



August Recess Guide

Most years, the U.S. Congress recesses for the month of August. Senators and representatives return to their state and/or congressional district and reconnect with constituents.

This is a great opportunity for local advocates to engage with elected officials, ask questions and share concerns. Here are some ideas.



Participate in a town hall meeting

Elected officials traditionally hold town hall meetings in their districts in August. This is a great way to lift your voice alongside those of your fellow community members.

During a town hall, your legislator will answer questions. Your question can spark an important conversation and hold your legislator publicly accountable.

- Visit your legislator's website. If he or she is hosting a town hall, the date, time and location should be posted.
- To identify or find contact information for your legislator, use a lookup tool such as www.govtrack.us.
- Timely questions and talking points based upon ELCA Advocacy priorities are available on the [ELCA Advocacy blog](#).

Schedule an in-district meeting

Consider planning an in-district meeting with other members of your congregation or group. This is a great opportunity to raise concerns and emphasize your foundational values, experience and ideas.

- A step-by-step guide for planning and maximizing effectiveness of an in-district meeting is available at elca.org/resources/advocacy.

Organize a moment-in-time event

The more people who unite behind a single issue at once, the bigger their impact! If your congregation or group is energized around an

Our ELCA Advocacy Network

Reach out to your ELCA state public policy office in more than 16 states from the list available at

ELCA.org/resources/advocacy

or to ELCA Advocacy national office staff at

washingtonoffice@elca.org.

We are available to answer your questions and aid you in the process.

Be part of the ELCA Advocacy Network year-round, and receive news and Action Alerts at impactful moments through

ELCA.org/advocacy/signup.

advocacy issue important to your community, consider additional ways to draw your legislator's attention.

- Host an open meeting of prayer and discernment around faith and public policy.
- Identify the critical question or issue you would like your legislator to address.
- Organize a call-in: To determine your legislator's contact numbers, use a lookup tool such as www.govtrack.us or call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121. Choose a target day, then ask your cohort to call in that day and share your message.
- Plan a social media burst: Create a hashtag that reflects your message. Use a lookup tool such as www.govtrack.us to identify your legislator's social media handle. Choose a target day, then ask your cohort to post tagged content that day and enlist others in the effort.

Amplify your experience

- On social media, tag your legislators with a message of thanks. Following up with a traditional thank-you note is also appropriate. This will encourage your lawmaker to remember your stance and possibly implement it into policy.
- Use social media to encourage your friends to take action too!
- Using the ELCA Advocacy [In-district Activity Form](#), please share your experience during August recess with ELCA Advocacy. Doing so may help us build attention to issues in future encounters.