

Advocacy Teams



Training Workbook

Updated February 2025

An abstract graphic on the right side of the page, consisting of several thick, curved lines in shades of orange, blue, and dark purple. These lines originate from the top right and curve downwards and to the left, creating a sense of movement and depth. The lines are layered, with some appearing in front of others, and they eventually disappear into the bottom of the frame.

“Never doubt that
a small group
of thoughtful,
committed
citizens can
**change
the world;**
indeed, it’s
the only thing
that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead

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Tell Your Lobbying Story

As a grassroots advocate, your power lies in your story. You do not need to be a policy expert to lobby your legislator—because you are already an expert on how policy issues impact your life and your community.

Stories are an opportunity to communicate your values to your members of Congress and to form a relationship based on trust and mutual respect.

There are three kinds of stories all advocates should know:

- » **The Turning Point Story:** This story describes the moment when you realized something was a problem.
- » **The Moral Values Story:** This story describes a moment or experience that shaped your values based on your faith, your upbringing, or your life.
- » **The Personal Impact Story:** This story describes a firsthand experience in your life that motivates you to advocate on a legislative issue.

How can we make these stories most effective?

Here's an easy recipe for an effective story:

- » Frame the issue through an individual moment or experience.
- » Identify your values that are illustrated within your story.
- » Tie your story into the policy issue and legislative ask.

To make your story most effective, remember to

- » **Be concise.** Practice a story you can share in 90 seconds or less.
- » **Be specific.** Share people, places, details from your story to engage the listener.
- » **Be mindful.** We should never ask or expect someone to share a story they are not comfortable sharing.

“When we tell our own story, we teach the values that our choices reveal—not as abstract principles, but as our lived experience.”

– Marshall Gantz

TIP:

Over time, experienced advocates develop a *story bank*, a collection of stories they can use to lobby on a range of issues, or to connect with different legislators.

Queries for brainstorming your story:

- » What is one moment in your life that inspired you to take action for peace and justice?
- » Why is this issue important to you?
- » Which of your core values inspire you to advocate on this issue?

Brainstorm the important details you want to cover in your story.

What are the feelings, images, or values you want your listeners to remember?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What is one story from your life that you could share in a lobby visit on the Advocacy Teams issue campaign?

Use the space below to work on your story and practice it with someone you trust.

Give feedback to your partner

As you write out your story, take time to practice with a partner on your team.

What emotions did the story evoke in you?

What were some of the highlights of the story for you?

Which parts of the story could be more clear?

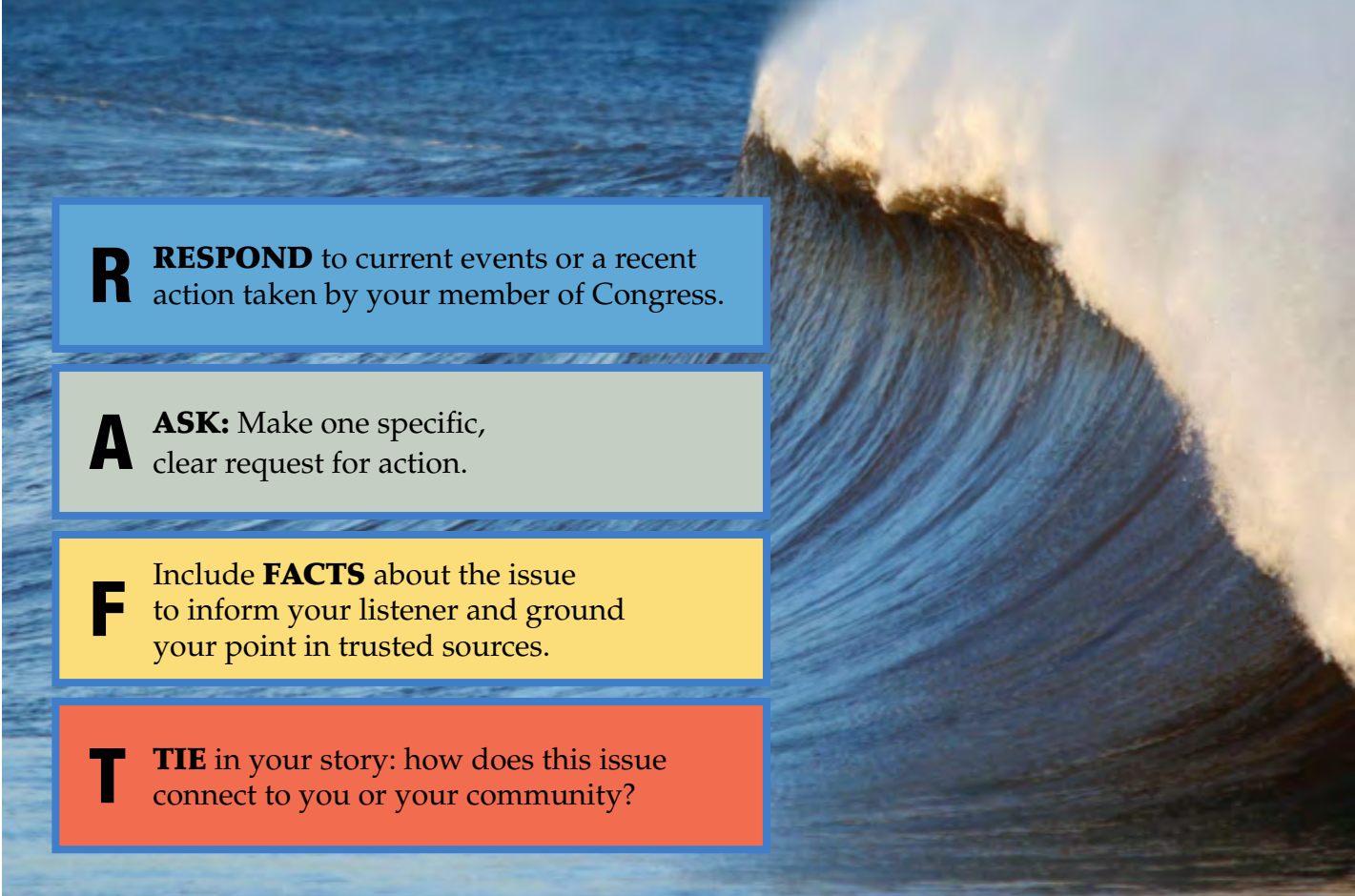
TIP:

To honor your partner's story, focus on how their story made you feel, rather than responding with an example from your own life.

