### Engaging in State and National Policy and Advocacy Efforts

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#### Advocacy vs Education

- Lobbying efforts to influence a specific piece of legislation, such as asking Congress to increase a budget or to support/oppose a bill, amendment, regulation or policy.
- Education providing factual information such as a program description, goals, current budget, people served, and accomplishments.

### Why engage in advocacy?

- Address growing burden of injury and violence
- Promote value of injury and violence prevention
- Educate policymakers
- Exercise your voice; engage in the democratic process
- IT'S EASY!

### Why engage in advocacy?

 Policymakers want to know what their constituents care about

 If constituents don't voice the importance of injury, we can't expect policymakers to advance the injury and violence prevention agenda

# Who do elected officials listen to?

Constituents

Donors

Party leaders

#### Basic advocacy principles

- Be prepared and organized to respond to policy needs/changes
- Provide reliable data and evidence to establish credibility among policymakers
- Personal/local stories are powerful, it's not all about the data!

#### Basic advocacy principles

Take some time to study the elected officials before you meet with them

- Visit their website
- Find out what committees they sit on
- Learn a bit about them

## How to engage in advocacy

#### There are numerous ways to engage:

- Meet with your elected official in Washington, DC or back home
- Call your elected official's office to register a position
- Email your elected official/staff
- Attend a town hall meeting
- Write a letter to the editor in your local paper

## How to engage in advocacy



#### **Office Locations**

Call toll-free from Wisconsin: (800) 247-5645

**EAU CLAIRE** Directions

**GREEN BAY** Directions

Green Bay, WI 54303

Phone: (920) 498-2668

1039 W. Mason, Suite 119

402 Graham Street, Suite 206 Eau Claire, WI 54701-2633 Phone: (715) 832-8424

Phone: (608) 264-5338

MADISON Directions

Madison, WI 53703

MILWAUKEE Directions 633 W. Wisconsin Ave, Suite 1920 Milwaukee, WI 53203 Phone: (414) 297-4451

30 West Mifflin Street, Suite 700

LA CROSSE Directions

205 5th Avenue South, Room 216 La Crosse, WI 54601

La Crosse, WI 54601 Phone: (608) 796-0045 WAUSAU Directions

2100 Stewart Avenue, Suite 250 B Wausau, WI 54401

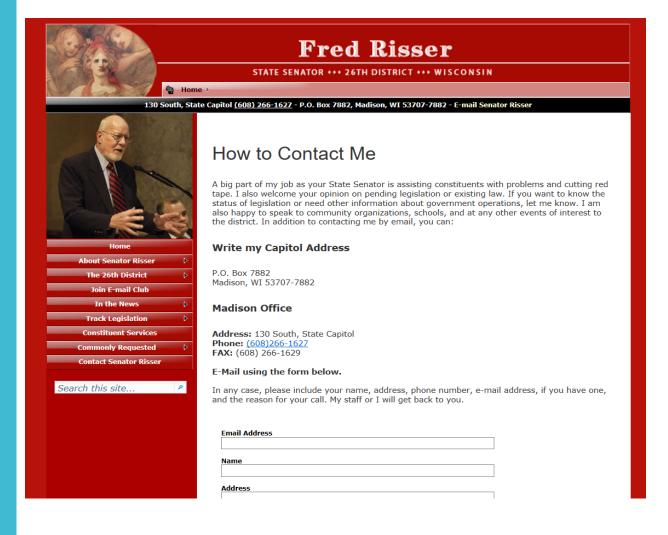
Wausau, WI 54401 Phone: (715) 261-2611 WASHINGTON, D.C. Directions 717 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 Phone: (202) 224-5653



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## How to engage in advocacy



#### **Congressional staff**



#### Legislative staff

- Expect and appreciate youth
- Be respectful staff hold considerable sway over a policymakers' decision to support a particular policy
- They hold the key to advancing your issue in the legislative process

### Legislative staff

#### When interacting with staff:

Be courteous and positive

 Ok to start by asking their familiarity with your issue

 Try to learn a bit about their background and interests

### Legislative staff

House/Senate staff

Personal office staff

Committee staff

General Assembly staff

### How to make your meeting memorable

#### Why is this important?

- Be clear about what you want
- Be clear about why you're relevant
- Be clear about the impacts on real, live people

#### The meeting

- Know what your "ask" is and deliver it!
- Have your business card available to hand to front desk staff
- Meetings can occur in the strangest of places. This is not a reflection on you or your issue(s).
- Don't leave without getting a business card
- Follow up!!

### Delivering your message

- Hello, my name is [] and I'm from [] (establishes relevancy)
- I am here to talk to you about [policy / relationship ask]
- This is important to me/my community because [personal story]
- That's why I ask that you [ask]
- I'd like to follow-up by [follow-up ideas]
- Thank you! In person and via email!

## Delivering your message

- Do thank them for stands the policymaker has taken that you support.
- Do relate situations to his/her home state or district; keep it local.
- Do ask for the policymakers position and why.
- Do show openness to counter arguments.
- Do admit you don't know. Find out the answer and follow up!
- Do spend time with policymakers you may not agree with. You can lessen the intensity of the opposition and perhaps change it.

## Delivering your message

- Don't overload a visit with too many issues
- Don't say but I thought my meeting was with the Representative/Senator
- Don't be argumentative
- Don't say I didn't vote for you last time and I won't vote for you next time
- Don't say you must be my daughter's/son's age!!

The one thing that makes ALL the difference

#### PERSISTENCE!

#### QUESTIONS?