

# Effective Public Policy and Advocacy Strategies

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umberlain  
Director  
alition to End Homelessness

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Virginia Coalition to

End Homelessness

# Why don't people advocate?

- ???



# Why don't people advocate?

- They don't think they can.
- They don't know how.
- They don't think it works.



# Importance of Advocacy

- Why advocate?



# Education v Lobbying

- What you can do:
  - Lobby
  - Advocate
  - Educate
  - Provide information



# How does change

# happen?

- Have a plan with
  - Clear Goals
  - Logical Strategy
  - Effective Tactics
  - Involve people most affected
  - Be persistent and hold people accountable



# Goal Setting

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Virginia Coalition to

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# Targets

- Who can make this decision?



# Background Research

- What do we need to know?

# For more information

- Virginia General Assembly
- U.S. House of Representatives
- U.S. Senate
- Individual elected officials websites



# Ask / Action

- Be specific in what you are asking.
- Make sure it is relatively possible and reasonable.
- Know the process.



# Strategy – Building Relationships

- It's all about the relationship.
- Elected officials have a \*self-interest\* in developing a relationship with you
- What do elected officials CARE about?



# Building Relationships & Messaging

THINK ABOUT HOW YOU SAY IT

Solutions, solutions, solutions

Are you asking them for something specific that is do-able?

Crafting your argument – local need and the use of research



# Strategy & Messaging

- Just because you say it doesn't mean that anyone is going to listen.



# Tactics / Activities

- Writing Letters and Making Phone Calls to Elected Officials
- Relationship Building with elected officials and their staff
- In person meetings
- Media
- Public Education – Community Forums, etc
- Other creative ideas?



# Action?

- Support

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- Action

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# Affected

- Service Providers
- People with the experience of homelessness
- Story telling



# How does change happen?

- Accountability
- “The only things that we will do (Congress) are the things that you make it impossible for us not to do.”
- - Congressional staff to RESULTS (A nonprofit, grassroots citizens' lobby that identifies sustainable solutions to the problems of hunger and poverty as a human rights issue)



# Persistence

- “ The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” – Benjamin Franklin



Questions: ,

s?

# Case Statement

- Our Goal / Policy Issue
- The Challenge (The Need)
- Why this will work

# What's Your Story?

# What's Next?

- ▶ Sign up for VCEH newsletter AND action alerts
- ▶ Lobby Day sponsored by VCEH in partnership with Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Virginia Housing Coalition, Habitat for Humanity - Virginia