



Advocacy Glossary of Terms

- **Act**
A bill or measure passed into law. Also used to describe a comprehensive piece of proposed legislation with multiple components.
- **Advocacy**
Efforts to influence public policy, funding decisions, or societal attitudes to support a cause or community.
- **Agenda Setting**
The process of defining and prioritizing issues to bring them to the attention of decision-makers or the public.
- **Allyship**
Active support of a marginalized group through actions, not just words.
- **Amendment**
A proposal to change, or an actual change to, a given piece of legislation.
- **Appropriations**
Legislative decisions that allocate funding to government programs and initiatives.
- **Authorization**
Authorizes a program, specifying its general purpose and, broadly, how that purpose is to be achieved, and sets a funding ceiling for the program.
- **Base Building**
Growing and mobilizing a core group of supporters to strengthen a movement's reach and power.
- **Bill**
A proposed law.
- **Budget**
An annual proposal that outlines anticipated federal revenue and designates program expenditures for the upcoming fiscal year.

- **Calendar**
The list of bills or resolutions to be considered by committees, or by either chamber.
- **Call to Action (CTA)**
A specific request encouraging supporters to take a concrete step (e.g., sign a petition, contact legislators).
- **Chairperson**
Member of the majority party who presides over the work of a committee or subcommittee.
- **Coalition**
A group of organizations or individuals working together toward a shared advocacy goal.
- **Community Mobilization**
Engaging and organizing community members to advocate for local or broader change.
- **Committee Report**
A committee's written statement about a given piece of legislation. Committee reports are especially important because they often contain implementing and enforcing language for the legislation.
- **Continuing Resolution**
A joint resolution of Congress to provide continued funding for government agencies, generally at the same rate as the previous year's appropriation, that have not yet been funded through the enactment of regular appropriations bills.
- **Digital Advocacy**
Using online tools (social media, email campaigns, online petitions) to support advocacy goals.
- **Fiscal Year**
The financial operating year of the federal government, beginning October 1st and ending September 30th of the next calendar year.
- **Grassroots Advocacy**
Efforts led and driven by community members rather than professional lobbyists or organizations.
- **Grass-tops Advocacy**
Engaging influential community leaders or stakeholders to influence policymakers.

- Issue Framing
The way an issue is presented to shape public perception and policy responses.
- Joint Committee
A committee consisting of members of both the House and Senate.
- Joint Resolution
Joint resolutions, which are essentially the same as bills, usually focus on a single item or issue. They are designated as either 'HJ Res' (when originating in the House) or 'SJ Res' (when originating in the Senate).
- Key Messages
Core points crafted to consistently communicate an advocacy position.
- Legislative Visit
A meeting with a policymaker to share your stance on an issue and urge action.
- Lobbying
Direct interaction with legislators or officials to influence specific legislation or policy.
- Majority Leader
Leader of the majority party in either the House or the Senate.
- Minority Leader
Member of the minority party in either the House or the Senate.
- Op-Ed
A written opinion piece in a media outlet to raise awareness or shape public opinion on an issue.
- Policy Brief
A concise document outlining an issue, evidence, and recommended policy solutions.
- Power Mapping
Identifying key decision-makers and their influence networks to target advocacy efforts effectively.
- Public Comment
Formal feedback submitted during regulatory or legislative rule-making processes.
- Reauthorization
Sanctions anew, usually with changes, a previously approved program.

- Recess
Marks a temporary end to the business of the Congress, and sets a time for the next meeting.
- Resolution
A formal statement of a decision or opinion by the House, Senate, or both.
- Rider
A provision added to a bill so that it may 'ride' to approval on the strength of that bill. Riders are generally attached to Senate appropriations bills.
- Storytelling
Using personal or community stories to illustrate an issue's impact and motivate change.
- Stakeholder Engagement
Building relationships and involving key parties (e.g., members, partners, community leaders) in advocacy work.
- Testimony
Oral or written statements given before a legislative body or public hearing.
- Town Hall
A public meeting where community members can discuss issues with elected officials.
- Voter Education
Providing nonpartisan information to help people understand issues and make informed voting decisions.
- Watchdog
Monitoring government actions or policy implementation to ensure accountability.