The RAFT Principles

Your life raft for effective advocacy

The RAFT principles will help you be an effective advocate in any situation: during a lobby visit, when writing a letter to the editor or in any other context when you want to be persuasive about an issue you care about.



R **RESPOND** to current events or a recent action taken by your member of Congress.

A **ASK:** Make one specific, clear request for action.

F Include **FACTS** about the issue to inform your listener and ground your point in trusted sources.

T **TIE** in your story: how does this issue connect to you or your community?

BALANCING FACTS AND STORIES

It's hard to make an authentic personal connection if you only talk about facts. But if you just tell personal stories without any data, you miss an opportunity to educate your legislator. When you put facts and stories together, they are greater than the sum of their parts. Each one allows the other to be heard more fully.

Read this example with highlighted RAFT principles to see how this works in practice!

I want to begin by thanking you for co-sponsoring a bill in the last Congress to repeal the 2002 Authorization for Military Force in Iraq. As we continue to work together to strengthen congressional oversight over war powers, we have an opportunity to prevent future wars by investing in peace. Today I am asking you to publicly support increased funding in three key peacebuilding accounts: \$66 million for the Complex Crises Fund, \$40 million for Reconciliation Programs, and \$25 million for Atrocities Prevention.

I know that we both care deeply that our tax dollars are spent wisely. What excites me about peacebuilding is that it not only saves lives and prevents suffering, it is a smart investment of our resources. The Institute for Economics and Peace found that for every \$1 we spend on peace, we save \$16 on the cost of conflict.

I experienced the value of investing in peace firsthand a number of years ago when I worked with at-risk youth at an after-school program in Baltimore, MD. I worked with middle schoolers who frequently got into arguments and fights, which meant I had to spend a lot of time dealing with the aftermath of conflicts. I had to try something different, so I started teaching basic conflict resolution and prevention skills to my students. After a few weeks of these peacebuilding lessons, we spent way less time dealing with conflict and much more time learning together.

Peacebuilding works in a middle school classroom just like it does around the world. By investing in peace, we can prevent wars from breaking out, save lives, and wisely invest our nation's resources for a more peaceful future.

RESPOND

ASK

FACTS

TIE-IN

TIP

All four RAFT principles are important, but they don't have to be used in order.

Group Norms and Practices

Every Advocacy Team has a certain culture that characterizes how it works together.

We encourage all teams to be intentional about how they work together and to revisit this discussion regularly as your team continues to grow. Establishing healthy norms and practices allows us to make our teams more positive, welcoming, and effective in our efforts.

Take a few moments to brainstorm three norms and practices that foster a supportive and effective group.

1.

2.

3.

Take a few moments to brainstorm three norms and practices that can prevent a team from being successful.

1.

2.

3.

TIP

It is good to review these norms and practices every six months or any time a new person joins your team!

Requesting a Lobby Visit with Your Member of Congress

Our approach to advocacy builds on the power of personal relationships, shared values, and speaking our truth.

One of the most effective ways to influence your legislators is by meeting with them directly to conduct a lobby visit, in person or virtually.

These meetings provide a chance to discuss your concerns, learn their perspective, and urge them to take action.

How to submit your request:

1. Submit a message through the contact form on your legislator's website.
2. If you have not heard back in 4-5 days, write to their scheduler directly. You can find the scheduler's email address at www.fcnl.org/congress (go to My Officials → Staff Lookup).
3. After two weeks email again or call the office.
4. Continue to contact the scheduler weekly with a polite reminder of your request. If you have not heard back in a month, drop by the local district office with the legislative leave behind and request the meeting in person.
5. After your drop by visit, submit a lobby visit report back form at www.fcnl.org/lobbyreport.
6. If you have not had success after your drop by visit or it has been a full month, please contact FCNL staff for assistance.

Details to include in any lobby visit request:

- Information about yourself and your group (professions, geographic distribution, faith backgrounds, affiliations with community groups, etc.).
- Suggested dates and times for your meeting.
- Topic or issue you will focus on.
- Optional: You can mention your group's connection to the Friends Committee on National Legislation, but this is not always necessary.

Requesting a Lobby Visit with Your Member of Congress

Sample email script

Dear [Scheduler's Name],

My name is Tim, and I'm writing on behalf of a group of constituents from the Dayton, Ohio, area. We would like to schedule a teleconference meeting with Rep. Turner sometime during the week of February 1. If Rep. Turner isn't available that week, we would love to meet with a member of his staff who handles foreign policy.

In our group we have two retired educators, two nurses, a small business owner, and a stay-at-home parent. We belong to different faith communities, including Unitarian Universalists, the Church of the Brethren, and the Religious Society of Friends. All of us live in Ohio's 10th Congressional District (some in Dayton and some in the eastern suburbs).

Is the Representative available to meet, via teleconference, with our group any afternoon during the week of Feb. 1?

If that time window does not work, please let me know what is possible. If I should connect with a different staff person, I would appreciate it if you could connect us.

We are hoping to meet with Rep. Turner to urge him to publicly support the UNRWA Funding Emergency Act. UNRWA is the "backbone" of all aid delivery operations in Gaza. Blocking U.S. funding will only exacerbate the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza, which is home to two million Palestinians who are experiencing displacement, hunger, and disease. We are eager to hear what the Representative's perspective is and learn how we can work together to restore funding to UNWRA through the emergency Restoration Act.

Thanks. I look forward to hearing from you!
Tim

Requesting a Lobby Visit with your Member of Congress

Sample call script

Hello, how are you?

I'm a constituent calling from *[district]* to schedule a meeting with *[Representative/Senator _____]* or a representative from your office.

Who would be the best person to speak to about this?
[specify if you know the staff member you want to meet with]

As people who are involved in *[list any community engagements]*, our group is very concerned about *[issue campaign for the year]*.

We think it's critical that Congress work towards *[short statement of our issue campaign's goals]*.

Our group includes community members such as
[name a few participants' occupations or activities].

Are you available to sit down with constituents from *[district]* any time during *[desired time period]*?

Great. I'll send you an email with information about our group and when we are available. And I'll follow up by phone later in the week.

Thank you very much for your time.

We're looking forward to meeting you.

TIP

Be persistent!
It takes many attempts to get a meeting.

Be respectful but don't give up!

