

Advocacy 101





Lutheran
Social Services
of the Southwest





Agenda

What is Advocacy?

Who represents me in office?

How do I advocate?

What's next?

What is the role of Advocacy?

The role of advocacy is to:

- **Create a relationship** with your elected representatives in local, state, and national districts
- **Stand up** for those whose voices are often not heard
- Provide an **avenue to express your opinions and passions** to those who have been elected to serve





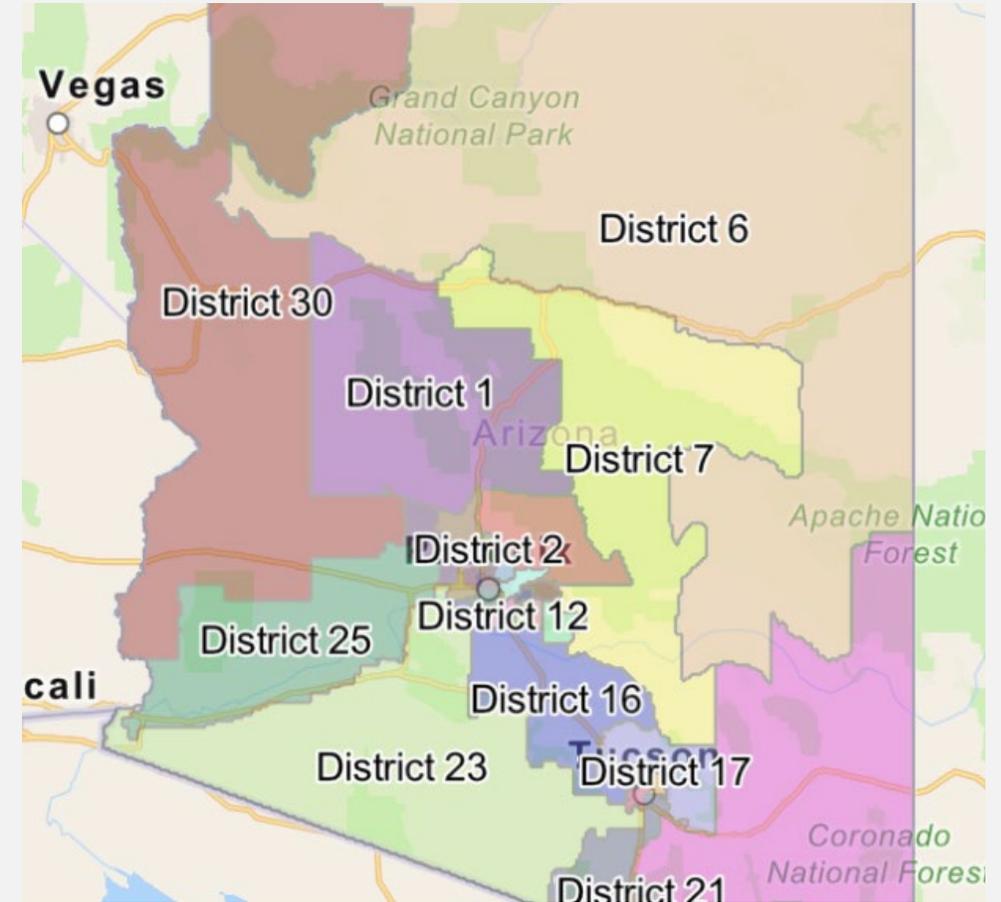
Think about a moment in your life when you stood up for someone, or someone stood up for you.



What stood out for you in the video? What questions arose?

How do I find my district?

1. Go to: <https://irc.az.gov/> or scan QR code below
2. Scroll down to view congressional or legislative maps
3. Click on either and enter in your address



How do I find my legislators?



Once you know your District, you can find out who represents you in your district.

1. Go to: <https://www.azleg.gov/>
2. Hover over either the Senate or House Tab to find your Senator or Representatives
3. Click on “Members” from the dropdown box. There you will find a list of individuals in each district, as well as email address.



What's next?

- Let your policy maker know who you are! Reach out and introduce yourself via letter or email



Effective letter writing

“Senator” Dewgood,

I am writing to let you know that your policy priorities for the year are ridiculous!

We have far more important things to worry about in Arizona than where you are focusing your efforts. We have enough money being thrown at transportation!

And your denial of our water supply issues is despicable. To think you would even have the audacity to suggest such a small amount of our budget go to support such a problem is ludicrous.

I voted you into office and I pay your wages. I expect that you will get in line with what your constituents want!

I will be down at the Capitol on Wednesday for a committee hearing and I will be stopping by your office for a visit.

–Jim

What are some mistakes Jim made?

How could Jim's letter be improved?

Is he likely to have a productive conversation with his Senator or granted a meeting?



Dear Senator Dewgood,

My name is Tom Patel and I am a constituent in your district. I am writing to you today to express my support for a larger delegation of state funds to help water supply efforts in Arizona.

