

2019 Argentum Grassroots Toolkit

DEAR ARGENTUM ADVOCATE,

Thank you for taking an interest in getting involved in advocacy efforts to help advance the senior living industry and the residents served. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the number of people using long-term care settings is expected to jump from 15 million in 2000 to 27 million in 2050—in large part due to the expanding population of older adults. Due to the increasing need for care and services for aging Americans, it is critical, now more than ever, to engage in the governmental process.

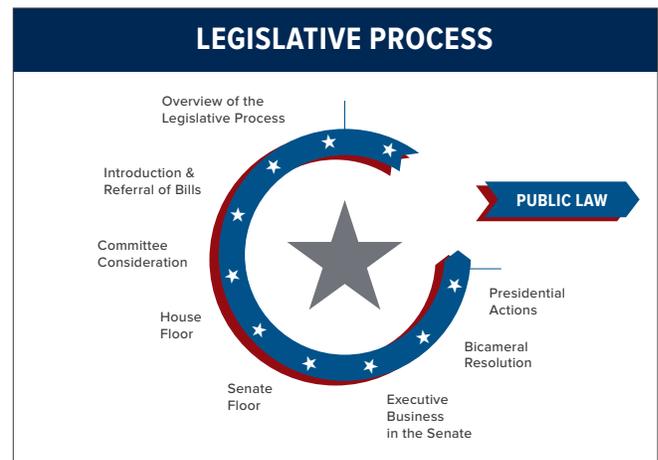
Motivated advocates will help drive the changes needed at the state and federal levels. The Argentum public policy team has created this tool kit for you and your team to use as a guide as you engage in efforts across the government spectrum. This tool kit will explore the importance of grassroots advocacy and provide you with the tools needed to effectively communicate with your lawmakers. Together, we can make a difference on Capitol Hill and in statehouses across the country.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

Through grassroots advocacy, we have the opportunity to reach out to our elected officials and let our voice be heard. If we join together to advocate for a common cause, such as support of the senior living industry, our voice becomes stronger and louder, leading to successful victories.

One of Argentum’s top priorities is to monitor legislative and regulatory activity on the federal and state levels. Our goal is to advocate for meaningful laws and regulations and try to prevent passage of reform that would negatively impact our member companies and the residents they serve. With your help, we will be able to achieve these goals.

Overview of the Legislative Process



Source: Congress.gov

Visit [congress.gov/legislative-process](https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process) for a 5-minute video that provides an overview on each section of the process.

Overview of Advocacy Website

The Argentum public policy team encourages you to utilize our website at [argentum.org/advocacy](https://www.argentum.org/advocacy) as a resource for your advocacy needs. There, you’ll find access to a resource bank of information for various policy areas, links to state partners, copies of congressional testimonies, contact information for congressional committees and federal agencies, past advocacy reports, and an interactive map to track bills on the state and federal levels. You will also find opportunities to support or oppose legislative or regulatory proposals as well as see other ways to participate as an Argentum advocate. In addition, you can view template letters to elected officials regarding certain issue areas. The Argentum team will regularly post “Calls to Action” for Argentum advocates to reach out to their lawmakers with step-by-step instructions.

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Annual Public Policy Institute & Fly-In

As an Argentum member, we invite you to join us in Washington, D.C. for Argentum's annual Public Policy Institute & Fly-In. This two-day event educates Argentum members on the most pressing topics and proposed legislation impacting senior living businesses and the residents served.

Each year, senior living industry professionals gather on Capitol Hill to meet with senators, representatives, and federal agency staff to discuss key legislative and regulatory issues. The event offers a powerful opportunity for senior living professionals to advocate for policies that will advance seniors' quality of life and allow senior living communities across the country to continue providing quality care. This event is a complimentary benefit for Argentum members.

Learn more about past events on our website at argentum.org/ppi.



Argentum members engaging with Senator Bob Casey (PA) during the annual Public Policy Institute & Fly-In.