Building a Profile for Your Member of Congress

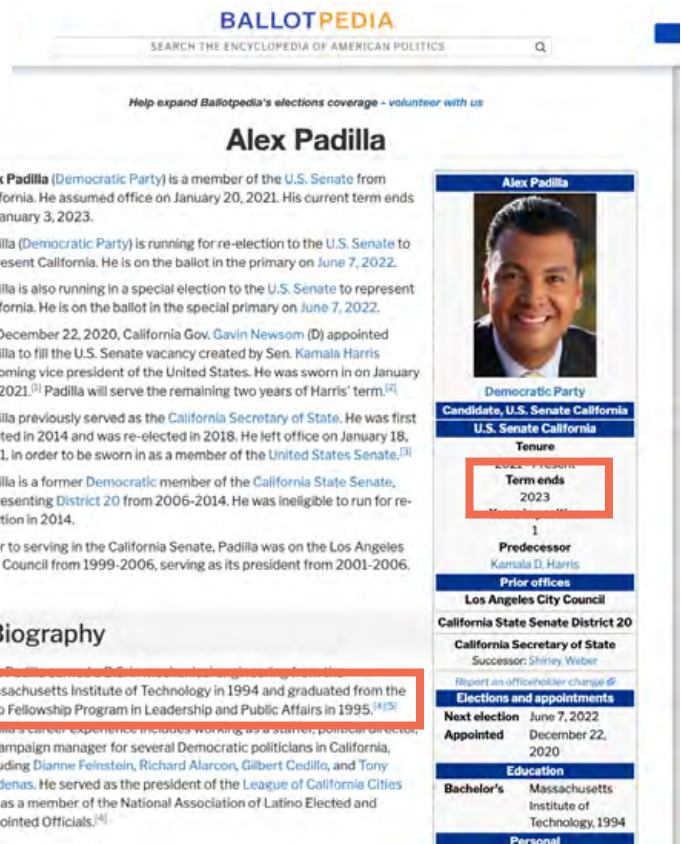
As you begin researching your members of Congress, you can build a profile for each legislator to better understand their backgrounds, their values, and where they hold influence in Congress.

1. Look up your member of Congress on the FCNL website

FCNL maintains a profile of all members of Congress at www.fcnl.org/congress.

Click on the My Officials tab. You can also find more biographical information at www.ballotpedia.org.

Some things to look for include their educational and career experience, their faith background, and when they are up for re-election!



Building a Profile for Your Member of Congress

2. Look up your member's voting records

Research your member's voting record by visiting www.fcni.org/congress. You can also look up other legislation they have supported in the past and set up alerts at www.congress.gov.

Researching their voting history is an important way to show that you are paying close attention to their actions, and it will help your team develop a more strategic ask.

TIP

Check out the Scale of Leadership on p.22 to see how your legislative ask might change if your member is supportive, opposed, or undecided on an issue.

Friends Committee on National Legislation Lobbying with Grace		End US Support for the War in Yemen		
Search by name...		Download		
	Official	117th Vote: SJ Res 31	116th Vote (S): SJ Res 7	116th Vote: SJ Res 7 Veto Override
1	Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)	✓	✓	✓
2	Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY)	✗	✗	✗
3	Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO)	✗	✓	↔
4	Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN)	✗	✗	✗
5	Sen. Dick Blumenthal (D-CT)	✗	✓	✓
6	Sen. Roy Blunt (R-MO)	✗	✗	✗

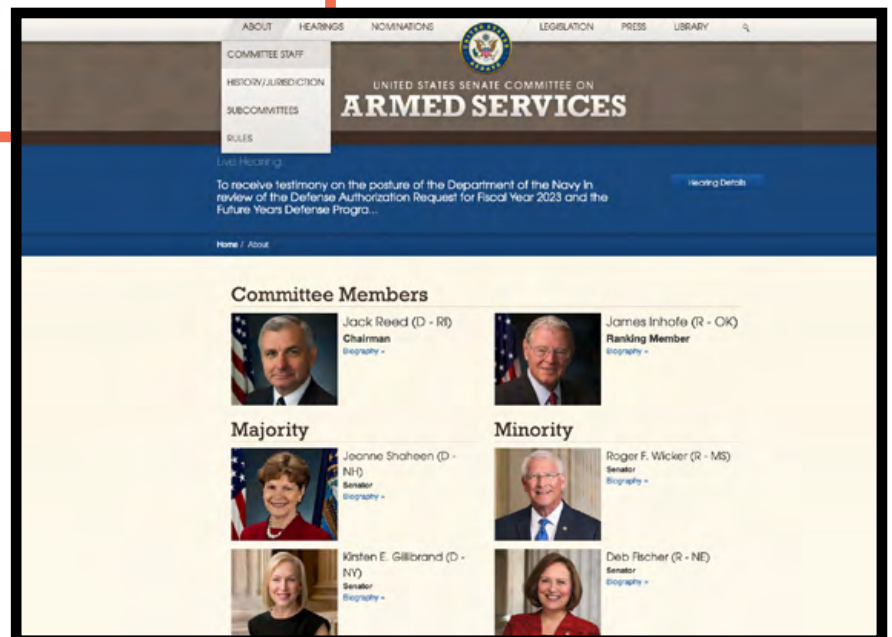
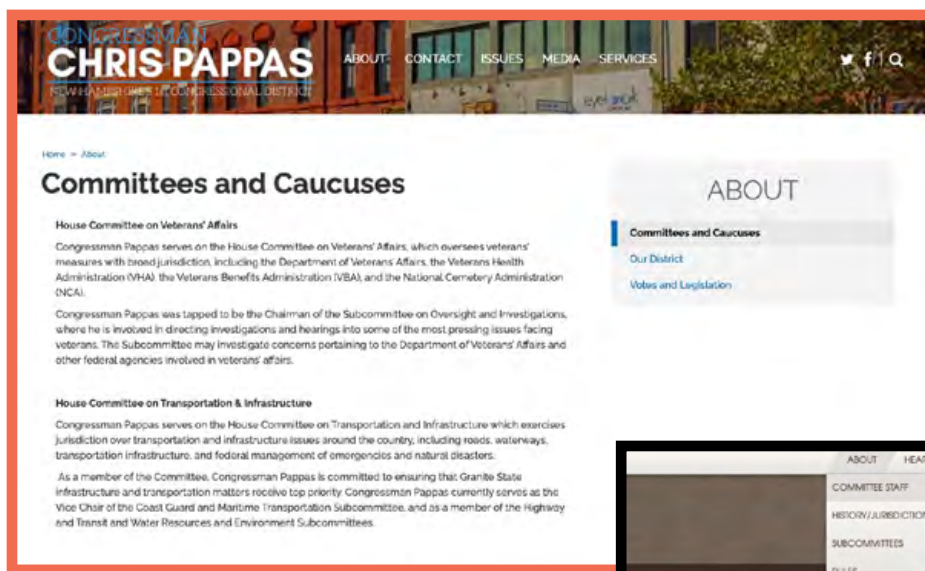
Take a look!

