



NATIONAL LOW INCOME
HOUSING COALITION

Lobbying 101

NLIHC Field Team

Joey, James, and Sarah

March 21, 2017

Outline

- 1. Basics on the federal legislative process**
- 2. Why we advocate**
- 3. Best tips for a lobbying meeting**
- 4. Lobby Day Practice**
- 5. Questions?**

Congress

House of Representatives

- 435 voting members, elected for 2 year terms
- Number of representatives depends on population
 - California: 53 representatives
 - Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming: 1 representative
- Each representative covers a geographic district
 - Americans have only 1 representative

Congress

Senate

- 100 voting members, elected for 6 year terms
- Each state has two Senators

How a Bill Becomes a Law

The Bill is Introduced



- Bills must be introduced by a member of Congress (either a Senator or a Representative)
- The bill can originally come from a variety of sources:
 - The Member themselves
 - The Office of the President
 - Individual citizens
 - Organizations and companies

The Bill Goes to Committee



Both the House and Senate have committees on a range of topics

- Committees have a majority of members from the majority party
- Lead by the Committee Chair and the Ranking Member

When the bill goes to committee, it is edited and then the committee decides if it will go to the floor of the House or Senate to be voted on or if it will remain in committee

- Most bills remain in committee and never go to the floor

The Bill Goes to the Floor

- If the committee decides the bill should move ahead and should be voted on by all of Congress, it goes to the “Floor” of the House or the Senate
- Members of Congress can speak for or against the proposed bill, and then the entire body (either Senate or House) votes on it



The Bill Passes through Congress



- Once the bill passes in each chamber, a committee made up of both House and Senate members reconciles any differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill
- The combined bill goes to both chambers, where it must be voted on again
- Then, the bill goes to the President, who can sign or veto it
 - Congress can override the President's veto with a two-thirds majority

Budget Process



- The President provides a budget request to Congress outlining their priorities for federal programs
- Congressional budget resolution sets overall framework, including a top-line spending figure for discretionary programs
- Then, the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations divide the discretionary spending limit among their 12 appropriations committees
- Committees then set funding levels for each program they are responsible for and craft a spending bill

Budget Process



- The appropriations subcommittees then pass their bills to the Appropriations Committee
- In both the House and the Senate, the Appropriations Committee mark up the bills and announce those bills to Congress
- Each chamber votes on their appropriations bills, then the House and Senate bills are reconciled and go to the President to sign

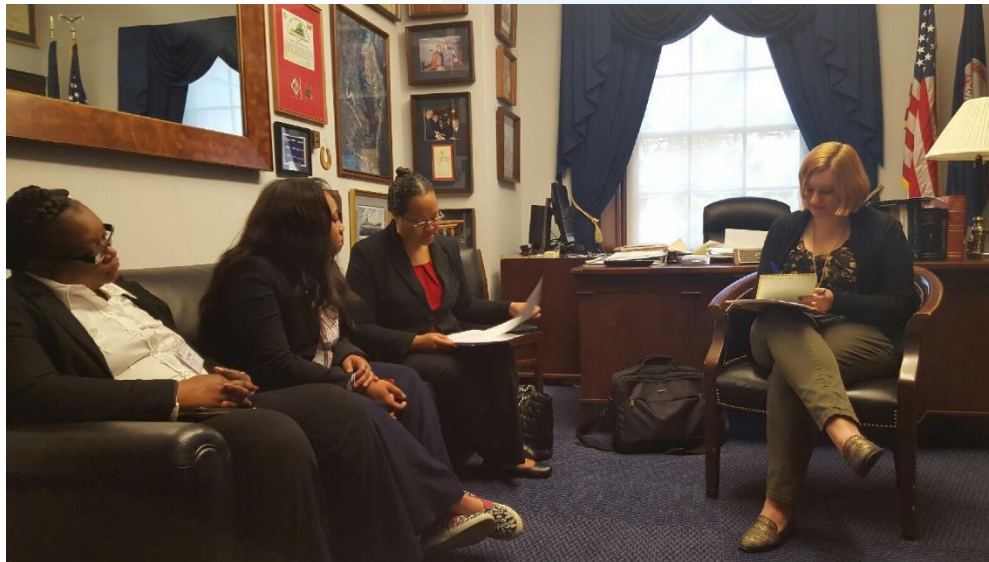
Your Role

Your Role

- Your Senators and Representatives make their decisions about votes by considering:
 - Their political party position
 - What their constituents value
 - Their personal values
 - Political and financial feasibility
- Your views and priorities influence their positions on issues

Does Advocacy Work?

- What do staffers say?
- Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, MID Reform



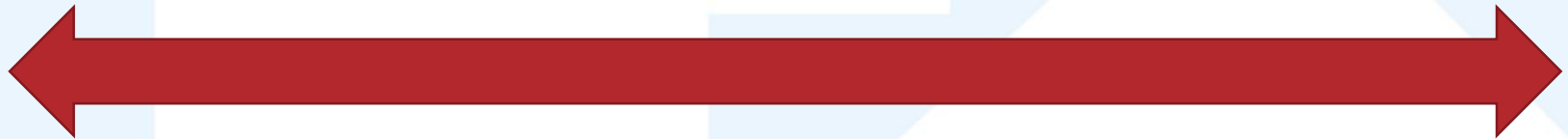
Does Advocacy Work?



YES!

NLIHC
www.nlihc.org

Your Role



**Staunch
Opponent**

Opponent

Neutral

Supporter

**Staunch
Supporter**

Questions?

Lobby Meetings

Advocacy: Lobby Meetings



Before your meeting:

- Coordinate meetings with a coalition
- Schedule meetings in advance by calling the appropriate office.
- Meeting with staff is often just as good as meeting with the actual elected official—sometimes better.
- Do research on the person you are meeting

Advocacy: Lobby Meetings



During your meeting:

- Introduce yourself and your organization.
- Use this as an opportunity to educate your elected official about the work you do and the issues more broadly
 - Provide data and experience (numbers and stories)
- Connect your work with the elected official
- If this is a lobbying visit: make a specific ask
 - “Support/oppose xyz legislation.”
- Leave behind materials

Advocacy: Lobby Meetings



After your meeting:

- Thank you! Let the Member or staff know you appreciate the meeting
- Share what you learned
- Follow up and build a relationship with the office
- Continue the conversation

Advocacy: Lobbying



Advocacy

- Public education and organizing in support of your mission
- Includes informing public officials about an issue or problem without specific legislation

Lobbying

- A subcategory of advocacy
- Lobbying involves taking a position on a specific piece of legislation and working for its passage or defeat

Questions?

Lobby Meetings

Policy Priorities Webinar

March 28, 2pm ET

<http://bit.ly/PolicyPriorities2017>

Find a Way to be Involved



Beyond Meetings...

- Letters
- Petitions
- Voter education
- Lobby days
- Publicizing data

Become a Member!



**The influence of NLIHC comes
from our more than 900
organizational and individual
members nationwide.**

Join us today!

NLIHC
www.nlihc.org

Stay in touch!



Joey Lindstrom

Manager of Field
Organizing

jlindstrom@nlihc.org

Sarah Jemison

Housing Advocacy
Organizer

sjemison@nlihc.org

James Saucedo

Housing Advocacy
Organizer

jsaucedo@nlihc.org

NLIHC
www.nlihc.org