

Advocating at the State House

2 0 2 4

What to Expect & Crafting your Message

Nina Crowley, PhD, RDN

Professional Affiliations and Education Manager

seca Body Composition Analysis Division

Federal

Tim Scott (R)



Lindsay Graham (R)



Nancy Mace (R)



Joe Wilson (R)



Jeff Duncan (R)



William
Timmons (R)



Ralph Norman (R)



Jim Clyburn (D)

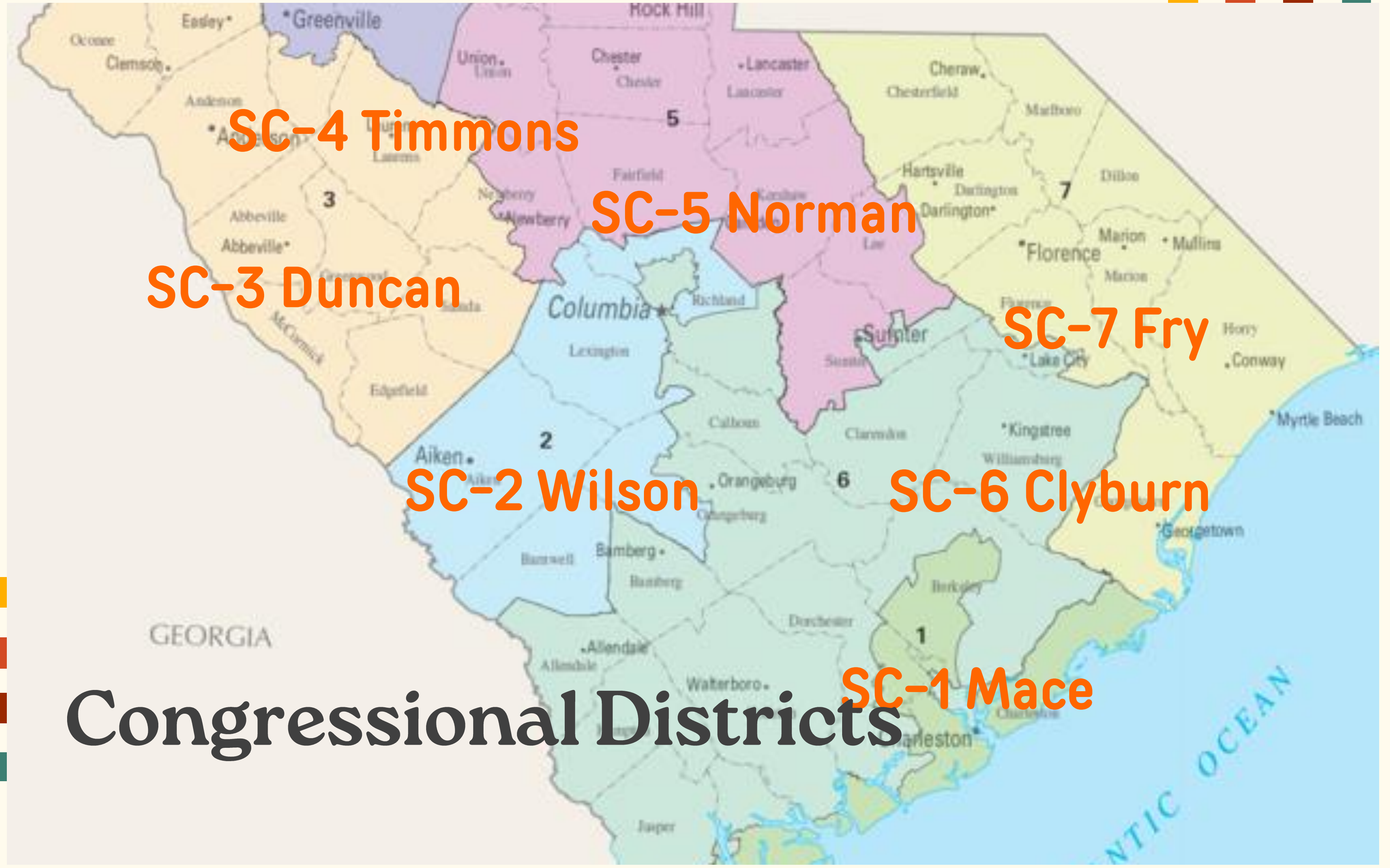


Russell Fry (R)

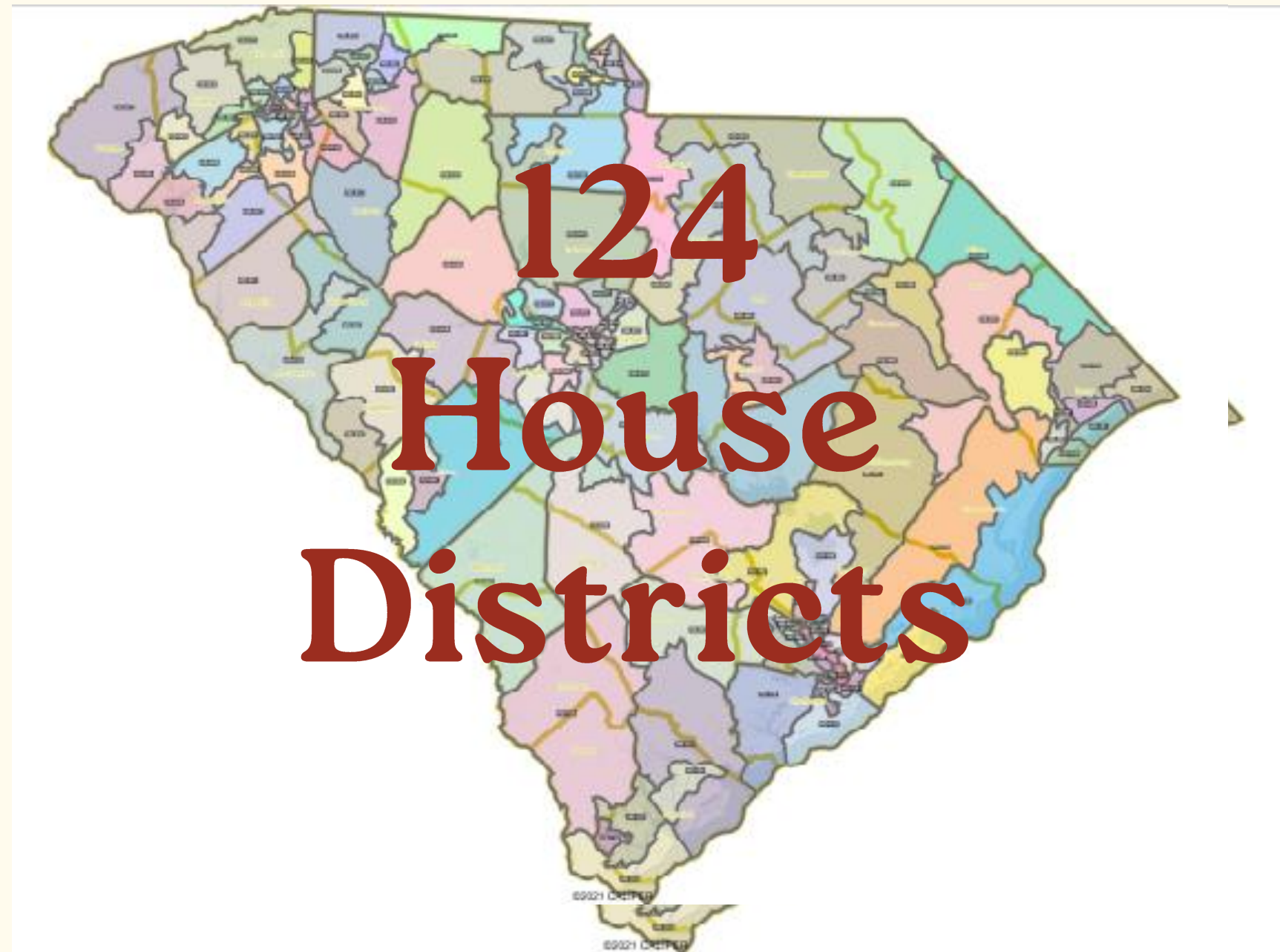


Congressional Districts

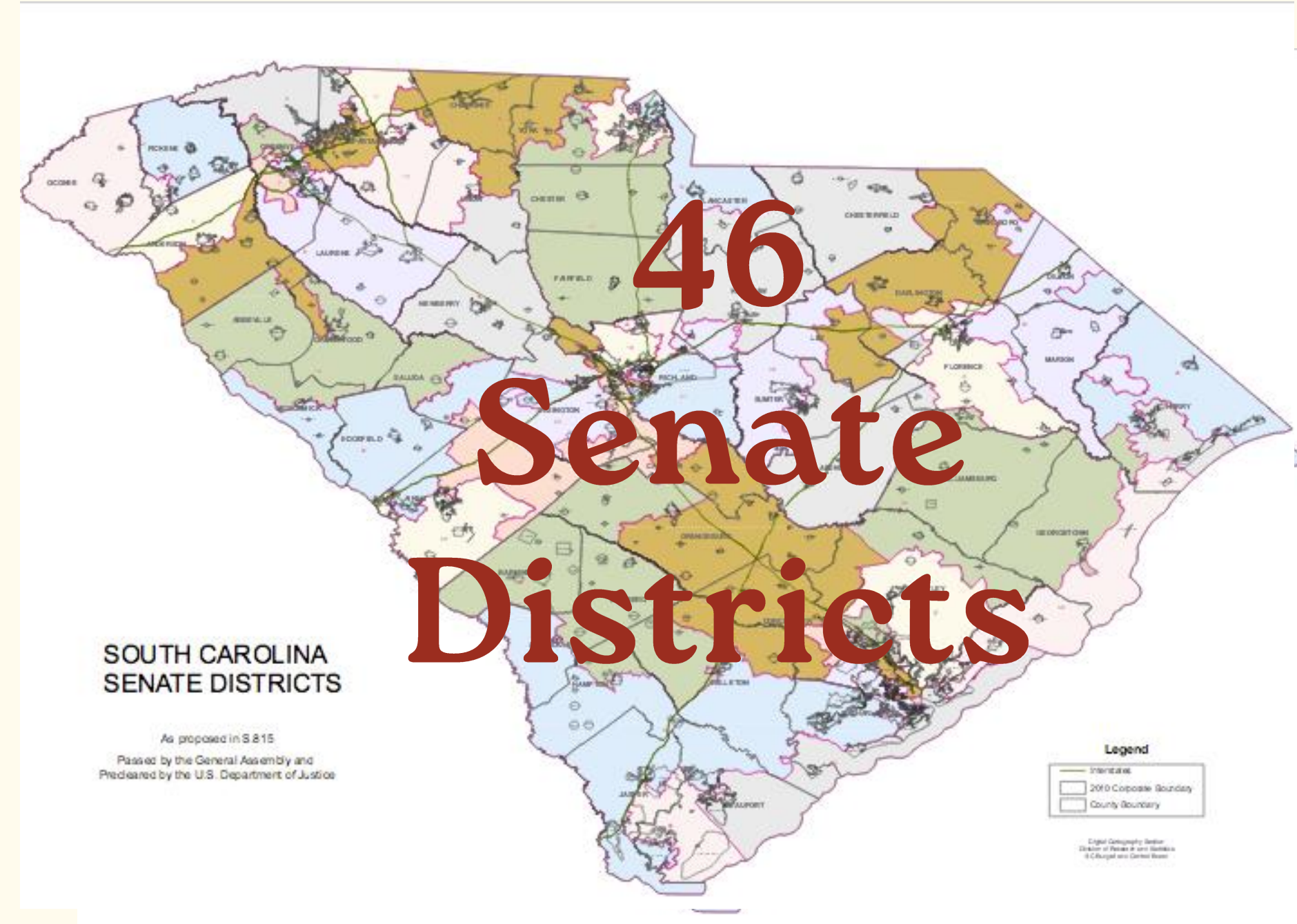
SC-4 Timmons
SC-5 Norman
SC-3 Duncan
SC-7 Fry
SC-2 Wilson
SC-6 Clyburn
SC-1 Mace



State Congressional Districts



Lower Chamber (2 yr terms)



Upper Chamber (4 yr terms)

Influence



Constituents are Key!

