Grassroots Advocacy

Justin Bell – J.D.
Government Relations Director
The Power of Advocacy

Through Advocacy, we have the power to influence legislation and shape public policy initiatives that could potentially impact the lives of all those that have been or will be touched by heart disease and stroke.
You’re the Cure Network

You’re the Cure is the American Heart Association’s network of advocacy volunteers who are committed to advancing the mission of the American Heart Association through the public policy arena.
Importance of YTC

Our advocacy volunteers are the true driving force behind our legislative accomplishments.
YTC: The Work of the People

• Send emails to lawmakers
• Call legislators
• Testify at public hearings and Committee meetings
• Meet directly with elected officials
• Serve as media spokespersons
• Sign and collect petition cards
• Recruit other YTC members to do the same
Online Actions

Advocates receive an email from AHA requesting their action:

ACTION ALERT

In Utah:

Today, young people consume more media than ever before, spending 7 to 9 hours per day online, watching TV, using mobile devices, listening to music, playing video games and reading print materials.

Billion of dollars are spent each year to market junk foods to kids across these various channels and includes junk food marketing to kids through the use of food characters and themes in movies, music, sports and beyond that influence kids’ food preferences and their health choices. This is further complicated by the fact that traditional advertising regulations do not protect kids from advertising their products that are not healthy for them.

That’s why there is an important opportunity to draft legislation that will promote voluntary guidelines for foods and beverages marketed to kids. This will encourage companies to do a better job of choosing how and what they market to kids by focusing their advertising on products that benefit a health diet.

However, the food, beverage and advertising industries are pushing back hard and working to influence the White House and Congress to drop these voluntary guidelines from moving forward. In fact, we need strong grassroots voices to speak up even louder in favor of responsible food marketing to kids.

Tell the President to step up against industry pressure and put the health of our kids first.

Thank you for being part of the Dust!

-Debra

Director of Grassroots Advocacy, American Heart Association

Heart Disease and Stroke, Yours the Cure.
Online Actions

Advocates who submit a letter are counted as toward our goal for actions taken.
Offline Actions are considered all activities that networkers engage in except responding to action alerts. Examples include:

- Meetings with legislators including lobby days
- Phone calls to legislators
- Serving as a spokesperson on advocacy issues in the media or at a hearing
- Writing a Letter to the Editor
- Recruiting other advocates
- Participating in a training to learn more about advocacy
- Signing a petition card
How You Can Help!

- Sign up for *You’re the Cure*
- Take Action Online
  - Respond to our *You’re the Cure* action alerts
- Help recruit new networkers and attend upcoming events
- Attend Heart on the Hill Events
- Contact your lawmakers about emerging issues
A Few Past accomplishments...

- Freedom to Breathe
- Hannah’s Law
- Joint Use
- CPR in Schools
- Stroke System
- AED Registry
- Tobacco Tax
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Mission: Lifeline STEMI Grant/Reporting
2015 Legislative Issues...

• Prevent and Reduce Obesity

  - The Statewide Health Improvement Program **SHIP** provides state funding to local communities to support local efforts for reducing tobacco use, and increasing opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating. AHA will work to ensure that the Statewide Health Improvement Program is fully funded to provide programs statewide.

  - Evidence demonstrates that healthy, active children are better learners. Yet schools continue to reduce the amount of physical education provided to our children. AHA advocates legislation that will strengthen physical education in schools across Minnesota.
2015 Legislative Issues

• **Active Transportation Policy**
  
  - American Heart Association recommends sixty minutes of physical activity daily and bicycling and walking can provide a good opportunity for physical activity if it’s safe. AHA, as part of the Move MN campaign, will seek to pass a statewide comprehensive transportation bill that invests significant new funding in all modes of transportation including the first-ever dedicated funding for biking and walking to ensure we have the infrastructure and programs necessary to make it a safe choice to walk and bike.
2015 Legislative Issues

- **Improve Stroke Systems of Care**
  - AHA has played a leading role in Minnesota developing and implementing a comprehensive System of Care for acute stroke. AHA will seek funding for the Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention Unit at the MN Department of Health specifically to support the MN Stroke System, including support for the MN Stroke Registry Program, support for hospital designation, EMS and hospital training and a stroke hospital site visit program.
  - EMS transport protocols ensure that stroke patients in the field are being transported to them most appropriate facility to treat them quickly. AHA will seek legislation requiring EMS agencies to have written transfer protocols for Stroke patients that follow current national guidelines and best practices.
REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2015

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Wednesday, February 18th

Kelly Inn — 161 St Anthony Ave St Paul, MN 55103
7:00 AM—10:30 AM

Register online now:
www.surveymonkey.com/s/MNLEGBREAKFAST15
Or call 952-278-7928 by February 1, 2015

Join other advocates from Minnesota to speak with legislators in a strong, unified voice about the importance of acute care issues when treating heart disease and stroke. Attend workshops and training and then put your skills to the test when you meet with your state legislators.

Breakfast is included. **No cost to attend but advance registration is required**

For more information, please contact Jess Nolan
jess.nolan@heart.org or 952-278-7928
Grassroots Advocacy

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead
To join You’re the Cure

1) Fill out a petition today or...

2) TEXT to join!

1. Text HEART to 69866
2. Reply back to the follow-up text with your name, email and zip

Thanks for joining our You’re the Cure network!
QUESTIONS?

Justin.Bell@Heart.Org