COMMUNITY TOURS WITH A LEGISLATOR

Many members of Congress have never visited or toured a senior living community, so there is opportunity to invite them to see how a community cares for residents and employees. It is imperative for elected officials to tour a community because their visit will impact their views on some policy items. Hosting an elected official at a community is a great way to educate representatives and/or senators about what senior living is and the numerous benefits it offers to older adults and the workforce opportunities it provides for staff. This is an effective grassroots activity that can encourage lawmakers to support

senior living providers and our mission to protect and advance the industry. Here is a step-by-step process you can follow to host a successful community tour with your elected official.

Step 1: Send your Senator or Representative an Invitation

First, you will want to identify which elected official you plan to invite for a tour. We recommend you identify the state representative/assemblyman, state senator, U.S. House of Representatives member, and U.S. Senator(s) that represent the district in which your community is located. Next, you will send out an invitation letter requesting their presence for a community tour. We have prepared a template letter for you to use (see final page).

Step 2: Work with Argentum and Your State Partner

If the elected official accepts the invitation and a date is scheduled for a tour, contact a member of the Argentum public policy team to provide additional guidance and talking points for a successful visit. We suggest you work with the executive director of the Argentum partner in your state, as they can play a vital role in the community tour.

Step 3: Alert Staff and Residents

Inviting an elected official to your community can be exciting for the staff and residents of your community. Be sure to notify staff and residents prior to the event so they are aware an elected official will be on-site touring the community. If the elected official has the time, perhaps s/he can host a town hall, visit with residents or staff, or participate in another activity at the community.

Step 4: Take Pictures

Take pictures of the legislator interacting with residents and staff while touring the community. You can share these photos with the legislator's staff and utilize them for public relations and community awareness opportunities. Also, don't forget to share them with the Argentum public policy team so your community can be featured in our Argentum Advocates for You e-newsletters and Argentum social media accounts.

Step 5: Follow Up

Show your appreciation to the legislator and his or her staff for their time by sending a thank you note.

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Members of the Texas Assisted Living Association, an Argentum state partner, during an annual Advocacy Day at the Texas state capitol.

MEETINGS WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR

It's not necessary to be in D.C. or at your state capitol to engage in advocacy activities. One way you can be part of the movement is to meet with your elected officials in your area

You can locate your representative's or senators' district office locations [here](#) and reach out to their office for a meeting request. The purpose of your meeting can be an educational meeting to inform the staff and elected officials about senior living and your company as well as the impact you have on your elected officials' district/state. You can also request to schedule a meeting to express your support, opposition, or interest in a specific piece of legislation. In this toolkit, you will find an example of two letters you can use when requesting a meeting. The Argentum Public Policy team kindly asks you to reach out to them for additional guidance to help you gather talking points and further preparation needs.

CONTACT US

For any additional questions, please contact Paul Williams, VP, Government Relations, at pwilliams@argentum.org or 703-562-1183.



Congressman Don Beyer (VA) visited the Argentum office in Alexandria, Va., along with representatives from Kensington Senior Living, Silverado, and Brandywine Living.

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ARGENTUM STAR PROGRAM

Advocate for Excellence in Senior Living

Argentum has launched a new advocacy program named **Argentum STAR**. Its goals are to encourage year-round advocacy from Argentum membership, to identify Argentum's top advocates, and to reward those advocates with a special distinction for their extraordinary efforts on behalf of senior living. This is an Argentum member-only program.

Argentum advocates are some of the most dedicated champions of senior living and we want to celebrate the hard work and efforts of member communities advocating on behalf of Argentum's principle of resident-centered care. The purpose of the Argentum STAR program is to encourage strong relationship building with elected officials and their staffs across the country.

All senior living professionals are encouraged to participate; with three participation levels, **Argentum Platinum STAR**, **Argentum Gold STAR**, and **Argentum Silver STAR**, anyone from a caregiver to a CEO can be an Argentum STAR. Any individual seeking to become an Argentum STAR must first identify which level they plan to reach and apply for further direction.

