

2020 Advocacy & Policy Agenda

Bereavement care in America is broken.
It's time for change.

NAGC
May 2020

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Agenda

1. Introductions
2. DC context
3. Policy agenda and goals
4. Advocacy tools
5. Q&A

Introductions

Joyal “Joy-al” Mulheron

- Founder & Executive Director
- Not a therapist or social worker!

Experience in DC policy.

- Worked with both Rs and Ds.
- Public health or population health work.
- Spent the last few years talking to thousands of individuals and professionals.

Evermore

Evermore, a nonprofit, is dedicated to making the world a more livable place for bereaved families by:

1. Raising awareness
2. Advancing research
3. Advocating for a better tomorrow

- Founded in 2014 by a bereaved parent
- Started with child death – implications on parents and siblings
- 2019 broadening the base to include children and spouses



Advocate (verb) / Advisor (noun)

according to Merriam-Webster

ad·vo·cate | \ 'ad-və-, kāt

1: to support or argue for (a cause, policy, etc.) : to [plead](#) in favor of

2: to act as advocate for someone or something

ad·vis·er | /əd'vīzər/

1: a person who gives advice in a particular field.

Key Offices

1. The White House aka "The Administration"
 - Internal policy offices (e.g., DPC, Domestic Policy Council)
 - Federal agencies report to the WH
 - POTUS is the "CEO" of these agencies
2. U.S. House of Representatives (1 Representative per district, based on population)
 - Oversight of federal agencies and national "issue" management
 - Constituent services
3. U.S. Senate (2 Senators per state)
 - Oversight of federal agencies and national "issue" management
 - Constituent services

Legislator Authority

535 Members of Congress: 100 Senate, 435 House

All members are divided into Committees to conduct the business in the House and in the Senate.

For example, there are 24 Senate committees and many subcommittees.

Example: Appropriations Committee has 12 subcommittees:

[Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies](#)

[Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies](#)

[Department of Defense](#)

[Department of Homeland Security](#)

[Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies](#)

[Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies](#)

Align issue to member authority

Every member serves on multiple committees.

Your member may have authority/jurisdiction over your topic area.

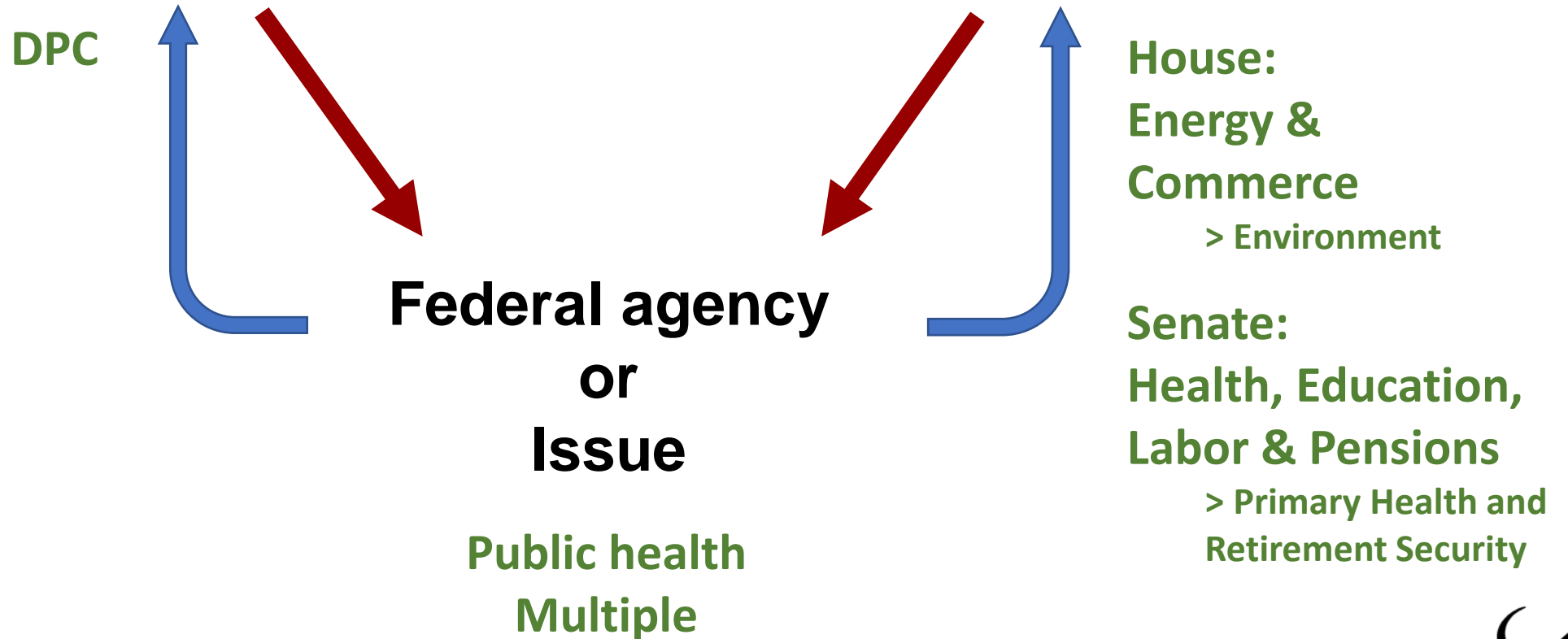
Often, however, they do not have a direct connection.