On the Advocacy Teams Toolkit, you can find your member's voting history for legislation on our campaign issue.

Building a Profile for Your Member of Congress

3. Look up your member's committee assignments

Learning about your member's committee assignments can help you understand their areas of influence and expertise. Look up your member's committee assignment by visiting their website and viewing their About page. You can also visit the webpage for each committee to learn more about their statements and actions and to learn who the ranking members are on each committee.

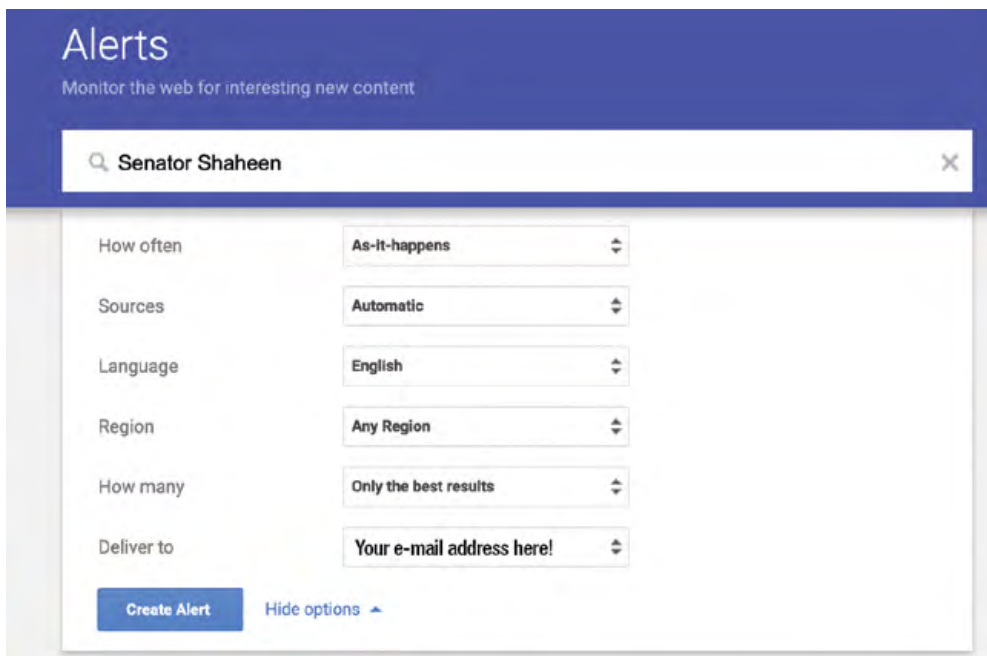


Building a Profile for Your Member of Congress

4. Set up a Google News Alert

Setting up Google News Alerts on your senators and representative is a great way to keep up with the news around your members of Congress or a specific piece of legislation.

1. Go to www.google.com/alerts.
2. Enter the name of your member of Congress.
3. Enter your email address and set options for how you would like to receive the alerts.



The screenshot shows the Google Alerts interface. At the top, the word 'Alerts' is displayed in white on a blue background, with the subtitle 'Monitor the web for interesting new content'. Below this is a search bar containing the text 'Senator Shaheen'. Under the search bar, there are several settings: 'How often' is set to 'As-it-happens', 'Sources' is set to 'Automatic', 'Language' is set to 'English', 'Region' is set to 'Any Region', 'How many' is set to 'Only the best results', and 'Deliver to' is set to 'Your e-mail address here!'. At the bottom left of the settings area is a blue button labeled 'Create Alert', and to its right is a link that says 'Hide options' with a small upward-pointing arrow.

5. Follow your member on social media

Visit your member's website to find their social media profiles and follow them on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram—or sign up for their email newsletter.



Member of Congress Profile Worksheet

Name:

Congressional district or state:

Party affiliation:

Personal

- Elected office held (if any) before Congress:

- Career/job/position before entering Congress:

- Religion (if any):

In Congress

- Number of years in Congress:

- Committee assignment(s):

- Relevant voting blocs or caucuses (*ex. Progressive Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, Hispanic Caucus, Freedom Caucus*):

- Relevant past votes on the issue you are lobbying on:

In the news

- How did the member make the news in the past month?

- What has the member said publicly about the issue you are lobbying on?

Member of Congress Profile Worksheet

Based on your research, what are some of the things your member values?

What are some of the things that might influence their decisions?

Are certain issues or groups important to them?

What values do you have in common with your member of Congress?

Once you've identified some of the things that might shape their perspective and their values, look back at your story. Are there any similarities between your own story and your member of Congress's story?



Lobby Visit Roadmap

Preparation is Powerful

We are more **confident** and **effective advocates** when we take the time to **prepare for lobby visits**.

Once completed, reference the roadmap during your meeting. Start by noting the meeting details.

Member of Congress:

Location:

Meeting Connection Details:

Group Meeting Time:

Identify Roles

Know your role! Even if you don't have a speaking role, your presence adds to the power of the visit.

You can also write a short letter to share with the staff to make your voice heard. If there are not enough people for each role, don't worry – you can still be an effective advocate!

Notetaker

Name:

Email & Phone Number:

During Visit: Provide a list of names and contact information of the group to the staffer. Listen closely and take detailed notes, including any questions and requests the staffer makes. FCNL's Policy Team can follow-up, answer questions, and reinforce your advocacy.

After visit: Allow others to review and add to the notes. Log reports at www.fcnl.org/LobbyReport.

Group Leader

Name:

Email & Phone Number:

During prep & before visit: Plan when and where to meet before the lobby visit. Identify a "thank you" for the legislator. Keep track of who is speaking, when, and for how long.

During visit: Introduce the group, facilitate based on the roadmap, and keep the visit on time. Make sure the "ask" is repeated clearly and prompt the staffer to ask questions.

Delegation Members

Share a personal story about why this issue matters to you—remember, you don't need to be a policy expert. Telling your story is an important way to connect with the values and priorities of those you're lobbying, and it can help change their minds or introduce a new perspective. Ask follow-up questions to learn more about the legislator's position and how you or FCNL can be a resource to them.

Checklist

- _____ **1. Introductions** (5 minutes). **Group leader** provides brief introductions and explains who the group is. Name any relevant faith, community, educational, or professional affiliations. **Notetaker** gives the staffer a list of the delegation members and a copy of the leave behind. Ask for the staffer's contact information and inform them you'll follow-up via email.
- _____ **2. Group leader asks how much time** the legislator or staffer has available for the meeting.
- _____ **3. Say "thank you."** (2 minutes). **Delegation member** _____ thanks the office for a position, action, or statement the legislator has taken. Keep it simple. You can also thank the staffer for their service and ask them to share something they're proud of working on. This exercise helps to build trust and shows you want this meeting to be respectful.
- _____ **4. Delegation member** _____ **introduces the ask.**
- _____ **5. Tell your stories** (6 minutes). **Delegation members [discussed in the prep session]** share why the issue is important, what it means to the community, and how it relates to the ask. Be brief to allow time for each story and give the staffer an opportunity to respond.
 - » Storyteller 1:
 - » Storyteller 2:
 - » Storyteller 3:
- _____ **6. Group leader asks legislator or staffer to respond to request** (5 minutes).
- _____ **7. After listening closely, consider follow-up asks.** (5 minutes)
Delegation member(s) _____ should deliver clear follow-up asks, such as...
 If the office supports the ask:
 - » Will they cosponsor the bill? Will they make a public statement in support?
 - » What advice do they have to continue building support?
 If the office opposes the ask:
 - » What is their biggest concern about the legislation?
 - » What additional information does the legislator need?
- _____ **8. Repeat the ask and follow up reminder.** **Delegation member** _____ repeats the ask and reminds the staffer that the group will follow up with the
- _____ **9. Group leader thanks the legislator or staffer for their time and attention.**
 If comfortable, ask if the group can take a photo with the legislator or staffer.
 Email photos to lobby@fcni.org.
- _____ **10. Post-visit follow-up.** **Delegation member** _____ emails the staffer within three days to say thank you and shares the leave behind.
 Contact lobby@fcni.org for support.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS • 2015–2025

Advocacy Teams

 Friends Committee
on National Legislation

Legislative Ask for January 2025

Urge Congress to Restore UNRWA Funding and Stop Famine in Gaza

As the 119th Congress begins, FCNL Advocacy Teams are hitting the ground running as we launch our 2025 campaign to advance a just peace in the Middle East by increasing humanitarian funding and access and blocking the weapons that are fueling the violence.

For years, we have lobbied Congress to end endless wars, promote diplomacy, and invest in peacebuilding. This year, we will focus on addressing some of the root causes of violence in the region that are driving the instability and humanitarian crisis in Israel-Palestine and across the Middle East. This month, we are taking the first step in this campaign by requesting meetings with our lawmakers to urge their support for the UNRWA Funding Emergency Restoration Act. This would ensure that the backbone of aid delivery operations in Gaza continues to function amid one of the worst hunger crises on the planet.

Specifically, we are asking senators and representatives to publicly support and cosponsor the UNRWA Funding Emergency Restoration Act. We are urging Senate offices to sign on as original cosponsors before the bill is reintroduced in the House and Senate by Sen. Peter Welch (VT) and Rep. Andre Carson (IN-7). Share the legislative ask with Congressional staff when you request this meeting. Educating members of Congress and staff about this issue is the first step towards building broad-based support for this legislation.

This year will be challenging for peace advocates across the country and the world, with the bloodshed across the Middle East region escalating at an alarming pace. Members of Congress will have their attention pulled in many directions. It is our job to make sure they continue hearing from as many constituents as possible, as clearly and frequently as possible, as we call for this powerful, concrete step to restore urgently needed UNRWA funding to Gaza.

Read more about our ask here: fcnl.org/teamtoolkit



Actions to Take in January

Urge your members of Congress to support and cosponsor the UNRWA Funding Emergency Restoration Act.

1. Request a meeting with your member of Congress or their staff to discuss the new campaign.
2. Schedule time for your team to share a meal, build community, and strategize for the year ahead.



Restore UNRWA Funding. Stop Famine in Gaza.

Gaza isn't starving. It's being starved. Over two million Palestinian civilians face one of the world's worst human-made humanitarian crises, with famine and disease spreading due to a lack of aid access. Amidst this catastrophe, the Biden administration and Congress halted all U.S. funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the largest aid operation in Gaza, until March 2025. President Trump has indicated that his administration will continue the suspension of U.S. funding to the agency.

This U.S. action was a knee-jerk response to Israeli allegations that a dozen UNRWA employees (out of 13,000 working in Gaza) were directly involved in Hamas' horrific attacks on October 7. As the facts continue to come in, it has become clear there was an unjustified rush to judgment against UNRWA. Other countries that suspended UNRWA funding have resumed funding it.

UNRWA was established by a United Nations General Assembly Resolution in 1949 to carry out direct relief programs for Palestine refugees displaced in the Nakba, the violence suffered by Palestinians following the establishment of the state of Israel. The agency began operations in 1950 and has provided vital relief to Palestinian civilians in need ever since.

Why Congress must pass the UNRWA Funding Emergency Restoration Act:

- » **UNRWA is the "backbone" of all aid delivery operations in Gaza.** Blocking U.S. funding will only exacerbate the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in Gaza, which is home to two million Palestinians who are experiencing displacement, hunger, and disease.
- » **Continuing to block U.S. funding to UNRWA doesn't just impact civilians in Gaza.** This vital UN agency provides essential shelter, healthcare, education, and financial assistance to millions of other Palestinian refugees across the region including in the West Bank, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. If UNRWA closed its doors, we could see even more regional instability and violence. Key allies like Jordan have come to Congress requesting UNRWA funding be restored and citing the national security implications should UNRWA's work be disrupted.
- » **In response to Israel's allegations, UNRWA immediately fired the twelve accused employees.** The UN ordered an inspector general investigation and commissioned an independent, outside review of UNRWA's mechanisms and procedures. UNRWA has taken concrete steps to implement all recommendations.
- » **After prompt action by UNRWA and the UN, and as additional facts have come to light, all 15 countries that suspended support to UNRWA have resumed funding, including the United Kingdom, European Union, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, and Australia.** The United States should join these key allies in restoring this urgently needed funding.

