Ambassador Talking Points:  
A Toolkit for Meeting with your Elected Officials

January 2015

The monthly Ambassador Talking Points Toolkit is a monthly resource from the National Council to help you schedule meetings with your elected officials about timely topics. Each edition highlights one current policy issue, providing:

- **Background** on why the issue is important and timely;
- **Talking points and a fact sheet** you can leave behind with legislators and staff;
- **A sample meeting request letter** for this issue; and
- **A link to the Ambassador Network Meeting Report** so the National Council team can follow-up as needed in Washington, DC.

Of course, you can discuss whatever topics you like when you schedule your meetings with your elected officials – but if you need a little inspiration, we hope you find Ambassador Talking Points a useful tool as you continue to build your relationship with Members of Congress and their staff. **Don't forget:** National Council Ambassadors have agreed to meet with legislators and/or staff at least three times per year. Get started today.

*Questions? Contact Michael Petruzzelli at michaelp@thenationalcouncil.org*

### Issue Of The Month: Mental Health First Aid

**Background**
The Mental Health First Aid Act authorizes $20 million in grants to fund Mental Health First Aid training programs around the country. This legislation was introduced in 2013 but did not pass; it must now be reintroduced in the new Congress. Representative Lynn Jenkins (R-KS) and Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-AK) will reintroduce the bill (likely this winter) and are looking for a large group of bipartisan cosponsors.

**Our Objective**
To recruit Senators and Representatives from both parties as cosponsors of the Mental Health First Aid Act of 2015.

**Take Action!**
- **Your task:** Schedule a meeting with your Senator(s) and/or Representative to remind them of the importance of the Mental Health First Aid Act.
- **Your ask:** “Please cosponsor this bill when it is reintroduced.”
Your pre-meeting homework: Find out if your legislator cosponsored the Mental Health First Aid Act last year (click to check the list of Senate and House cosponsors). If so, thank them for their support and urge them to cosponsor the bill once again!

Your Toolkit

- **Fact sheet** with talking points on the Mental Health First Aid Act that you can leave behind for legislators and staff to review. *(Hint: the talking points are in bold text!)*
- **Additional information** on the Mental Health First Aid Act and other related policy initiatives.
- **A sample letter/e-mail** requesting an opportunity to meet with your legislator and/or staffer.

A Word to the Wise (responding to common questions)

- You might get asked whether the bill will be the same this year as last. As of right now, we are not aware of any major changes to the bill language in 2015.
- You might get asked why we need this legislation given that Congress appropriated $15 million for Mental Health First Aid in 2014 and 2015. The Mental Health First Aid Act will help solidify the future of this funding by providing statutory authorization clearly delineating Congressional intent.

Don’t Forget to Tell Us How It Went!
Once you’ve met with your legislators and/or staff, please provide feedback to the National Council’s policy team so we can close the loop with staff the next time we meet with them here in DC. This simple step helps increase your impact and helps us measure the results of our collective efforts. **Take a moment to complete the short feedback form here.**