

## Calling your Local Legislators

Picking up the phone is a quick and easy way to connect with your local legislators. A phone call is more direct than a letter and is a great way to educate them about [Be The Match®](#). It's also an effective way to schedule an in-person meeting.

### **Before the Call**

First, find out who represents your district, as well as their contact information, by visiting your state legislature's [website](#).

Make sure you prepare your message. Review the representative's platforms and agenda. Know the bills for which he or she voted and prepare notes to help tell your story. It may even help to rehearse your story, or write out your key points on a sheet of paper.

### **During the Call**

You'll likely reach a staff member of your representative's office. Their job is to manage incoming requests. However, this won't change the way you present your story.

- You'll first want to introduce yourself to the staff member. Be sure to let them know that you are a constituent in your representative's district.
- Ask to speak or leave a message with the aide who handles the issue on which you wish to comment. Make sure you write down the full name of the staff member you talked to for future reference.
- Once you are connected to the appropriate aide, let them know that you would like to leave a brief message for the legislator. (A sample script is below.)
- Keep in mind that your representatives and their staffers are very busy, so it's important to be concise. Be sure to include a "call to action," meaning ask a question that requires a response. Speak slowly and clearly so the person listening can take any necessary notes.
- When you are done with the conversation, politely thank the person on the other end for their time and consideration.

The following call script can be used by transplant recipients, donors or registry members to share your story and request a meeting. It's also a great way to follow-up after you send your local representative a letter.

### **Sample Call Script**

Hello, my name is [name], I'm a resident in your district. [Add personal story – e.g., I received a life-saving marrow transplant in 2004]. I'm hoping to schedule a meeting with [Rep. name] to share my story, and let [him/her] know that this would not be possible without Be The Match®, which is the federal contractor for the C.W. Bill Young Cell Transplantation Program and the National Cord Blood Inventory.

Do you have a minute to listen to my story?

**If yes:** [Add more of story here, but be concise]

There are hundreds of people in [your state] who need a marrow or umbilical cord blood transplant, and even more patients in need across the United States.  
The continued congressional support of the Be The Match is critical to saving more lives.

Does [Rep. name] have time in the coming weeks to meet with me and a Be The Match representative to hear my story and learn about the importance of marrow and cord blood donation?

**If no:** I understand.

I'll call back in the coming months to see if [his/her] schedule is less hectic. I know this issue is important to thousands of people in our state and country. Thanks so much for your time.

Note: If you are leaving a message on an answering machine, make sure to clearly state your name and provide a phone number or email address.

### **After the Call**

Whether you spoke to your representative or a staffer, it's very important to send a thank you note, preferably hand-written. Be sure to reference some of the topics discussed during your conversation. If you promised to send any additional information, such as brochures of fact sheets, you can send these materials with the thank you letter.