

CHAPTER ADVOCACY

HOW TO TAKE ACTION AND
MAKE AN IMPACT IN YOUR
COMMUNITY - 2021





STEP ONE: DECIDE

FOR OFFICIAL USE

CHAPTER
ADVOCACY

Choosing a topic, organization, or piece of legislation to support as a chapter can be challenging when trying to reach a unanimous agreement. When deciding on an advocacy project to launch, talk to members and answer the following questions:

What is the impact of the issue in my community?

What are the ramifications of these actions?

What are some issues where we can make a genuine difference?

What does this mean to my local school, school district, and students?

In my community, who else is concerned about this issue?

Is this plan viable and doable in a reasonable amount of time?

What are the options for action?

What resources already exist in my possession?

- What is the impact of the issue in my community?
- What are the ramifications of these actions?
- What are some issues where we can make a genuine difference?
- What does this mean to my local school, school district, and students?
- In my community, who else is concerned about this issue?
- Is this plan viable and doable in a reasonable amount of time?
- What are the options for action?
- What resources already exist in my possession?




FOR OFFICIAL USE


CHAPTER
ADVOCACY

STEP TWO: PLAN OF ACTION


Make a plan of action that outlines the steps your chapter will take to finish their advocacy project. **Plans should include:**



a timeline of what you want to accomplish with deadlines (add a calendar for the long and short term list of priorities) - When making a timeline, keep in mind when your state legislature is in session, when your legislators are in town, and community activities that may be of assistance to your cause. Include attending a town hall meeting in your action plan and timeframe if your representative is hosting one.




a list of contacts to involve - Local government officials, state legislators, community leaders, activists working directly on the subject you're addressing, and adults who have previously supported your club can all be included in this group.




a key message on the issue to send out to members, contacts, and media - Make it clear where you stand on the topic and what you aim to achieve. When composing the message, think about your replies to the questions you answered when picking the topic in step one - the more personal and local you can make your focus, the better.

a lobbying day - If at all possible, visit your state capital or local government building to speak with legislators and directly discuss the issues.



phone banking events and letter writing to relevant organizations or lawmakers to gain support - Provide phone banking/letter writing scripts to your local chapter members so they can contact politicians. The more precise you can be, such as pushing support for a certain measure, the better.



a social media plan - Create graphics that may be easily shared on social media, both for informational purposes and to promote upcoming events. Consider a theme for your project and use it into your social media campaign! One of our favorites, for example, is to use the hashtag #MakeADifference in every post. Furthermore, choose a color style for your postings and stick to it.

STEP THREE: BUILD YOUR NETWORK



FOR OFFICIAL USE

CHAPTER
ADVOCACY

Seek guidance and help from legislators and relevant organizations. Reaching out to officials can be intimidating, but we assure you that they will not bite! Adults in your community will almost universally be eager and willing to assist you. When you go to speak with them, make sure you're prepared; have your plans and objectives available. They can assist your chapter in fine-tuning action plans and can be useful in advancing your advocacy efforts.

Always remember:

1. When engaging with politicians, do your homework ahead of time to learn about their positions and activities on the issue you're advocating for.
2. Establish solid ties with staffers and legislators; a positive relationship will make them effective partners in this and future projects.
3. Before speaking with members of your group or legislators, prepare your main message and information.
4. With a follow-up letter, thank everyone who has helped.

Your follow-up letter should look something like this:

“Hello Appropriate Title Legislator/Organizer Name, This is (your name), and we discussed (your initiative) earlier today. I simply wanted to express my gratitude for your assistance with this assignment. We appreciate your thoughts and look forward to putting your suggestions into action. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my chapter if there is anything I or my chapter can do for you. I look forward to working with you again in the near future! Once again, thank you. Have a wonderful day!

Sign off with your name and contact information.”



FOR OFFICIAL USE

CHAPTER
ADVOCACY

STEP FOUR: SPREAD THE WORD

To promote awareness, contact local media or launch a media campaign.

- Call or email local newspapers to let them know what you're up to.
- Make a social media strategy to spread the message.
- Email blasts, Facebook postings, Twitter updates, and other forms of social media are all effective.
- Have a clear and thorough message to offer about your cause before speaking to the media.
- Be clear and concise in your press releases, and incorporate the main point in a brief headline.

Make sure your logo appears on everything, including email footers, press releases, and social media posts.

(If you need help making a logo please email hsda@hsdems.org!)

STEP FIVE: UPDATE YOUR FOLLOWERS

Throughout this process, your chapter should keep legislators and organizers informed about the success of your lobbying efforts and establish solid ties with them. Subscribe to updates on a piece of legislation that your lobbying effort is focused on to monitor how it is progressing through Congress.



FOR OFFICIAL USE

CHAPTER
ADVOCACY

AS ALWAYS MAKE SURE TO SHARE YOUR PROGRESS WITH NJHSR ON SOCIAL MEDIA. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IS HERE TO HELP YOU, SO PLEASE FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT FOR ADVICE, CONTACTS, HELP GETTING STARTED, AND MORE!

Some organizations to support or reach out to (look for local chapter divisions in your state/area):

- [The American Conservative Union](#)
- [Americans for Prosperity](#)
- [Eagle Forum](#)
- [Turning Point USA](#)
- [Jersey 1st](#)
- [Young Americans for Liberty](#)
- [Today is America](#)
- [PragerFORCE](#)
- [Students for Trump](#)
- [Young Americans Against Socialism](#)
- [Stand For America](#)
- [Log Cabin Republicans](#)
- [College Republican National Committee](#)
- [Young Republican National Committee](#)