiative ends on 12/31/2026. Vulnerable individuals such as those with Alzheimer's would continue to receive essential supports such as housing transition navigation and medically supportive food and nutrition services. It would also require the State Department of Health Care Services to publish a public report on a quarterly basis, ensuring accountability on the part of health plans.

BILL SB1149

Expands Bereavement Leave for “Chosen Family”

While California law allows workers to take leave to care for chosen or extended family members, bereavement leave remains limited to immediate family. This bill expands protections.

Allows workers to take job-protected bereavement leave following the death of a chosen or extended family member so they have time to grieve the loss of someone they love. This can include paid caregivers.

SB 1149 contributes to closing the gap of the marginalization of LGBTQ+ identifying caregivers and loved ones by allowing them to be able to access bereavement leave benefits.

BILL

AB 2201

Improves Medi-Cal Eligibility Re-Determination Process

Strengthens state safeguards to ensure California residents do not lose access to health care because of paperwork required to submit for re-determination of Medi-cal benefits.

Mitigates risk to re-determinations of Medi-cal benefits from bureaucratic delays or federal policy decisions that restrict coverage and access to care.

This bill requires the county to gather available information without requesting documentation from the recipient in the case of re-determinations.

BILL AB 2348

Extends Vital Medi-Cal Benefits

The bill authorizes Medi-Cal managed care plans to continue providing community supports beyond the end of the initial CalAIM waiver (Dec 31, 2026).

It emphasizes long-term, sustainable, and flexible social support services for eligible members. focuses on "health-related social needs" (HRSN), including housing transition/navigation, tenancy services, recuperative care, and medically supportive meals, designed to improve health outcomes and reduce expensive hospitalizations.

Requires the Department of Health Care Services to increase reporting frequency from annual to quarterly to monitor utilization data, demographics, and effectiveness, while providing ongoing technical assistance to providers.