

Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

Advocacy:

- Active Support for a Cause
- Recommendation of a Course of action
- Speaking up and speaking out to bring about necessary change on a specific issue.

Advocate: One who pleads on behalf of another.

Bill: A bill is a proposal for a law. A bill amendment is a proposal by a legislator (in committee or floor session of the respective chamber) to alter the language or provision of a bill.

Coalition: a group of people (possibly from different groups, organizations, or points of view) who come together on behalf of or to oppose a particular issue.

Constituent: a citizen residing within the district of a legislator.

Direct Lobbying: contacting government officials or employees directly to influence legislation.

Grassroots Lobbying: this generally means appealing to the general public to contact the legislature about an issue. It involves activating people at a local level and mobilizing allies through efforts to increase community understanding and support.

Legislative Agenda: a summary of issues concerning a particular group or organization that will be promoted during a legislative session.

Legislative Committees: Sub-Groups of legislators within a legislative chamber that allow a more in-depth review of policy matters or bills than would be possible by the entire chamber.

Levels of Government:

- Federal government - consists of Representatives/Senators from all 50 states, a President, and the Supreme Court. The three branches are known as legislative, executive, and judicial respectively.
- State Government- consists of elected legislators, a Governor, & a state supreme court.
- Local Government- consists of a city council, mayor, local boards of education and county officials. Most have professional, unelected managers.

Lobbying: the process of trying to influence policymakers in favor of a specific cause.

Nonpartisan: not formally declaring or having a political party affiliation.

Nonpartisan organizations: those that work across political party lines.

Tool Kit: Set of articles or tools for a specified purpose.