



YOU CAN ADVOCATE!

The Key to Getting Started



Presentation Outline

- ◆ Principles and Actions
- ◆ Know the issues
- ◆ Types of Advocacy
- ◆ What you can and cannot do
- ◆ Make contacts with policymaker's staff
- ◆ Present your ideas to staff
- ◆ Maintain contact with staff
- ◆ Maintain alertness about the issue
- ◆ Show appreciation for support
- ◆ Reminders



Principles

- ◆ Know your organization; its mission and who you represent.
- ◆ Your Strength/Power
- ◆ Your Leadership

Actions

- ◆ A powerful voice for your constituency
- ◆ A relevant resource
- ◆ A strong advocate for your mission



"These new regulations will fundamentally change the way we get around them."



Keep up with current issues facing your organizations and your constituencies

- ◆ Use your organizational sources.
 - Arizona Legislature <http://www.azleg.gov>



Types of Advocacy

- ◆ Education
- ◆ Organizing
- ◆ Build coalitions: Work with other groups organized around an issue
- ◆ Write emails or letters
- ◆ Make calls
- ◆ Make visits
- ◆ Letters to the Editor or Op-Ed
- ◆ Public Speaking
- ◆ Forums and meetings
- ◆ Action Alerts
- ◆ Candidate Forums
- ◆ Voter Guides
- ◆ Voter registration, voter education, Get Out The Vote (GOTV)
- ◆ Organized rallies
- ◆ Neighborhood coffees
- ◆ Facility Tours

What you can and cannot do as a 501c-3:

You CAN

- ◆ MAKE a difference
- ◆ Influence policies and laws

Lobbying:

- ◆ is a Democratic tradition
- ◆ advances solutions to problems
- ◆ is *not* complicated
- ◆ will help you to fulfill your mission
- ◆ can have an immediate impact
- ◆ advances your cause and builds public trust
- ◆ Policy makers need your expertise

You CANNOT

- ◆ Endorse Political Candidates
- ◆ Contribute to Political Campaigns



Preliminary Preparations

- ◆ **Do you know your policymakers?**
 - **Develop relationships with those who have influence, cultivate champions**
 - **Attend local meetings with your policymaker**
 - **Offer your services**
 - **Offer to give a tour of your facility, become a trusted source of information**
 - **Write letters inquiring about issues on a steady basis**





Make Contact with Policymaker's Staff

- ◆ **Important to have a relationship with staff members before an issue comes to the forefront.**
- ◆ **Before you call, be prepared, be succinct.**
- ◆ **Fax or email a letter with a brief summary of the issue.**



Present your Ideas

- ◆ **Make an appointment**
- ◆ **Know your issue—including the opposing view**
- ◆ **Fact are not enough. They are filtered through values and ideology**
- ◆ **The Human Story: using emotion and passion.**
- ◆ **Stay on point**
- ◆ **Be enthusiastic but not aggressive**
- ◆ **Be honest, credible and consistent. BE PERSISTENT**
- ◆ **Leave a written position statement and contact information with the staffer**



Keep the Issue on the Policymaker's Radar

- ◆ **Write a thank you note expressing appreciation for the staffer's time and attention**
- ◆ **Telephone a few weeks later as a follow up to the visit**
- ◆ **Keep the staffer informed of new developments**



Show Appreciation

- ◆ **After the dust settles, write a letter to the policymaker expressing appreciation for his/her support**
- ◆ **Take every opportunity to express your appreciation to the policymaker in person**



"Personally, I think this country was in trouble when we decided to make sliced bread the high-water mark."



Reminders: Register to vote and VOTE!!! It's about POWER!

- ◆ Build relationships and educate policymakers about your issues.
- ◆ Citizen Advocacy is about persuasion, not debate.
- ◆ Why will policymakers listen to you?
 - *You are a constituent from their district, who VOTES and you represent other constituents!
 - *You have good, reliable information.
 - *You are representative of your organization.



Patience. Perseverance.
Presence. Persistence.
BUILDS POWER!!