Support the UNRWA Funding Emergency Restoration Act

Contact:

Hassan El-Tayyab

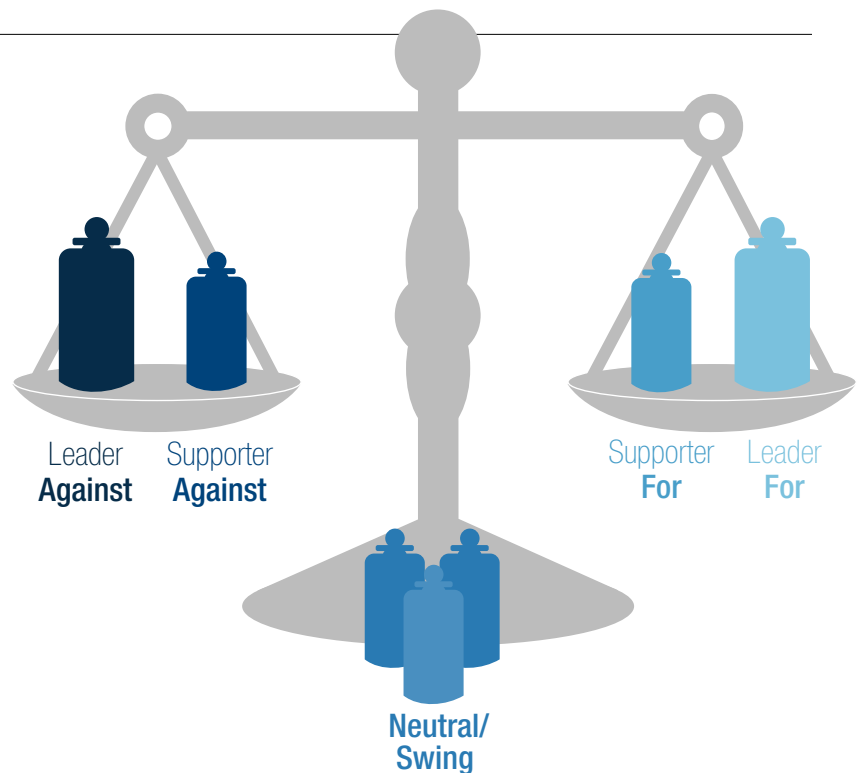
Legislative Director for
Middle East Policy and
Advocacy Organizer

hassan@fcni.org

Tip the Scale toward Justice

Is your member of Congress a champion on this year's issue campaign? Are they a strong opponent? Are they undecided?

The Scale of Leadership can help you assess how to approach each legislator based on their past support, and it may influence the actions you ask them to take.



Where does your member fall on the scale of leadership?

What is one tactic you could use to make your conversation with this member most effective, taking that position into account?

A Story

An Advocacy Team in California met with Rep. Jimmy Panetta's office about preventing war with North Korea. The office said that there wasn't enough bipartisan support for him to sign on.

After the lobby visit, the team did some research and followed up in an email showing that their bill was more bipartisan than something he had recently cosponsored. Rep. Panetta thanked them for the research and signed on to the bill immediately.

The team published a letter to the editor with the title "Representative Panetta listens to his constituents," and it went over really well. Rep. Panetta himself now joins their lobby visits, and he's joined some calls with FCNL. He cites the Advocacy Team as a group that really changed his mind on that particular issue: preventing war with North Korea.



Leader
Against



Supporter
Against



Neutral/
Swing



Supporter
For



Leader
For

1. Where does your member of Congress put their weight?

Leader Against:

Actively advocating against your position, may have introduced legislation

Supporter Against:

Has expressed opposition or voted against your position

Neutral:

Unfamiliar or noncommittal

Swing:

Voted or made public statement for and against your position

Supporter For:

Has voted in favor of your position or has expressed private or public support

Leader For:

Has taken positive initiative, may have expressed interest or has introduced legislation

2. What strategic ask can you make?

Reduce their opposition to the issue

Avoid negative action

Invest in the issue, vote if legislation exists

Become a leader through vocal advocacy

Shepherd legislation and raise awareness about issue

3. What tools can you use to tip the scale in your advocacy?

Lobbying

Tell stories to humanize the issue & illustrate successes

Ask about motivation for member's position on issue

Make clear, specific asks toward neutral action

Make clear, specific asks toward positive action

Ask member to initiate a sign-on letter / host a briefing

Ask member to author and shepherd legislation

Ask member to join key committees, engage colleagues and/or make public statements

Media

Research and communicate shared values

Ask member to draft or sign on to op-eds that you write

Outreach

Use letters, events, and media to demonstrate community support for the cause

Give regular, positive feedback for the member's actions

Adapted from FCNL and RESULTS materials

Working Effectively with the Media

Here are two examples of letters that use the RAFT principles well.

Example #1

Respond

“Do you know the Pentagon’s wish list is \$16.4 billion over the \$886 billion defense budget request?”

Tie-In

As a child I experienced firsthand the stress of missing a meal and moving frequently; I dropped out of college due to the strain of waitressing and growing student debt. This impacted my ability to find a stable home, occupation and income. So what is \$16.4 billion was used to support people’s basic needs to help them thrive?

Facts

- 1 in 7 children face hunger in our state; 1 in 10 people are food insecure (Feeding Washington).
- 46 percent of renters spend 30 percent of their income on housing; 88 percent of families can’t afford a median-priced house (Washington House Republicans).
- Washington’s five largest school districts reported enrollment dips with 10,000-plus students disappearing from the public school system (state records).

Mention

My gratitude to Sens. Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Rep. Marie Gluesenkamp Perez for advocating for working families. I urge you to support bills like Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act (H.R. 7024) and Streamline Pentagon Budgeting Act (H.R. 4740) to begin realigning our nation’s spending priorities away from endless war and toward more critical needs impacting our communities.

Ask

—Devona Renee, *The Columbian*, March 13, 2024



Remember to include and **EMPHASIZE** your member of congress by name in your LTE. Mentioning them by name likely gets your piece in front of their staff and holds them accountable!

TIP

Submit multiple letters from your team members on the same day to increase your chances of getting published! In February of 2022, the Memphis, Tennessee, Advocacy Team submitted three letters on the same day and all three got published!

Working Effectively with the Media

Example #1

Respond

“Like many West Virginians, I am thinking of our troops serving overseas during this Christmas season.

Tie-In

It is hard for families to be separated during the holidays. That is why many of us are sending thoughts, prayers, even gifts to adopted soldiers.

Facts

Here is a gift idea. Let’s be very careful with how and where we ask our soldiers to serve. In 2001, Congress gave the president the authority to engage our military without their approval through the Authorization for the Use of Military Force. It was an extraordinary time and we felt we needed an extraordinary response to counter Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. But the last three presidents have used that authority multiple times and to fight groups that did not exist in 2001.

The time for this sweeping power is over. We recently saw bipartisan support to end U.S. support for fighting in Yemen. Let’s bring decisions concerning military engagement back to where the Constitution says they should be with the Congress—so we, the friends and family of U.S. soldiers, have a say in the outcome.

