5 Things You Can Do To Build Advocacy With Local Government

NAWDP provides the professional development, resources, and certification credibility to individuals seeking to thrive in the workforce development industry as thought leaders and innovators. As the leading advocate for workforce development professionals, NAWDP builds relationships and connections with other industry-leading organizations to challenge and collaborate for the advancement of the industry.
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Building advocacy with local government officials is a good way to gain awareness and support of your local needs. Identify your local officials and then determine what engagement strategies work best for your organization.

1. Get to Know the Staff - When you call the office you will most likely NOT speak to the elected official, however, you want to build a rapport with staff members from the start. Request a meeting with the staff person that handles the issue(s) you are addressing (i.e. business, workforce development). If the elected official can attend that’s great, but you should focus on building the relationship with the staff person.

2. Bring People in for a Tour - A great way to introduce an elected official to the workforce system is by inviting them for an overview and tour of your center(s). Many officials have never been to a workforce center, and even if they fully support the workforce system, they don’t have an understanding of what happens at your center. A tour of your center is a great, interactive way to provide an overview of the workforce system.

3. Utilize Online Outlets - Your organization’s website is your digital home. Everything you do digitally should drive people back to your website. Since your website is the home of all your digital activity you need to make sure it is presentable and up to date with current information.
   a. Make sure you are connected to your local officials on your various social media platforms. Use your various platforms to promote events and share success stories.
   b. Events are great ways to bring together large or select groups of individuals to increase the awareness of your organization. Whether the event is in a small setting or a large hall, inviting targeted elected officials can greatly increase your exposure.

4. Involve Local Press - Local and national press outlets can be a great way to put your organization in front of elected officials and other stakeholders without direct interaction.

5. Involve your Board members - Build your board members into ambassadors for your workforce system, that is what they are there for. Board members not only provide feedback on your system’s strategy and implementation, but they are there to promote your work.

Advocacy is not something you do once a year, advocacy is something you do just about every day. It is a critical part of maintaining the workforce development system and ensures success in the future. While advocacy is something that anyone can do, consistency is key.

NAWDP members may download a complete copy of the "Road Map to Local Advocacy" here. **Members must be logged in to access the toolkit."