Grow "grassroots" for shared interest advocacy.

Federal agencies

The White House

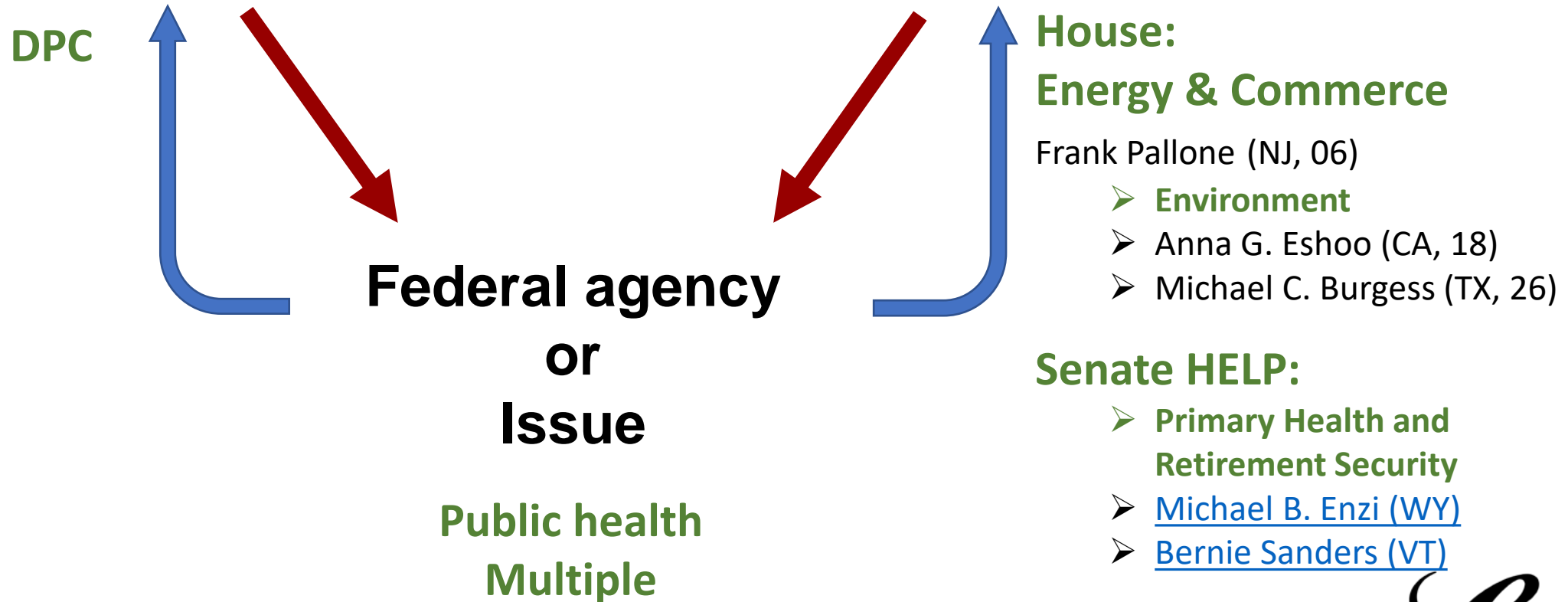
Congress



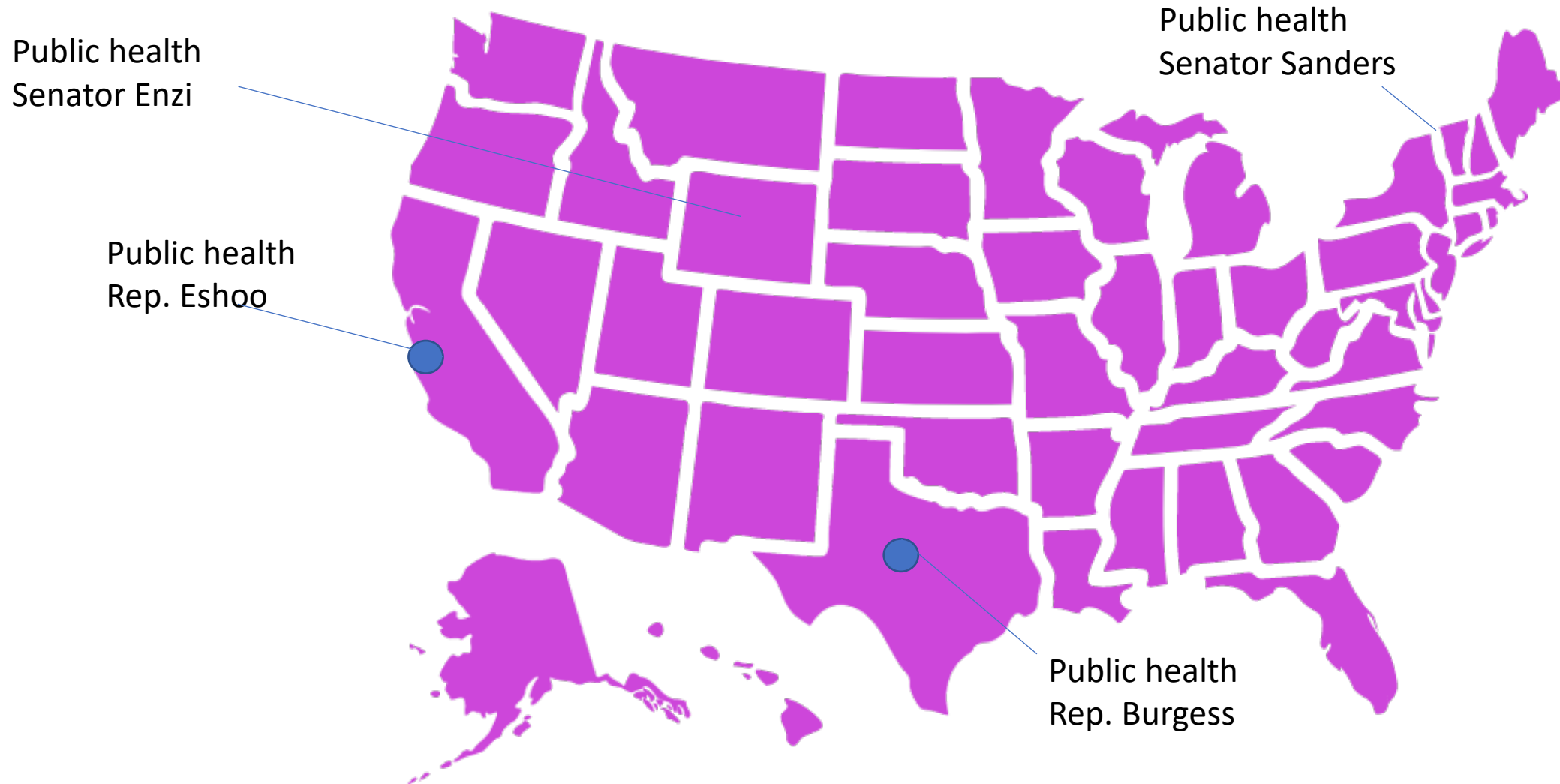
Federal agencies

The White House

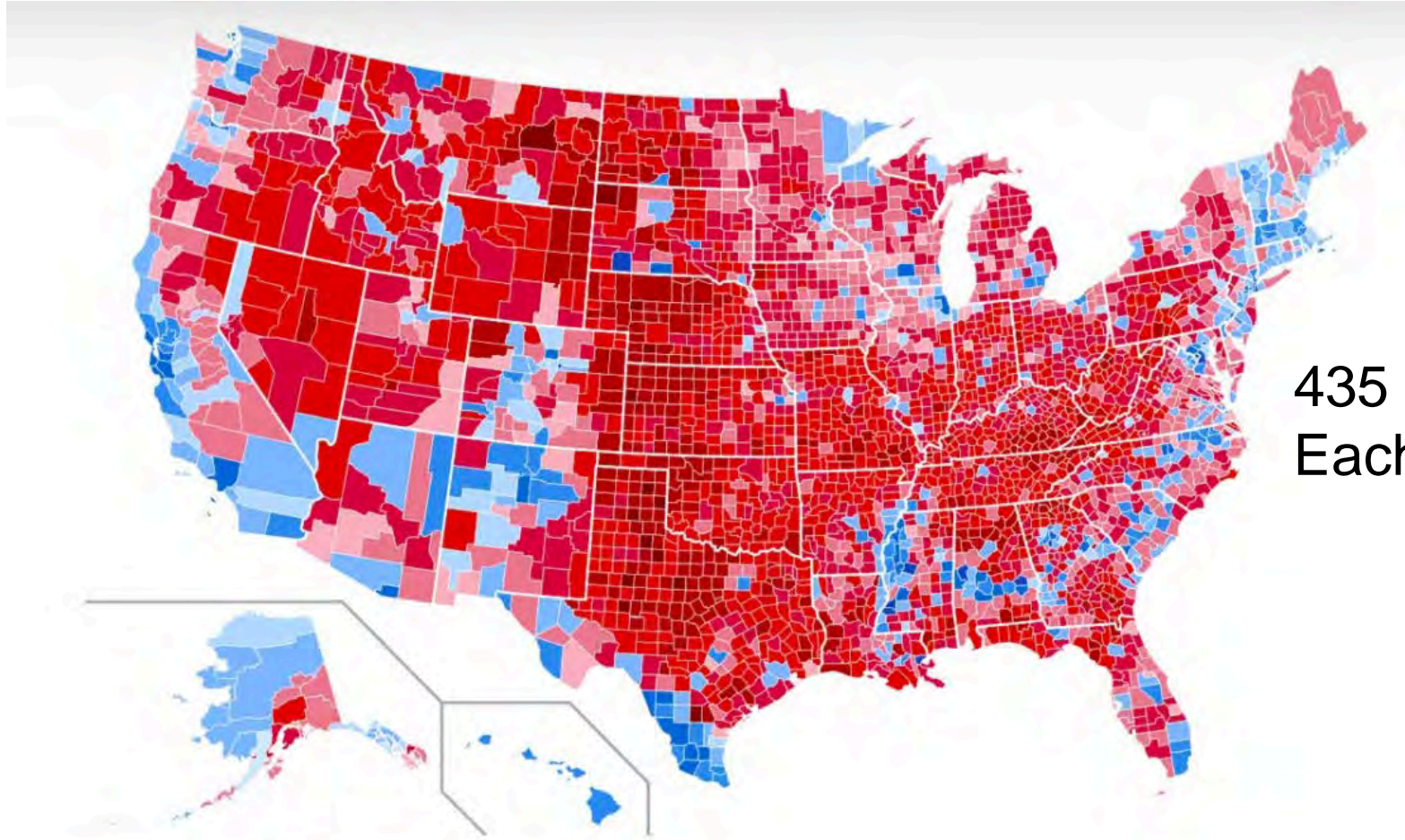
Congress



National “Grassroots”



National “Grassroots” District Map



435 districts
Each representing ~700,000 people

United States presidential election results by county, 2016.

Map via Wikimedia Commons

Why now?

- National mortality trends.
- People are listening differently.
- Proven innovation in social systems, technology and connectedness.
- Ability to imagine new practices.

