

# Literacy Advocacy In Plain English

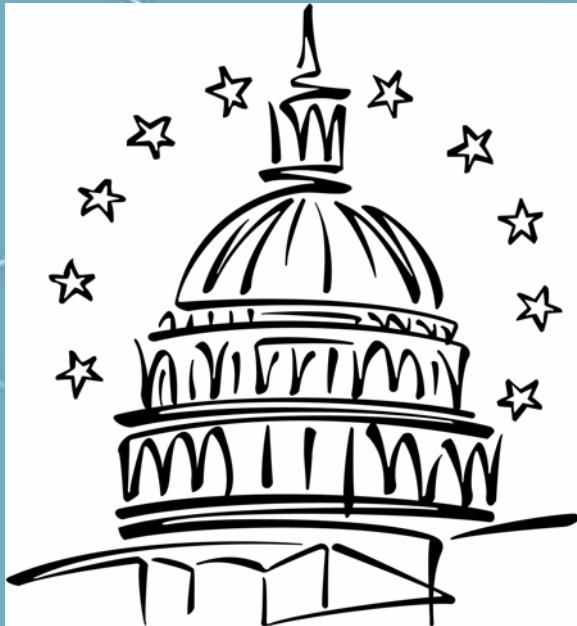
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# Course Outline



- Introductions
- Goals
- Definitions
- IRS Rules
- Strategies and Tactics
- Resources
- Final Thoughts

# What are Your Goals Today?

- You will understand the concept of advocacy
- You will understand basic lobbying rules
- You will develop an advocacy action plan

# What is Public Policy?

The combination of goals, laws, rules, and funding priorities set by public officials that determine how government meets needs, solves problems, and spends public funds

- Established by law (legislative)
- Regulated by government agencies (executive)
- Monitored by court system (judicial)

*The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook*

# What Is Advocacy?

- Identifying, embracing, and promoting a cause
- Attempting to shape public opinion
- Promoting the interests of your community

The Lobbying and Advocacy Handbook

*The Highest Office in a Democracy is That of Citizen*

Former Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter

# Key Advocacy Points

- Audiences
  - Who is the target audience for your message?
- Messages
  - What are the main ideas you wish to convey?
- Method of Communicating
  - What is the best vehicle for reaching your audience?

# What is Your Arena of Influence?

Arenas of influence are those places where public policy is decided.

- The legislature
- The court system
- Regulatory agencies
- The media
- Public opinion

*The Nonprofit Board Member's Guide to Lobbying and Advocacy*

# Advocacy Strategies

- Form Collaborations and Partnerships
- Articulate the Issue Clearly
- Demonstrate Success
- Anticipate Obstacles
- Share Information with Policy Makers
- Be Well Informed
- Mobilize Opinion Leaders
- Cultivate Celebrities
- Engage the Media
- Let Adult Learners Speak for Themselves
- Celebrate!

# Why Advocate?

In small groups, discuss the following:

- Identify an issue or problem that your program is facing that would be solved if more people knew about the work of your program in your community

# The Legislative Process

House	Committee	Senate
Before Bill Introduced		Before Bill Introduced
Committee Subcommittees Hearings		Committee Subcommittees Hearings
House Floor		Senate Floor
	Conference Committee	
House Approval		Senate Approval
	Executive Approval	

# What Is Lobbying?

- **Direct Lobbying:** Communication with a legislator that attempts to influence specific legislation (including appropriations)
- **Indirect Lobbying:** Urging others to adopt a stated position on specific legislation

## ➤ **Calls to Action**

*Bob Smucker, The Nonprofit Lobbying Guide*

# 1976 IRS Lobbying Law

- Established clear guidelines for reporting lobbying expenses for 501(c)3 organizations
- File IRS Form 5768 (“H Form”) to elect coverage under the Lobbying Law
- If budget is less than \$500,000, 20% can be spent on direct lobbying and 5% on indirect lobbying
- Track and report lobbying expenses separately

# State and Local Laws

- Reporting requirements vary greatly
- Check with your State Attorney General or Secretary of State
- Check with your local County Executive

# What is Prohibited?

- 501c3 Organizations:
  - NO Public Endorsement of Political Candidates
  - NO Using Charitable Funds to Contribute to Political Campaigns
- Public Agencies:
  - NO Public Funding Spent on Lobbying

# What Can You Do?

- Exercise Your **Rights** as Private Citizens
- Educate Your Stakeholders
- Educate Your Friends and Family Members
- Write Letters From Home
- Make Phone Calls from Home
- Send Emails from Home
- Vote!!!

# 10 Reasons To Lobby

1. You *can* make a difference
2. There is power in numbers
3. You *can* change laws
4. Lobbying is a democratic tradition
5. Lobbying advances solutions to problems
6. Lobbying is *not* complicated
7. Policy makers need your expertise
8. Lobbying will help you to fulfill your mission
9. Lobbying can have an immediate impact on people in need
10. Lobbying advances your cause and builds public trust

# Case Study

A local library literacy program is planning an awards reception. The Volunteer of the Year wants to thank the Mayor for her support of the program and remind the attendees to vote in the upcoming local election during her acceptance remarks.



# 10 Point Lobbying Checklist

1. Recognize Your Power as a Constituent
2. Recognize and Use Your Knowledge
3. Set Clear Goals
4. Be Prepared
5. Mobilize Your Stakeholders
6. Cultivate Relationships with Policy Makers
7. Communicate Regularly
8. Meet Regularly
9. Be Creative!
10. Persevere

# Develop An Action Plan

- Individually, take a few minutes to identify a person of influence or policy-maker in your community whom you would like to cultivate to become a champion of your program.

# Resources

[www.proliteracy.org](http://www.proliteracy.org)

# In Closing

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead