Policy Advocacy

Research
- White papers
- Data
- Case studies

Public Education
- Educate the community on the issues
- Educate legislators on the issues
- Hold trainings/workshops

Voter Education
- Educate candidates and voters
- Encourage citizens to vote
- Advocate for or against specific legislation
  - Petition, Letters of support
  - OpEds, Letters to the Editor
  - Legislative Meeting, Lobby Day

Lobbying
Legislative Lobbying and Electoral Advocacy

As a citizen you CAN engage in:

• **Direct Lobbying**
  ○ Contact or meet with a legislator to propose, support, or oppose legislation

• **Grassroots Lobbying**
  ○ Urge the public to contact their representatives to propose, support, or oppose legislation

• **Electoral Advocacy**
  ○ Educate candidates and voters on the issues through fact sheets, questionnaires, and forums
  ○ Support or oppose candidates for public office
  ○ Register voters
As a **non-profit** you CAN engage in:

- **Direct Lobbying***
  - Contact or meet with a legislator to propose, support, or oppose legislation

- **Grassroots Lobbying***
  - Urge the public to contact their legislators to propose, support, or oppose legislation

- **Electoral Advocacy***
  - Educate candidates and voters on the issues through fact sheets, questionnaires, and forums
  - Nonpartisan voter registration
  - Encourage citizens to vote
Legislative Lobbying and Electoral Advocacy

*There are Legislative Lobbying and Electoral Advocacy limits for non-profits

- **Lobbying limits for non-profits:**
  - Per IRS: “No substantial part of a non-profits activities can be used to influence legislation”
  - What is insubstantial? 3-5% of overall activities
- Additional information: bolderadvocacy.org
Legislative Lobbying and Electoral Advocacy

*There are Legislative Lobbying and Electoral Advocacy limits for non-profits

• **Elections: non-profits CANNOT:**
  ○ Endorse candidates for public office
  ○ Make any campaign contributions (whether monetary or in-kind)
  ○ Ask candidates to sign pledges on any issue (for instance, ask candidates if they promise to support the DREAM Act if elected)
  ○ Publishing or communicating anything that explicitly or implicitly favors or opposes a candidate

• **Additional information:** bolderadvocacy.org
Let’s take a beat
Building Your Public Narrative

Why do we tell stories?
Building Your Public Narrative

- **Story of self** – We tell the story of “self” to legitimize ourselves and to help us build relationships. We have to tell where we are starting from and what our individual core values are.
  
  - “If I am not for myself, who will be for me?” Who am I and why am I called to this work.

- **Story of Us** – We want people to become a part of the story and become a part of “us”. We need talk about the context of the campaign and the basic values that will have folks identify with the organization/the campaign. We want to move the story from “I” to “we”.
  
  - “If I am for myself alone, what am I?” Who are we as a community and why do we have the responsibility to act?

- **Story of Now** – Our campaigns are urgent and we need to act. We need to act in a strategic way that brings is closer to resolution.
  
  - “If not now, when?” What is our strategy?
Building Your Public Narrative

Before I was __________
Then I __________
Now I am ____________
I believe _____________
Let’s take a beat
Opportunities to Advocate
(friendly reminder, build this into your existing work, not add more work to you already full plate)

1: support what's already out there.
Opportunities to Advocate

2: build coalition and networks in your specific sector.
Opportunities to Advocate

3: care for and shape the sector/community as a whole.
Who Are Your Elected Officials?

- President & Vice President
- 2 Senators
- 9 Members of Congress
- Governor
- 40 State Senators
- 160 State Representatives
- Mayors / City Councilors / Select board
Ways to Build Relationships

- Share updates
- Invite them to programs
- Make them aware of initiatives you are a part of.

Don’t wait until you need something.
Let’s take a beat
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