- Letters, emails, and phone calls
- Meetings, town halls, and public forums
- Social media

Other ways legislators are Influenced

- Meetings with political allies, lobbyists
- Media coverage
- Research conducted by their staff members
- Surveys of voters



Meet your Legislators



Do your Research

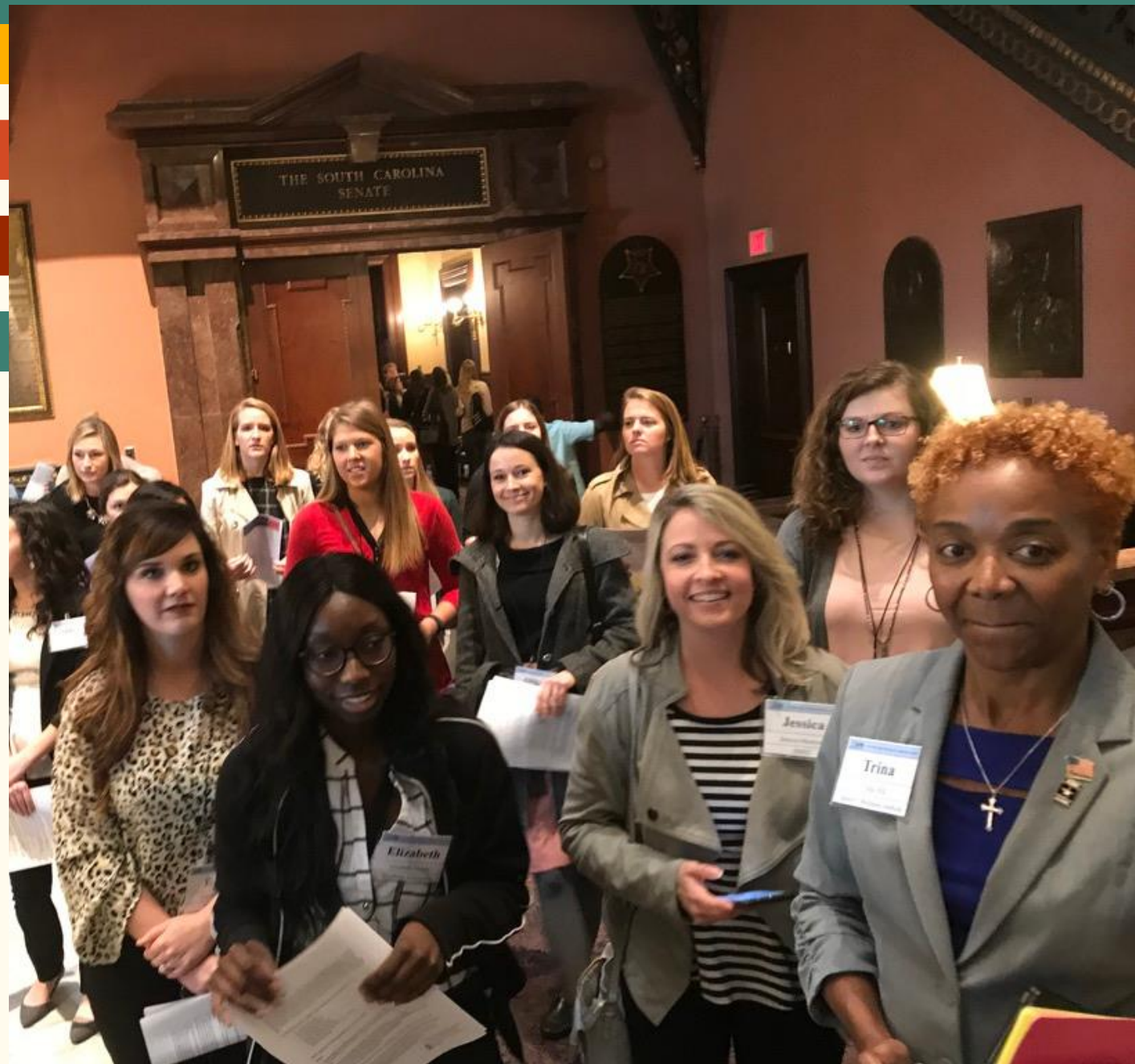
Biographical info
Previous votes
Committee
assignments

