**HOW TO CRAFT AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY MESSAGE**

“Big Six”

1. **Have an opening statement that includes your ask –** Make a statement that gets your audience’s attention right away, perhaps using a dramatic fact. This is your lead-in and should only be a sentence or two. In addition, make sure to include a positive statement about the decision maker, the issue you’re talking about, and the “ask.”
2. **Present the problem –** Describe the problem, who it affects, and who it impacts.
3. **Give the facts –** Data is important to demonstrate that a problem exists and to support your position. Look for facts that are relevant to your audience.
4. **Give a personal example or story –** An example or story puts a human face on the issue and makes it real and more compelling. Again, make sure the example is relevant to your audience, such as an experience a constituent had in a legislator’s district or a resident had in the administrator’s long-term care facility.
5. **Connect to something that your audience cares about, values, wants, or needs –** Learn what you can about the person. For example, is the legislator an opponent of “big government”- or a champion of social issues? Is the long-term care administer concerned about the facility’s reputation in the community or about competition with other providers in the area? Then use the information to show your audience how this issue and position fit with their interests.
6. **Reiterate the ask –** Tell your audience what action you want them to take.