

One of the best ways to create change in our communities is to share personal stories with elected officials, and this is especially important for members of the disability community.

What is “my story”?

- Your story is when you share about your life



Why should people share their stories?

- Elected officials make rules and laws called policies, that affect persons with disabilities.
- Elected officials need to think about what policies people want.
- They need to learn how a problem affects people in real life.
- When people who have disabilities lead and share their own stories, other people understand it is possible for them, too.

What should I share in my story?

There are four key things to include in your personal story for an elected officials:

1

Introduction

2

Issue or Problem

3

Solution and “Ask”

4

Closing and “Thank You”

Plan Your Story

Fill out this form to create your personal story

LET ME TELL YOU A LITTLE BIT ABOUT MYSELF...

I AM EXPERIENCING A CHALLENGE, PROBLEM, OR CONCERN THAT IMPACTS MY QUALITY OF LIFE. THIS ISSUE IS...

YOU CAN HELP SOLVE THIS ISSUE BY...



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IN CLOSING, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK...



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Create Your Story

Introduction

When writing or sharing an introduction to your personal story, include information about yourself that you might share when meeting someone for the first time

Examples:

- Your name
- Where you live (city or district)
- What has happened in your life (past and present)
- Important people in your life

Example

Hi my name is Martha and I live in Winona MN. I am a self-advocate. I live with my mom, dad, and dog Teddy. I like to be involved in my community and want to start volunteering at a local animal shelter.

Issue or Problem

Think about a problem or policy that affects you or someone you care about

Help elected officials understand how the issue:

- Impacts your quality of life
- The supports you depend upon
- Your health or financial stability
- Inclusion in the community

Example

Right now, I am concerned about transportation. I do not have a Driver's License so I have to depend on the city bus system to stay involved in my community. The city buses in town only run at certain times and routes. There are very few routes available for people in my community limiting our access to building community, employment and living a quality life.

Solution and “Ask”

What things could have made your life better

What you want to see happen next in your life

What you want to happen for other people who have lives like you

Your story should always include an “ask”. This can be an idea or solutions that can help:

- Overcome a challenge
- Meet a specific need
- Make sure other bad things don’t happen

Example

Im asking you to support policies that increase accessible transportation options for people with disabilities. By supporting these policies, you will help many Minnesotans with disabilities gain better access to their community and become more independent.

Closing and “Thank You”

Whenever you share your story with an elected official, be sure to thank them for taking the time to read your letter or meet with you. It is important for them to know that we appreciate the work they do!

Example

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. I really appreciate all the work you do. I am counting on you to support policies that increase accessible transportation options for people with disabilities.