Issue details:
Revenue implications
Number of constituents
affected
Multiplier effects
Benefit to taxpayer
Counter-argument

Walking over to the State House



Call them out ✦✦✦ in the lobby



Call them out ✦✦✦ in the lobby



Call them out ◆◆◆ in the lobby



Storytelling Tips & Tricks

- By sharing your story, you have the opportunity to humanize and highlight the struggles that many people face
- It is important to remember that you DON'T have to be an expert in policy, insurance, etc.
- What you bring to the table is your real lived experience!
- Decision makers remember more than stats and facts – they remember the real people that are impacted by the hurdles!
- If you are asked a question and don't know the answer, the best response is, “I will find out and follow up with you.”
- Breathe! Speaking in front of new people can be intimidating, but your voice and story humanize a complex issue. Nearly every person in this country is either affected by, or cares about someone that is affected by a nutrition-related Issue!
- Remember that your story is more powerful than anything else. Focus on the human impact of the broken system leaving this group of patients behind.

Storytelling Components

- What hurdles have you (or your patients) faced?
- How have these hurdles impacted you physically, mentally or emotionally?
- Why is this hurdle in your way (bias, insurance, etc)?

- What are you fighting for?
- Are there commonalities with other problems that may be relatable – insurance denials, etc.?

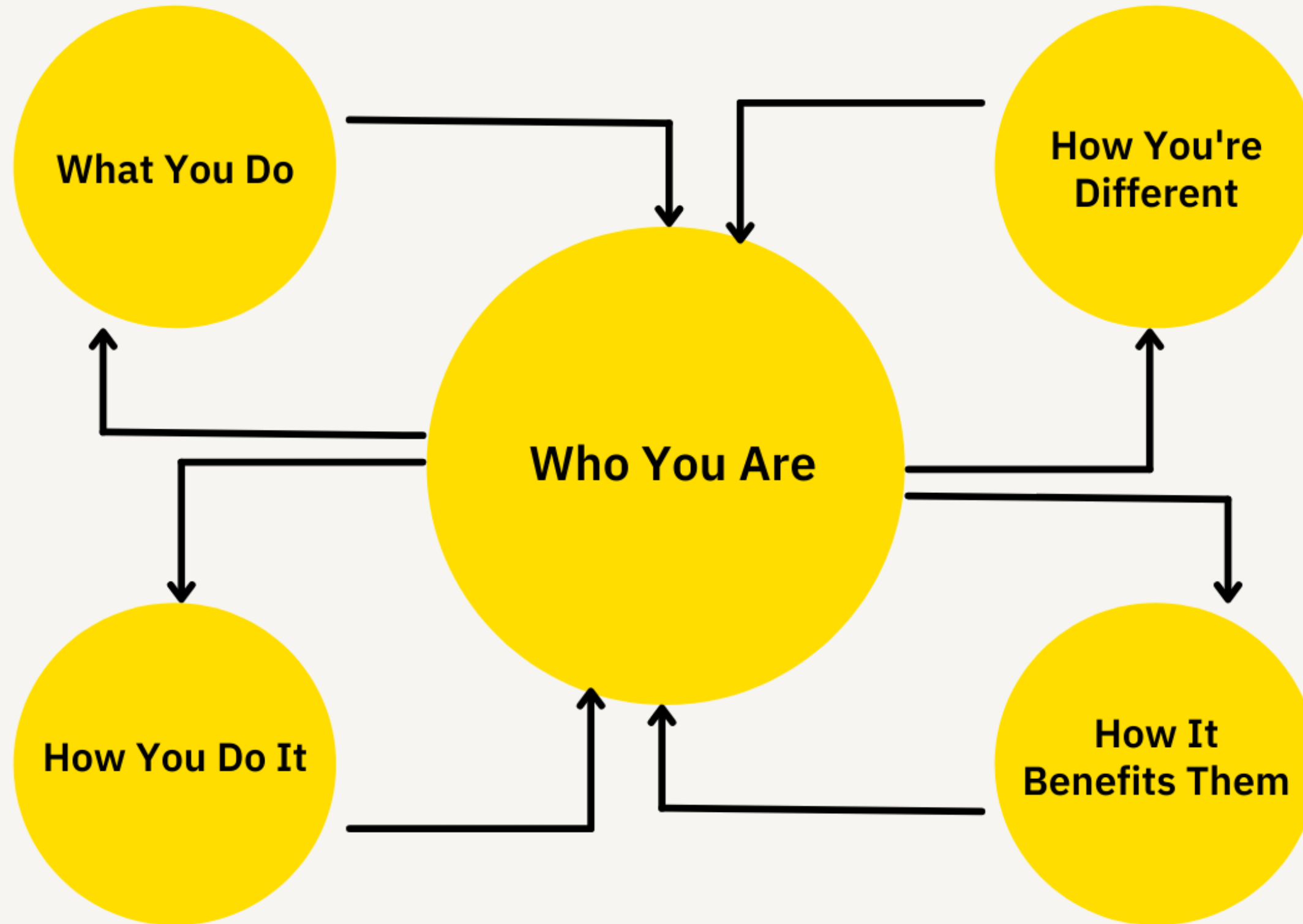
- How can you reach your solution?
- How can the audience help

