

Tools for Advocacy

In order of effectiveness

★ And ways to increase your effectiveness ★

① Invite your legislator for a site visit

★ Put your legislator to work! Even better than a site visit is a hands-on opportunity to engage with constituents

② Visit your legislator's office

★ Bring photos of your program to show your legislator what you do and why it's so important

③ Write and send an original letter

★ Fax your letter to get it there quicker

④ Call your legislator

★ Organize a phone bank to multiply your effectiveness

⑤ Organize a postcard or paper plate campaign

★ Hand-deliver your postcards or plates to your legislator's office

Least effective: Petitions (paper or online), form emails

Other ways to engage:

Tweet at your legislator

Organize a SNAP challenge

Additional Resources:

nyccah.org

nyc4cnr.org

strength.org

frac.org

feedingamerica.org

thepod.cfccanada.ca

bread.org

presbyterianmission.org/ministries/hunger

Calling Your Elected Officials

① Be Prepared

★ At the very least, think through what you are going to say. You should have talking points in front of you, and you can even write a script for yourself. If you're nervous, practice beforehand.

② Find the Right Number

★ Go to usa.gov or state or local government websites for info. For US Senators or Representatives, you can call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.

③ Talk to the Right Person

★ Your telephone calls will likely be taken by a staff member, not the legislator. When asking a legislator to vote yes or no, you can share that with the person answering the phone. If you need to say more, ask to speak with the aide who handles the issue (ex: education, health, poverty).

④ Identify Yourself

★ Say your name and address and indicate that you are a constituent.

⑤ Be Concise

★ Tell the person answering the phone that you would like to leave a brief message, such as: "Please tell Senator/Representative (Name) that I support/oppose (House Bill ___ or Senate Bill ___)."

⑥ Give Reasons

★ Say why you support or oppose a bill. Ask for your legislator's position on the bill. You may also request a written response to your telephone call.

⑦ Say Thank You

★ Thank the person answering the phone for his/her time. After a vote, call again and thank your legislator for their vote. This is particularly important.

★ The same rules apply if you are calling the President or another executive branch official.