PATHWAY TO BECOMING AN ARGENTUM STAR

Argentum member advocates applying for the program must identify which state(s) they plan to complete the program and must accomplish the criteria below within a year, beginning on the day the individual's application is submitted. For example, if you submit your application to be an Argentum STAR on May 15, 2019 then you have through May 14, 2020 to complete the level-specific criteria:

Argentum Platinum STAR criteria:

- Meet with at least one U.S. House member office in their district or Washington D.C.
- Meet with at least one U.S. Senate member office in their district or Washington D.C.
- Attend state partner hill days in the state(s) OR meet with at least one state House or state Senate member office;
- Host or attend a community tour for at least one state and/or federal elected official in the state(s);

- Attend Argentum's Public Policy Institute and Fly-In (must attend both days);
- Get residents and families involved, by having them write a letter to an elected official; and,
- Sign on to at least one 'support' or 'oppose' letter from Argentum's federal advocacy webpage.

Argentum Gold STAR criteria:

- Meet with at least one U.S. House member and/or U.S. Senate member office;
- Attend state partner hill days in the state(s) OR meet with at least one state House or state Senate member.

Argentum Silver STAR criteria:

- Sign on to at least one 'support' or 'oppose' letter from Argentum's federal advocacy webpage; and,
- Share a positive story on social media and tag your elected official.

APPLICATION & TRACKING PROCESS

If an Argentum member chooses to enroll in the Argentum STAR program, the member will need to complete an application via the Argentum website. Once submitted, the member company will receive a document for each state for which they applied, with the program criteria and a checklist to follow for completion. After the Argentum member satisfies all requirements, they will submit their completed form to a member of the Argentum public policy team for review.

ARGENTUM STAR RECOGNITION

Argentum STAR's will be honored with the following:

- Argentum STAR award; and,
- Recognition in the Argentum Advocates for You e-newsletter.

Initial Launch Date: June 1st, 2019

If you plan to participate, please complete the online application at argentum.org/starprogram.

For questions, please contact Paul Williams, VP, Government Relations, at pwilliams@argentum.org.

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TEMPLATE LETTER: MEETING REQUEST WITH AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

[INSERT NAME OF ELECTED OFFICIAL]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Dear [INSERT ELECTED OFFICIAL NAME],

As a constituent of your [INSERT DISTRICT OR STATE], I am writing to request a meeting with you to discuss issues of importance to [INSERT COMMUNITY NAME] and the senior living industry. I am hopeful that your schedule will permit us an opportunity to meet on [INSERT DATE], at your office in [INSERT CITY OF DISTRICT OFFICE].

As you know, assisted living is a home and community based option where seniors receive assistance with some daily activities in a place they can call home. [INSERT COMMUNITY NAME] has [INSERT NUMBER OF RESIDENTS] and over [INSERT NUMBER OF STAFF] staff members. I hope to work with you and your staff to ensure seniors in our community have an opportunity to age with dignity, independence and choice.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request. I look forward to meeting you, and to building a strong working relationship with you and your staff.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME AND JOB TITLE & CONTACT INFORMATION]

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TEMPLATE LETTER: INVITATION TO AN ELECTED OFFICIAL

[INSERT NAME OF ELECTED OFFICIAL]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Dear [INSERT ELECTED OFFICIAL NAME],

I would like to invite you to visit [INSERT COMMUNITY NAME], a senior living community located at [INSERT ADDRESS, CITY, STATE]. As [INSERT TITLE] of the community, I would gladly give you a tour and organize an informal event where you could meet some of your constituents: the residents, the employees, and the family members of seniors living at [INSERT COMMUNITY NAME].

As you know, assisted living is a home and community-based option where seniors receive assistance with some daily activities in a place they can call home. [INSERT COMMUNITY NAME] has [INSERT NUMBER OF RESIDENTS] and over [INSERT NUMBER OF STAFF] staff members. Many of these individuals are politically engaged and all have firsthand experience with seniors' issues. They would be thankful for any time spent talking to them and learning about our community.

I appreciate all the work you have already done on behalf of seniors and look forward to hearing from you soon regarding your visit to the community.

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME, JOB TITLE & CONTACT INFORMATION]