Mention

Who will bring this gift? We need three wise people traveling from not so far to act. Sens. Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito and Rep. Alex Mooney, reassert your constitutional authority. Retire the AUMF.

Ask

Because our service people cannot be refunded or exchanged.”

— Meg Kinghorn, *Martinsburg Journal*,
December 16, 2018



Reach out to your community radio station and ask to share your team’s work on the radio! Teams in Oregon, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania have used this as one way to engage more people through media.

TIP

Be sure to respond to something local and timely! Something that has happened recently in your community can help make your LTE more relevant and hopefully... more likely to be published!

Reflect

Discuss: What did each letter do well? What would you add or change?

Working Effectively with the Media

Now it's your turn!

List local or state media outlets that you could contact.

Write a draft letter to the editor:

TIP

To be most effective, research how the issue you are advocating on affects or connects to your local community, congressional district, or state. Drawing a connection between a large issue and its impact on your community will raise its importance with the media and your members of Congress.

Tips on Using Social Media

- Social media can be another important advocacy tool because members of Congress and their staff use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms to connect with their constituents.
- Using the RAFT principles still applies to advocacy on social media: call on members by name or tag them, use a news hook to make it timely, and engage a wider audience through tags, shares, and retweets.
- Tag your member by name so they are notified when you post about them (i.e. @AmyKlobuchar).
- Amplify posts by other FCNL advocates by retweeting or sharing their content.
- Build the relationship with your members of Congress by thanking them for positive actions they have taken. Also be mindful of posts that may hurt the relationship, and avoid content that may make it less likely that the office will want to dialogue with you.
- Connect with your local community by inviting neighbors and friends to outreach events and actions.



Beyond Single Issue Advocacy

Advocacy Teams focus on one legislative campaign each year. But as advocates, we all care about a range of issues, and there are certain ways we can bring multiple concerns into our lobby visits while sticking with our strategic ask.

Intersectional Advocacy

The term “intersectionality” was coined by Kimberle Williams Crenshaw in 1989. This term describes how different aspects of a person’s identity—including race, class, and gender—overlap to create different kinds of discrimination and privilege.

The term “intersectional advocacy” refers to an approach that highlights the adverse impacts a particular issue has on people with certain identities and amplifies those perspectives in our conversations with members of Congress and their staff.

Why is this important?

- Advocacy Team members bring a range of identities, perspectives, and backgrounds as we conduct lobby visits and publish media pieces. Highlighting these identities is an important way to show our legislators that these issues impact people from all walks of life and can challenge assumptions about who is most affected by a piece of legislation.
- Our advocacy is part of a broader effort to build a more just and equitable world. An intersectional approach compels us to advocate for policies that serve all members of our communities, especially those who are often marginalized in the policymaking process.

Example:

Growing up in New Mexico, I knew that nuclear testing had happened in my state. I was always concerned about how this affected the safety of my community and people around the world. But I am especially concerned because I know these tests caused severe harm to Native communities within the Navajo Nation, which is why I am asking you to support legislation to provide compensation for individuals affected by radiation exposure.

Reflect:

What is one way that this year’s Advocacy Teams campaign issue disproportionately impacts people from a certain identity group?

Beyond Single Issue Advocacy

Advocating on interconnected issues

We can also strengthen our advocacy by weaving together multiple concerns in a way that shows the deep connections between two legislative issues while still making one clear policy ask.

Why is this important?

- Advocacy Teams focus on one strategic legislative campaign each year and one domestic flex issue.
- By advocating for interconnected issues, we can lobby on the issues we care about, while still advancing our main campaign.
- It might be the case that your legislator cares a lot about a specific issue, but you are asking them to support a piece of legislation that seems unrelated. This approach helps you to tie your member's concerns into the issue you're lobbying on.

Reflect:

What's an issue that you care about? What is one way this can connect to our legislative campaign?

Example:

I grew up in the countryside and I have always had a deep appreciation for nature and the environment.

My concern for the earth leads me to advocate to end endless wars, because I know that the U.S. military is the largest institutional polluter on the planet, and warmaking is fueling the devastating climate crisis.

Team Roles: How to Share Leadership Within Your Team

Advocacy Teams work best and are able to accomplish more when team members share roles. There are tasks that all team members are responsible for and distinct roles that FCNL has identified as important to establishing a healthy team.

During your team's training, we will discuss these roles. You will be invited to pencil in the names of team members who will fill each role. We encourage all teams to regularly evaluate team roles and switch when desired.

The role of all team members

- Attend the FCNL National Call (in person with your team, when possible) and take action following the call.
- Regularly support your teammates to take actions collectively and individually.

Co-Communicators

- Serve as primary contact persons for FCNL staff.
- Join monthly Advocacy Team Communicator Calls in addition to the National Call.
- Share updates from Communicator Calls with your team.
- Share stories, victories, questions, and concerns with the Advocacy Teams staff and in the Communicators' group in Mobilize.

Coordinator

- Coordinate the scheduling of team meetings and remind people about team meetings.
- Lead monthly team meetings. Invite communicators, congressional liaisons, media coordinators, and outreach coordinators to share updates on their work.
- Manage email and phone call correspondence with the team.
- Ensure team is reporting actions (lobby visits, letters to the editor, and outreach events) to FCNL at www.fcnl.org/teamtoolkit.

Team Roles: How to Share Leadership Within Your Team

Congressional liaison(s)

- Serve as the primary contact for a congressional office. Schedule regular lobby visits with each member of Congress.
- Keep monthly contact with the congressional staffer covering the campaign issue for the year through phone calls, emails, and requests for lobby visits.
- Support team members as they organize and plan lobby visits.
- Coordinate yearlong schedule of Advocacy Team's lobbying. Teams should work towards a goal of lobbying each member of Congress every three months—or one lobby visit per month.

Media coordinator

- Serve as the point person for local and statewide newspapers.
- Organize and support team members to write letters to the editor and op-eds on a regular basis.
- Coordinate longer-term schedule of Advocacy Team's media engagement.

Outreach coordinator

- Focus on local outreach to bring new folks into the team and engage the wider community in the team's work.
- Organize events, speak at community meetings, and promote the team's advocacy on social media.

Setting goals can help you pace yourself in this work. Check out our [goal-setting worksheet](#) on p. 32 to see how you can plan out your work over the course of several months to stay focused and plan ahead.

Advocacy Teams



Quarterly Goal-Setting Worksheet

Revisit this sheet with your team members every three months to track your progress and work towards shared goals. You can also fill this out with members of your statewide network!

