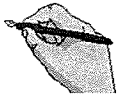


## **Grassroots**

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## Overview



An effective grassroots program is a vital component of advocacy. The program takes time to build, but with consistent and well-maintained effort, can grow each year. Part of the time needed to build an effective program is (1) the time it takes to educate and build trusting relationships with legislators, and (2) the time it takes to develop a broad and diverse (Masters, Fellow, residents and students; representation of each from every district; experienced and new volunteers) pool of Key Contacts.

The following topics are the main components for developing an effective grassroots program. Further information is provided on:

1. What is a Key Contact?
2. Writing Alerts
3. E-mailing and calling Legislators
4. Lobby Day
5. Lobby Day Checklist
6. Additional Grassroots Actions

If you have any questions or need further information, feel free to contact Jolynne M. Flores, Supervisor Grassroots Advocacy and PAC, at [jflores@acponline.org](mailto:jflores@acponline.org) or 202-261-4532.

# 1. What is a Key Contact?



A chapter's success with its state legislature greatly depends upon year-round grassroots support from chapter members who volunteer as Key Contacts. Key Contacts communicate with their legislative representative, as constituents, on issues of importance to medical students, and internists and their patients.

A chapter will ideally have active Key Contacts from every district within the state. A Key Contact program is an excellent means for getting more chapter members involved. Because health care legislation has a direct impact on your members' professional lives, there can be a sizeable segment of your membership that can be motivated to become involved in health care advocacy.

Constituents are the people the legislator has been elected to represent. A constituent can be the powerful voice to communicate to an individual legislator. A constituent can speak directly to the legislator on how the legislation will impact him/her—and the patients within the district—directly. Knowing how legislation will affect constituents can move a legislator to action. Key Contacts became the constituent voice for your chapter.

Key Contacts count on the chapter to keep them abreast of the issues and to inform them of the opportune time for them to communicate with their legislators.

Keep your Key Contacts informed. Make communicating to their legislators easy.