I believe this is a beneficial use of state funds. In our area, we are affected by the limiting measures that were enforced to ensure that enough water is available for all. The shortage of water is affecting our family and friends in neighboring towns and these problems could have a lasting effect on our economy if this problem is not addressed soon.

I acknowledge your support for the transportation issues that our city is experiencing, and I thank you for your work in this area. I encourage you to also support the State's efforts at increasing budget for our water shortage.

I will be coming to the capitol on Wednesday, July 6th and would be honored if you could make time for a visit. I will follow up with your assistant to check on your availability.

Thank you,

Thomas Patel

1234 Lane

Phoenix, AZ

What are some key things Tom utilized to write a professional letter?

Is he likely to have a good opportunity for a productive meeting with his Senator?

Are there ways his letter could be improved?



Tips for letter writing



Be courteous and informative in your communication.

State the purpose of the letter in the opening sentence and if you are referring to a bill, include the bill number, author and topic.

If you live in the elected official's district be sure to say this in the opening paragraph.

Focus on the message and key points.

Personalize the letter by including examples of how the legislation might impact you and your family, or neighbors.

Tips continued

Keep the letter brief – not more than one page.

Restate your request at the end of the letter, for example urging them to support or oppose the bill.

Thank the policy maker for his or her support and offer to address any questions that he or she might have.

Be sure to include your contact information, and sign the letter.





Practice



House Bill 2509 or “Tamale Bill”



Phoenix City Council Ordinance
regarding Accessory Dwelling
Units or Casitas

Sample Letter

Dear (Representative/Senator/Congressman or Congresswoman) (Last name):

My name is (your first and last name) and I am a (advocate/community member/service provider) who resides in your district (district number). I am contacting you today to express my support/opposition to (State the bill and why you support or oppose the bill or other issue here. Choose up to three of the strongest points that support your position and state them clearly.)

(Include a personal story. Tell your representative why the issue is important to you and how it affects you, your family member and your community.)

(Tell your representative how you want her or him to vote on this issue and ask for a response.)