Monthly Meeting

Having a regular monthly meeting time helps form community and coordinate team actions.

Our monthly meeting will take place on

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Remember to prepare an agenda, share speaking roles, and determine clear next steps for each team member to take after the meeting.

Lobby Visit Goals

Aim to meet with each Member of Congress once every three months to keep up the relationship.

We plan to meet with Senator _____

in the month of _____

We plan to meet with Senator _____

in the month of _____

We plan to meet with Rep. _____

in the month of _____

Media Goals

Only one in nine letters to the editor (LTE) get published, so if you don't get published at first, try again!

This month, _____, we aim to send LTEs to this media outlet: _____.

Next month, _____, we aim to send LTEs to this media outlet: _____.

The following month, _____, we aim to send LTEs to this media outlet: _____.

Outreach Goals

Hold an outreach event once every few months to invite new people to take action with your team. Outreach ideas include speaking to a community group, holding a film screening, inviting a new person to a lobby visit (and prep-meeting), or holding a tabling event.

The best way to get people involved is to invite them to your actions instead of to your business meetings.

In _____ (month), our team will engage the wider community by _____.

FCNL Programming Schedule

The FCNL National Call takes place on the first Wednesday of each month at 8:00 P.M. ET.

This month, the National Call takes place on _____

Communicator Calls take place on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 8:00 P.M. ET.

_____ will send out notes from this month's Communicator calls.

Advocacy Teams



Quarterly Goal-Setting Worksheet

Short-Term Goals

Write three goals your team can work towards together in the next three months.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Year-Long Goals

Write three goals your team can work towards together in the year-to-come.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Welcoming New Members to Your Advocacy Team

It's important to always think about ways to engage new people in this work.

Here are some things to consider as you plan your outreach:

- Look for opportunities to reach new people in your communities through tabling events, speaking to local groups, or presenting to classrooms.
- When you meet people interested in your work, remember to invite them first to your actions, not your business meetings.
- One-on-one conversations are more effective than sending out an invitation to a large listserv.
- Having a regular monthly meeting time and regular lobby visits provide a structure that helps new people to join easily.

What happens when a new person contacts FCNL about joining their local team:

1. FCNL staff will invite them to attend the next Intro to Advocacy training.
2. FCNL staff will introduce the new member to your team's Communicators, add them to the Mobilize/Forj community platform, and our email list.
3. Communicators will reach out to the new member to invite them to your next team meeting or action.

Remember: Be open to whichever role a new person may want to take, and avoid making assumptions. For example, someone who is directly affected by an issue may not feel comfortable telling a story about it. Also, a young adult may not want to get involved with social media.

Tip: Use the worksheet on pages 35-36 to help your team prepare to welcome in new members!

Welcoming New Members to Your Advocacy Team

1

Have a team discussion

Query #1:

How do you want someone to feel when they join your team?

If your team **established group norms** during your trainings, this is a great time to revisit them together.

Query #2:

What do you want new members to know about your team as they get involved?

Remember:
When talking with new members, don't highlight what's not going well. Instead, **share the aspects you value** most about your team.

Query #3: *What are you most proud of your team for?*

Query #4: *What energizes you most about your team?*

New members want to join teams that are **honest** about challenges but **optimistic** about overcoming them.

2

Welcome the new person



A team member reaches out for coffee or a phone call.

Which team member will reach out?

The communicator(s) steps:

Invite them to a **New Member Training** with FCNL. *These occur monthly.*

Plan an action, like a lobby visit, letter-writing event, or film screening. *This allows your new member to see your team's advocacy in action.*

Plan a social gathering as a team. *People are more likely to join a group when they feel connected to the community.*

3

Build the relationship during team meetings and social events

» ***Get to know your new member!***

Ask what they care about and share your own interests.

» End team meetings with ***clear next steps*** so the new member feels motivated to return.

» ***Be inclusive:*** Listen actively and include the new member in your conversations.

» ***Review and update group norms.*** Every time a new person joins, your team should adapt to a new group dynamic.

Tips and Resources

Advocacy Teams programming

- National Call: First Wednesday of each month, 8:00 P.M. ET
- Every month we have a Zoom call for hundreds of Advocacy Team members across the country. Each call features a high-level guest speaker, a policy update, and highlights from teams across the country.
- Most teams hold their monthly team meeting after the National Calls to share progress reports and upcoming actions.

Communicator Calls: 3rd Thursday each month, 8:00 P.M. ET

- Communicators are invited to attend Zoom calls twice a month. These calls feature a policy update and additional trainings to share with your team.

Monthly Newsletter

- FCNL produces a monthly newsletter for all team members, with updates on our legislative campaign and stories from our past month of advocacy.

Action Sheet

- FCNL shares a monthly Action Sheet, which includes a specific and updated ask to take to members of Congress that month.

Toolkit

- This online hub for the Advocacy Teams program can be found at www.fcnl.org/teamtoolkit. You can find links to submit reports, recordings of past calls, the monthly Action Sheet, and other resources.

Report your team's actions!

- On the Team Toolkit, you can submit reports about your lobby visits, media pieces, and community events.
- Sharing information about your team's actions allows FCNL lobbyists to follow up with Congressional offices.

This is a crucial step in your lobbying as a team, and it makes our network stronger and more powerful as a whole.

Using Mobilize

- FCNL has a vibrant community on our online platform called Mobilize (or Forj). Connect with advocates on your local team, in your state, staff, and advocates across the country. Find helpful resources and have access to quick answers to your advocacy and policy questions all in one place.

Tips and Resources

Glossary of Terms

MOC = Member of Congress

LTE = Letter to the Editor

NDAA = National Defense Authorization Act

AUMF = Authorization for Use of Military Force

WPR = War Powers Resolution

FTO = Foreign Terrorist Organization

CD = Congressional District

We're here for you!

FCNL provides ongoing support, coaching, and advice as teams start taking action together. You can contact FCNL staff with questions and updates.



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END THE
FOREVER
WARS
#RepealDad - Replace

PEACE
IS
POSSIBLE

WAR
IS NOT THE
ANSWER!
don't fail.org

REPEAL
THE
2002
AUMF

The WAR IS
SHILL ENDLESS
Repeal the AUMFs

REPEAL
the
2002
AUMFs

GIVE
PEACE
A
CHANCE

AS WE ACT, LET US
NOT BECOME THE EXACT
THAT WE DEPLORE

WHY HAVE
Congress
Over

WAR
IS NOT THE
ANSWER!
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AUTHORIZATION
IS NOT
HEALTHY FOR
CHILDREN AND
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