Example: I have struggled with obesity since I was a child. As an adult, I have tried ___ without long-term success. My doctor and I both feel that the next step for me is ___ but my insurance will not cover this and I cannot afford to pay out of pocket.

Example: Everyone with obesity deserves access to safe and effective treatment options, in the same way treatments are covered for other diseases like hypertension.

Example: We encourage you to support the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act. Please sign on as a cosponsor.

ELEMENTS OF AN ELEVATOR PITCH



(Boiled down to 1-2 sentences)

Audience Pains & Motivations



What We Do	+	How They Benefit
-------------------	---	-------------------------

Key Points:

--	--	--	--

Supporting Points:

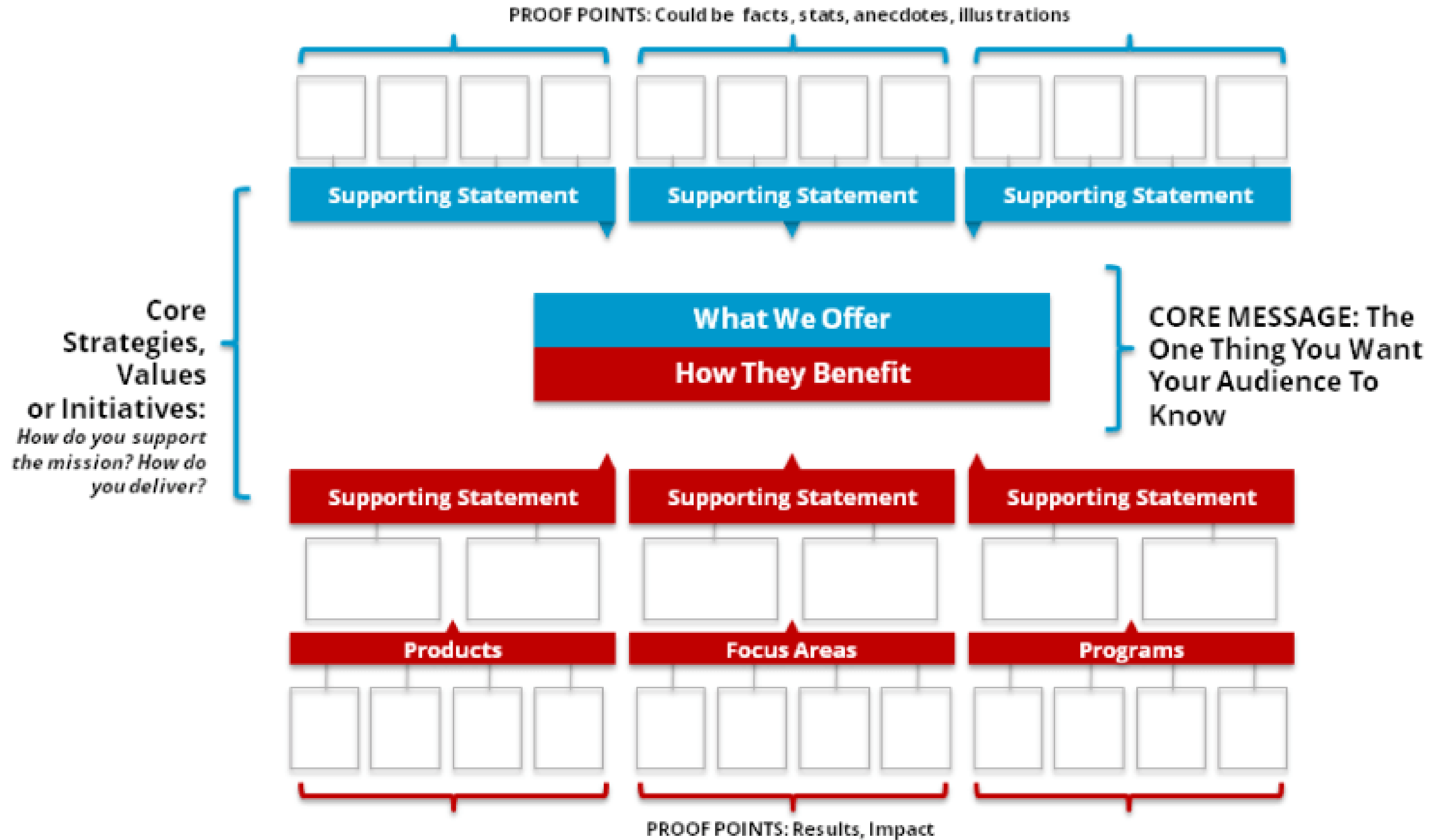
--	--	--	--

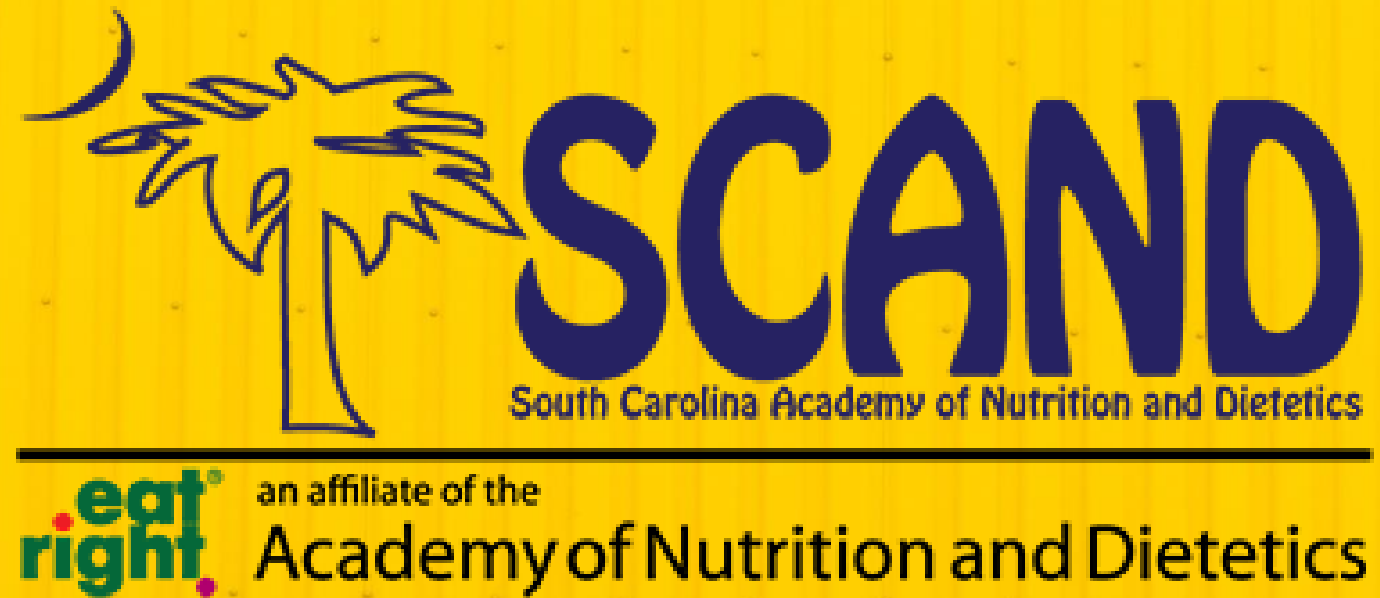
Examples, Facts, Testimonials

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____



Message Mapping Framework





Mission

To **positively impact** the **health and well-being** of South Carolinians through food and nutrition