Congress is the long game!

Long-term policy objectives:

1. Increase investment in research
2. Increased investments in family programming
3. Increased investments in professional education, development and support

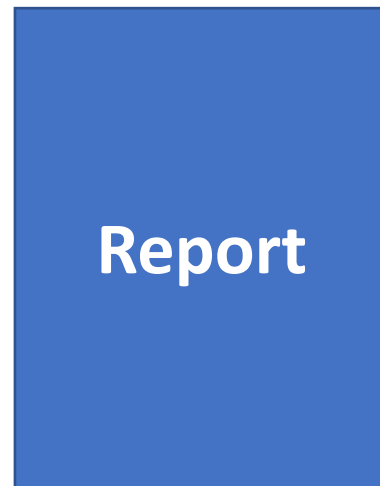
2020 Congressional Policy Goals

1. Appropriations “report language”
2. Socialize the topic
3. Build relationships
4. Identify “champions”

“Appropriations” Season



- Bill with budgeted cash amounts
Eg, Similar to a grant budget



- Description of how to spend allocations
Eg, Similar to a grant budget narrative

- 1) US budget
- 2) Season
- 3) US Bill
- 4) Report language that requires U.S. Health & Human Services agencies (CDC, HRSA, SAMSHA, OMH, NIH, etc). to report back to Congress what they are doing on “bereavement care.”

FY 21 US Budget

U.S. House:

- Jan/Feb: Met with chair of health approps **Rep DeLauro's** office and ranking member **Tom Cole's** office, as well other health appropriators
- Mar: Rep DeLauro would consider the measure if we could circulate a letter and garner signatories
- Deadline March 13th
- March 10th/11th: **Rep. Lloyd Doggett** leads the letter.
- March 11th and 12th: Garner signatories
 - **Chairwoman Nina Lowey** of House Approps endorses the measure
- March 13th: Letter formally submitted

