



# ADVOCACY & COALITION BUILDING

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# Advocacy

Promoting a cause or principle that will create large-scale or systemic change.

# Overview



## Advocacy can be:

- Community Organizing
- Public Education
- Community Mobilization
- Educating Legislators
- Nonpartisan voter mobilization
- Litigation
- Lobbying

# Advocacy Tips



- **Know the facts**
- **State your message clearly**
- **Build relationships**
- **Engage the public**

# Visiting Legislators

In-person visits are an opportunity for legislators to hear directly from constituents about key issues affecting the communities they represent.

# Visiting Legislators

## Before Your Visit:

- Make an appointment!
- Don't go alone!
- Prepare!

## At Your Visit:

- Introductions and Who You Are
- Why You Are There
- Personalize It
- What You Want
- Thank You

## Writing an “Op-Ed” or Letter to the Editor

A way for community members to express their opinions and help guide the public conversation about important topics.

# Planning and Writing Your Letter

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## **Plan:**

- Research the publication
- Choose a messenger

## **Writing Your Letter:**

- Grab attention
- State your position/Call to action
- Your evidence
- Closing

# Petitions and Sign-On Letters

Show how much support your issue has, and for building a list of individuals or organizations that support you and may be willing to take future action.

# Collecting Signatures

## Types of Petitions and Sign-On Letters:

Targeted Petition: Addressed to a specific person asking for a specific action.

Issue-Based Petition: Shows the level of support for a particular idea or policy proposal.

## Collecting Signatures

- Paper: Ask people to sign at events, go door-to-door, or ask people at a busy intersection.
- Online:
  - Collects all the signatures in one list to print or deliver all at once
  - Automatically send an email to your target every time someone signs.

# How to Use a Petition/Sign-On Letter

## Ways to Use a Petition:

- ❑ Deliver a physical copy of the petition and list of signatures.
- ❑ Publish your petition or sign-on letter with the list of signatures in a local paper or on your website.
- ❑ Hold a press conference.

## Following Up:

- ❑ Invite signers to a community meeting to discuss the issue and ask them to get involved with your organization
- ❑ Ask signers to participate in lobbying efforts to advocate on behalf of the issue or policy
- ❑ Ask signers to attend a meeting with the targeted official

# Coalition Building

A coalition is a group of organizations, and sometimes individuals, with a common interest who agree to work together toward a common goal

# Forming a Coalition

- Why build this coalition? What is the purpose of creating this coalition?
- Do members have a shared vision or shared principles?
- Which organizations or individuals should be included?
- What coalition structure would be best? How will the coalition make decisions?
- What resources does the coalition need? How will they be allocated?
- How long should the coalition last?

# Tips for Success

- Communicate openly with all coalition members
- Choose a realistic strategy and set reachable goals
- Be inclusive and participatory
- Acknowledge and use the diversity of the group
- Agree to disagree in the process
- Share risks and responsibility
- Improve trust and communication among members
- Exchange knowledge, ideas, and strategies

# Coalition Models

- **Spokes council**: A loose association of organizations; any coordination is voluntary.
- **Collaborative**: A collection of organizations formed to coordinate activities, develop shared materials, and/or coordinate allocation of resources.
- **Campaign**: A close association of organizations that work together on a specific issue; engage in collective decision making, allocation of resources, and strategies.
- **Formal Coalition**: A stand-alone organization with its own leadership, mission, and resources.

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# Coalition Examples

# Examples

## **PA is Ready!**

- Collaborative model
- Defined membership structure
- Indefinite lifespan – mission oriented

## **Pennsylvania United for Immigration Reform (PUIR)**

- Campaign model
- Loose membership structure
- Limited lifespan

## **Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition (PICC)**

- Formal coalition model
- Formal membership structure
- Indefinite lifespan – stand alone organization

# Thank You!

For more information about this presentation:

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