1. **Do your research:**
   - Identify all candidates running for a specific seat.
   - Check to see if corresponding candidates have a campaign email address or online form to submit communications and invitations.
     - If not, you can use their phone number or other listed contact information for your outreach.

2. **Craft and send your invitation to ALL candidates:**
   - Draft your invitation to include; a clear introduction of who you are, what issues you hope to discuss, and inviting the candidate to meet with you in your community/district/state.
     - Consider using the ADA template invitation that can be tailored to fit your personal requests.
   - Include your contact information so that the candidate/staff may follow up to schedule a time to meet.
   - Include language that explains you are seeking/welcoming meetings with ALL candidates to ensure everyone understands and support diabetes policy.
   - **MAKE SURE** to document all issued invitations.
     - Email is easiest (simply BCC yourself), otherwise keep a ledger of your outreach ideally in digital format.

3. **Follow up:**
   - You may not receive a response immediately – be prepared to follow up.
   - Consider ‘plan B’ – research whether candidates will be making public appearances or attending candidate forums and if possible plan to attend and seek them out for introduction and discussion.

4. **Once you get a meeting – PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE:**
   - Be prepared to tell your story
   - Make sure to have materials you can leave behind that speak to local/state/national impact of diabetes
   - Share ADA policy and regulatory priorities
   - Let ADA Grassroots Advocacy and/or State Government Affairs staff know once you have confirmed a meeting with candidates.

5. **Host or attend your meeting:**
   - Remember as an advocate, you are an expert on your experiences – be confident.
   - Take notes.
   - Ask questions
   - Offer yourself and the ADA as a resource for information
   - NEVER express partisan views or behave in any way partisan

6. **After your meeting:**
   - Send a thank you note and follow up with any requests for more information.
   - Let ADA Grassroots Advocacy and State Government Affairs staff know how the meeting went. You can use www.diabetes.org/candidate to report your visit information or email us at grassroots@diabetes.org
   - Stay in touch – remember the goal is to maintain your relationship throughout their candidacy and beyond.

**Reminders:**
- NEVER express partisan views or engage in partisan activities
- NEVER endorse a candidate for public office or political appointees
- A personal relationship is worth more than a campaign check – cultivate your relationship and set yourself apart!