

Advocacy

Speaking, writing, or acting in support of a cause, idea, or group of people to create change.

Appropriations

The process which Congress decides how government money will be spent.

Bill

A proposal for a new law (or change to an existing law) introduced in Congress or a state legislature.

Budget Resolution

A plan passed by Congress that sets overall spending limits but does not allocate money to specific programs.

Call to Action

A clear request for supporters to do something specific—like calling a lawmaker, signing a petition, or attending an event.

Caucus

A group of lawmakers who join together to promote shared interests or issues (e.g., Congressional Black Caucus).

Coalition

A group of organizations or individuals who work together for a shared cause or campaign.

Committee

A smaller group of lawmakers in Congress that studies issues and shapes bills before they go to the full chamber.

Constituent

A person who lives in an elected official's district and is represented by them.

Filibuster

A Senate practice where a senator speaks for a long time to delay or block a vote on a bill.

Grassroots Advocacy

Organizing community members to influence decision-makers, often through petitions, rallies, or letter-writing.

Issue Brief (Policy Brief)

A short, clear document that explains a problem, why it matters, and what action should be taken.



Legislation

Laws or proposed laws made by a legislature.



Lobbying

Direct communication with lawmakers or their staff to influence decisions on specific laws or policies.

Nonprofit Organization

An organization that works for a public or social good and reinvests any money earned back into its mission.

Policy

A plan, principle, or rule adopted by a government, organization, or institution to guide decisions.

Resolution

An official statement made by Congress or another governing body to express an opinion or call attention to an issue.

Stakeholder

Any person or group with an interest in an issue, policy, or organization (e.g., community members, funders, policymakers).

Testimony

A formal statement given to lawmakers during a hearing to share information, experiences, or expert advice.

Whip

A member of Congress who helps party leaders organize votes and ensure members support party positions.

Advocacy Strategies (Examples)



Letter-Writing Campaign

Sending letters or emails to lawmakers.



Phone Banking

Calling supporters or lawmakers to encourage action.



Public Demonstrations

Organizing rallies, marches, or press events.



Storytelling

Sharing personal experiences to highlight the real-world impact of an issue.



Social Media Advocacy

Using online platforms to spread awareness and mobilize supporters.