

Engage Candidates in the 2026 Elections

Engaging candidates for Congress and public office is vital for building power through relationships – whether with the candidates themselves or stakeholders they listen to. Engaging all candidates is essential, regardless of their political party, as driving change often takes creative coalitions. Even when candidates lose, they may likely continue to lead in their communities and can be potential allies for future advocacy. More resources at fcnl.org/elections.

Why Candidate Engagement Matters

- **Early Relationships:** Connecting with candidates helps to influence their priorities.
- **Bipartisan Advocacy:** Engaging incumbents and challengers ensures a balanced approach, fostering goodwill and understanding across the political spectrum.
- **Community Influence:** Candidates have influence within their communities. By engaging them, we can amplify our advocacy efforts and reach a broader audience.

How You Can Get Involved

- **Lobby Candidates:** Reach out to candidates to discuss FCNL’s priorities and other issues you care about. Share our mission and the causes that matter to you.
- **Attend Forums and Townhalls:** Participate in events hosted by candidates to learn about their platforms and introduce them to FCNL’s work and your own advocacy priorities.
- **Support with Time and Money:** Giving time and money to campaigns or efforts that align with your values may open the door to more opportunities to meet with candidates.
- **Build Long-Term Relationships:** Continuously engage with both incumbents and challengers to establish lasting connections that transcend election cycles.

Steps for Effective Engagement When Meeting a Candidate

1. **Research Candidate Platforms:** Understand the key issues and positions of each candidate to tailor your engagement strategy.
2. **Schedule a Meeting:** Contact candidates’ offices to schedule meetings and discuss FCNL’s priorities and your own advocacy interests.
3. **Prepare Your Message:** Be clear about FCNL’s priorities, your own advocacy interests, and how they align with the candidate’s interests and community needs.
4. **Follow Up:** Maintain ongoing communication with candidates to reinforce the relationship and keep FCNL’s priorities and your own causes on their radar.
5. **Report Back:** Share your notes about any candidate relationships or interactions with FCNL at Lobby@fcnl.org so we can reinforce and support your advocacy.