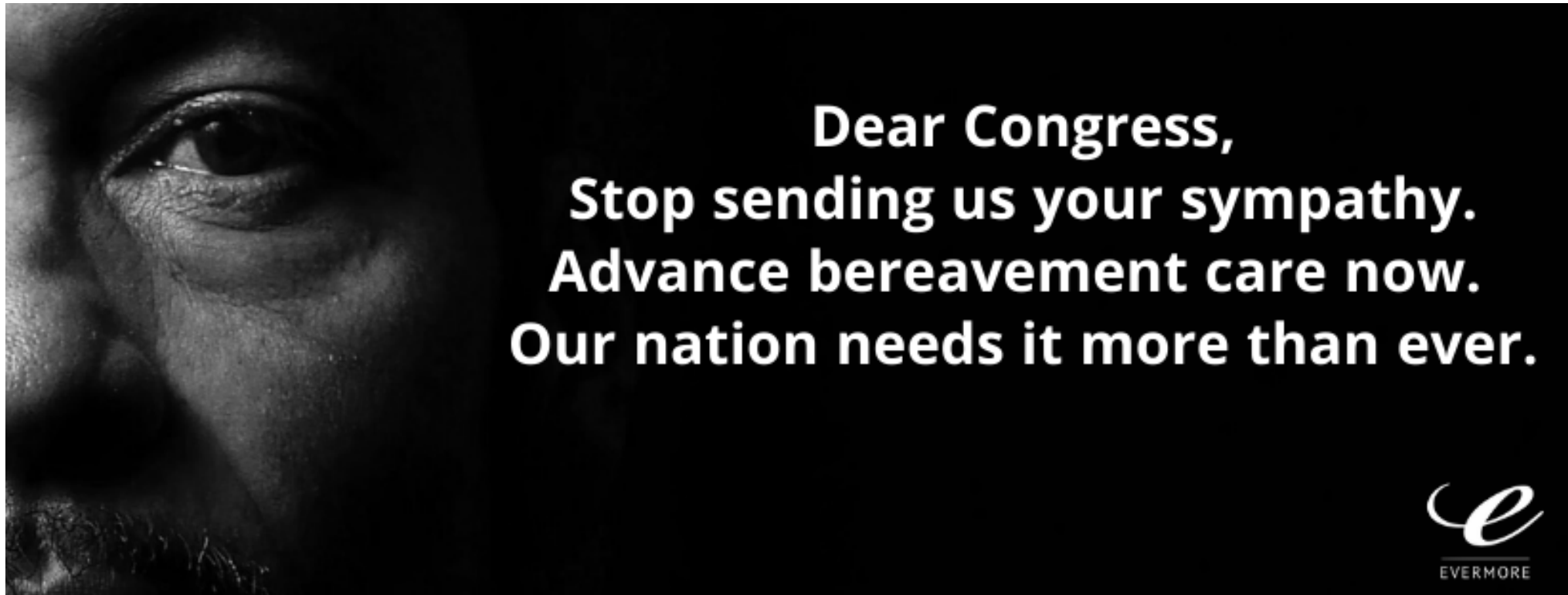
Congressional Policy Agenda

1. Examine bereavement leave policies among employers with more than 50 employees *(agency level)*
2. Re-institute the full fertility module in the U.S. Census Bureau Current Population Survey (CPS) *(agency level)*
3. Examine and push for bereaved children to have access Social Security benefits *(agency level)*
4. Make child death an eligible event for unpaid FMLA leave *(Act of Congress, unlikely 2020)*
 - *Other relationships?*
 - *Age?*

Tools

- Emails
- Calls
- Hearings
- Op-eds, LOE
- Site visits
- Petitions, etc

Tools



Roles

Your role

1. Your voice is powerful.
2. Delegates want to hear from constituents.
3. Sharing your interest and why this is important.

Our role

1. Coordination.
2. Strategy.
3. Talking points/communication.
4. Policy expertise

Core Messaging

Bereavement care

- Intentional word choice
- Aligns with health care
- Not mental health
- Families and professionals

Public health problem

- Nearly every person will experience it
- Shortens life span,
- “Systems” approach to the issue (the other 23 hours)
- Institutional policies and programs
 - Hospital practices during a stillbirth.
 - Law enforcement practices on a death scene.
 - Transitioning from a rescue scene to a crime scene.
 - Benefits for professionals themselves.

If interested...

1. Determine who are your representatives?
<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members>
2. Send your delegates (or House Rep) to hello@live-evermore.org
3. Follow delegates on social media
4. Sign-up for delegate newsletters

How do we achieve success?

Externally

1. Common language.
2. One voice.
3. Unified.
4. Everyone can help. This is not a partisan issue.

Internally

1. Recognize that we are at the beginning of this.
2. It will evolve. It will take time. We will disagree.
3. Respect everyone's position and contributions.

*****Dynamic environment – things will change mostly unpredictably*****

Questions?