Sincerely,

Your name and title

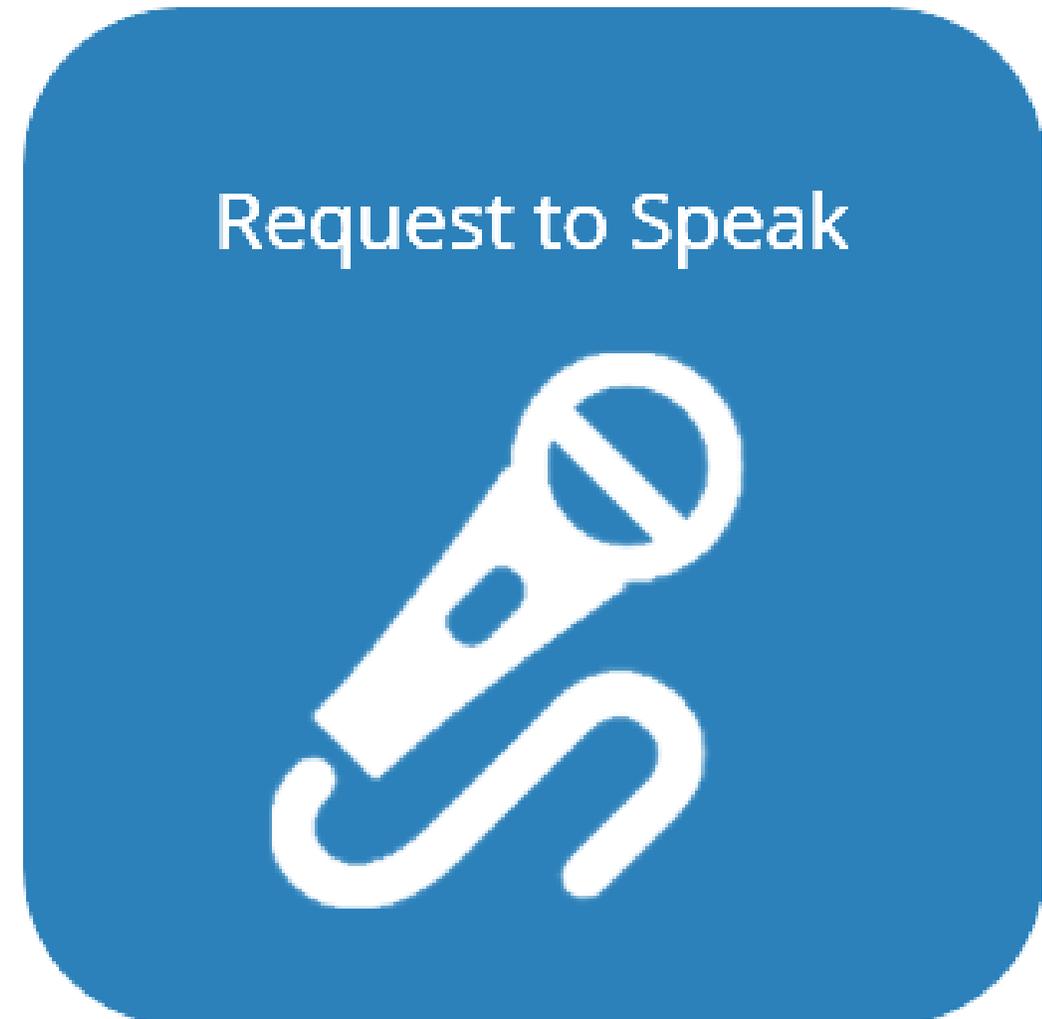
Street address City, State, Zip code

Request to Speak

The Request To Speak program (RTS) is a system that allows the public to register an opinion on bills listed on agendas and to request to speak on a bill in a committee.

Initially, you must go to the capitol and register at a kiosk (in either House or Senate), and then you are able to sign in online at home through the following website:

<https://apps.azleg.gov/Account/SignInOn>



Request to Speak

LAMA can visit the capital on your behalf to set up your RTS account! Simply:

1. Scan the QR code, fill out the RTS Application and follow the instructions provided.
2. Email the form back to director@lamaz.org

Our toolkit has more information on Request to Speak.



Things to remember when meeting with your legislator

- Visits are often short, 10-15 mins so plan accordingly
- Have an outline of who will lead the meeting and who will speak about what, and when
- Leave time for the policymaker to ask questions
- Feel free to bring materials to leave behind, such as a fact sheet or pamphlet from your organization



Things to remember continued...

- Be polite! Even if you disagree, having respectful conversations are key to making an impact
- Policy makers cannot be experts on every subject matter and rely on those who have the knowledge to educate them
- Creating a relationship with your Representative is a way to build rapport and trust
- Find common ground!



Things to remember continued...

- Personal stories are usually most impactful and memorable
- Always follow up with a thank you
- Handwritten letters are the most impactful, but an email or call are great as well



But that sounds intimidating.
What if I don't do it right?



Here are a few things to remember if you are feeling unsure about meeting with your policy maker:

- Being nervous is normal! It happens to everyone.
- Policymakers are people, just like us. Try not to focus on their title, but that they are human, with flaws, like all of us!
- Your policy maker is usually happy to hear from constituents and will likely be friendly during your meeting
- You can always bring a friend! Just identify who is from the policymaker's district

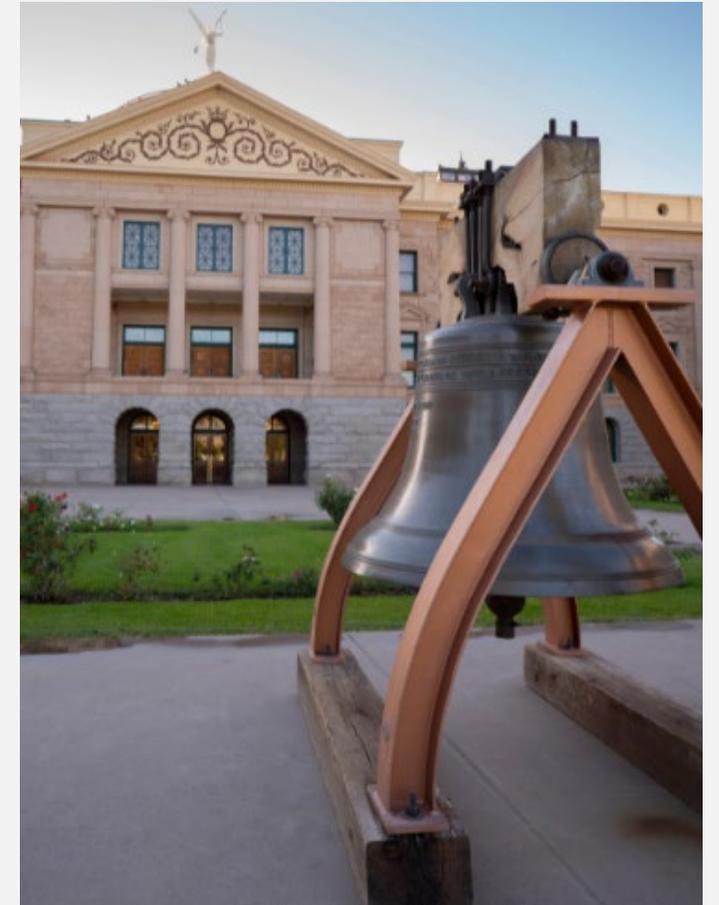


Ways you can get involved

- Keep up to date with the reps in your district. Azleg is a good place to find valuable information
- Follow your policy makers on Instagram, Facebook and X
- Subscribe to our LSS Advocacy Newsletter and LAMA newsletter to stay updated on current issues
- Become a member of our advocacy team
- Check your social circles to find other groups and ways to advocate. Some good ones are: The Housing Coalition, Arizona Faith Network, ELCA Advocacy



Thank you!





Questions?