



## ADVOCACY BY THE NUMBERS

*Building Your Message Step-by-Step*

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**FIRST -- INTRODUCE YOURSELF.** Tell the elected official:

1. WHO you are,
2. WHERE you live *and* vote in his/her district and
3. WHAT you want (Schedule S.510 – The FDA Food Safety Modernization Act for a floor vote as soon as possible)

**SECOND -- LEARN TO TELL YOUR STORY EFFECTIVELY.**

Take a minute to write down your story of how foodborne illness has impacted your life. Start from the beginning and include important details. They reveal areas that need to be addressed. (For example: a woman who lost her sister to a stroke reported long waits and lack of specialized nurses on call. Policy impact: establishment of stroke and heart attack protocols and special rapid response team available on all shifts)

### Build Your Arguments

**Arm yourself with information...**about your local community like poll numbers, recently published articles and editorials and your state's cost of foodborne illness.

### Don't be a Know-it-all

You may not know the answer to every question. That is "okay." Your MOFS Sherpa is your resource for follow-up information. Warning: A legislator may try to get you "off message" by talking about friends and family you may know in common, or other issues – don't fall for it. Your story is unimpeachable – stick to it and weave elements of it into your answers.

**THIRD -- Make the ASK and CLOSE.**

**Will you urge leadership to move S.510 to a vote as soon as possible?**

**Will you oppose any amendment that could threaten passage of this important bill?**

### **SPECIAL NOTES:**

**Closing -- Say thank you.** Always thank the legislator for her/his time. If s/he has been supportive of food safety in the past, thank her/him. Let her/him know that the Make Our Food Safe Coalition can be a resource for them, their staff and constituents. Collect business cards and follow up with a thank you note when you get home.