Vision

A state where **all people thrive** through the **transformative power** of food and nutrition



Principles

- To have a state-wide impact in **eliminating all forms of malnutrition and food insecurity**
- **Collaborate** to solve our state's **food and nutrition challenges**
- **Expand work force capacity and capability** of food and nutrition professionals
- Focus on state-wide improvements across the **food well-being and health care sectors**
- Highest level of integrity and commitment to **excellence among dietetic professionals**

Effective Communication

1

What?

Describe and define the **facts**, situation, product, position

2

So What?

Discuss the implications or **importance** for the audience - the **relevance** to them

3

Now What?

Outline the **call-to-action** or **next steps**, such as taking questions or setting up a next meeting

3 Questions in Action

Here is an example of the 3 questions in the way we introduce ourselves to a new state senator or state representative

What?	So What?	Now What?
<p>South Carolina dietitians, represented by the SCAND, are dedicated to positively impacting the health of our state through nutrition expertise.</p>	<p>Our evidence-based guidance contributes to individual well-being and community health, aligning with SCAND's mission and vision for a thriving South Carolina</p>	<p>We urge legislators to support policies promoting nutrition education, access to healthy food, and the integration of dietitians into healthcare. Let's collaborate to build a healthier South Carolina together.</p>



3 Questions in Action

Here is an example of the 3 questions in the way we introduce ourselves to a new state senator or state representative

What?

The South Carolina Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (SCAND) represents **over 700 registered dietitians** (RDs) committed to improving the health and well-being of South Carolinians. We play a crucial role in addressing chronic diseases like obesity, hypertension, and diabetes, impacting individuals, families, and healthcare systems.

Registered dietitians are healthcare professionals with specialized training in food, nutrition, and disease management. We offer evidence-based solutions to prevent, manage, and even reverse chronic conditions through:

- **Individualized nutrition counseling:** Tailored plans addressing specific needs and preferences
- **Medical nutrition therapy (MNT):** Collaborating with physicians to create personalized treatment plans for chronic diseases.
- **Education and community outreach:** Empowering individuals and communities with knowledge for healthy eating and lifestyle choices

So What?

DIETITIANS CONTRIBUTE TO

1. Improved Health Outcomes

Lower blood sugar levels, reduced blood pressure, weight management, and reduced risk of malnutrition.

2. Reduced Healthcare Costs

Preventing and managing chronic diseases leads to cost savings for individuals and the healthcare system.

3. Enhanced Quality of Life

Improved energy levels, reduced symptoms, and increased participation in daily activities.

Now What?



CALL TO ACTION

We urge you to support initiatives that:

- Increase access to qualified dietitians.
- Promote the integration of dietitians into healthcare teams.
- Invest in preventative health programs, including nutrition education and counseling.



Access to MNT by RDs Is Good Policy!

Better Patient Health, More Treatment Options and Lower Costs



IMPROVE

Health of the Nation



DECREASE

Costs



ACHIEVE

Improved Social
Determinants of Health



INCREASE

Consumer Choice

Talking to your Legislators



- All politics is local
- A picture is worth a thousand words
- Be open and honest
- Use power of personal appeal
- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know"
- Know the issue
- Become part of the media machine
- It all adds up
- Know your allies and your opposition





Following up and Staying In Touch

- Write thank you letters
- Follow up emails with photos attached to remember visit
- Acknowledge support for your issues
- Attend campaign fundraisers
- Send new info from the Academy and follow up
- Send other materials and be creative! (Op-ed pieces from local paper, Letters-to-the-Editor, Peer-reviewed journal articles)
- Define your role (as a nutrition expert) before someone else does!



Thank you!
Questions?

