

# **Advocacy Basics: Tools You Can Use in the 2018 Legislative Session**

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# Advocacy Basics: Tools You Can Use

Why advocate?

Keys to effective advocacy

Tools you can use:

- Legislative hotline
- Email action alerts
- Lawmaker meetings
- Bill testimony
- Social media

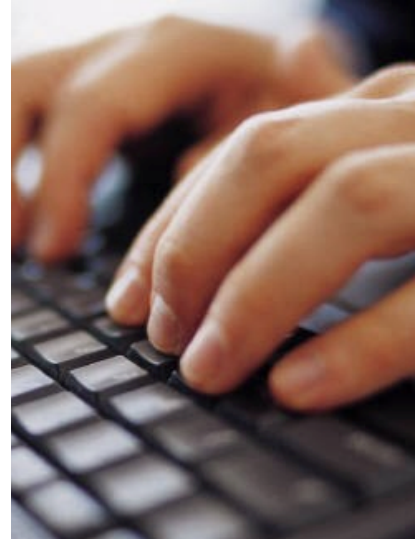
Importance of personal stories

How the Housing Alliance can support you



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# What do we mean by advocacy?



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# Why advocate?

- Educate lawmakers and the public on issues
- Develop stronger messages and narratives
- Build relationships
- Generate the public pressure needed to advance your priorities



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# Keys to effective advocacy

Understand the legislative process



[bit.ly/Feb1webinar](https://bit.ly/Feb1webinar)  
[bit.ly/oct18webinar](https://bit.ly/oct18webinar)

Connect with your advocacy community



[wliha.org/hhad](https://wliha.org/hhad)  
[bit.ly/housingallianceemails](https://bit.ly/housingallianceemails)

Have a strong, shared message

Person center language, names, worth, strengths, respect, and the v

Always lead with the person:

- **People** experiencing homelessness
- **Person** experiencing housing instability
- **Person** participating in a program
- **Tenant or resident** accessing housing

People first language results in more actions (including public policy!)

[bit.ly/nov29webinar](https://bit.ly/nov29webinar)

Contact your lawmakers

Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos



District: **WA037**  
Phone: (360) 786-7944  
Fax: (360) 786-1283

Rep. Eric Pettigrew



District: **WA037**  
Phone: (360) 786-7838  
Fax: (360) 786-1276

Sen. Rebecca Saldana



District: **WA037**  
Phone: (360) 786-7688  
Fax: (360) 786-7520

# Tools You Can Use to Contact Your Lawmakers



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# Call the Legislative Hotline

**1-800-562-6000 (TTY for Hearing Impaired 1-800-635-9993)**

- Toll-free
- Open 8am-8pm Monday-Friday during legislative session  
(and from 8am-noon and 1-4:30pm Monday-Friday during the interim)
- Interpreter services available in many languages
- Leave a message for your state lawmakers, Governor or Lt. Governor
- Get questions answered about pending legislation and the legislative process



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# Respond to email action alerts

Michele, Housing Alliance via mail.salsalabs.net  
to me

12/12/17 ☆



- Timely
- Targeted
- Strong messaging
- Advocate for effective solutions
- Can be personalized
- Fast

## Make your advocacy go further by encouraging others to contact their lawmakers

- Forward email action alerts
- Organize your own letter-writing or postcard campaign



Leading the movement to ensure a  
safe, healthy, affordable  
home  
for everyone in Washington

### Action Alert!

We need a [Capital Budget... like yesterday!](#) If lawmakers don't pass a Capital Budget in early January, vital affordable housing, Permanent Supportive Housing projects, and funding that makes up for limited local resources and home weatherization needs in rural communities is at risk!

Hi Teresa,

When state lawmakers kick off the 2018 legislative session on January 8, they will have a lot of unfinished business to attend to. Topping that list is **passing a two-year State Capital Budget**, which wasn't enacted last session for the first time in state's history.

Without a capital budget, critical "brick and mortar" projects across the state are at risk of not being built, including affordable housing through the State Housing Trust Fund, homeless shelters, rural home weatherization, food banks, senior and community centers, environmental clean-up and more.

Lawmakers can fix this by passing a budget early in January. **Will you put the Capital Budget on the top of our lawmaker's agenda by sending them a message now?**

**TAKE ACTION  
NOW**

What your lawmakers needs to know:

- The Capital Budget has \$106 million for the Housing Trust Fund. This will build or preserve at least 3,066 safe, healthy, permanently affordable homes across the Washington State.



# Meet with your lawmakers

During the meeting, be sure to:

- Say **who** you are
- Mention the **group** you belong to
- State the **issue**
- Share a brief **personal story**
- Make a **clear ask**
- Offer to **answer questions**
- Leave them with a **fact sheet** and your **contact info**

## CHECKLIST FOR PLANNING A LAWMAKER MEETING

### BEFORE THE MEETING

- ☐ Designate someone to greet the decision maker and introduce them to the key people at your meeting, (especially important if you are hosting a large event).
- ☐ Welcome the decision maker to the space if the meeting is not in their office.
- ☐ The person greeting should know what the decision maker looks like. Their webpage will have a picture of them. (See the previous section on looking up a legislator's webpage.)

### DURING THE MEETING

- ☐ Begin with introductions of everyone in the room, having each attendee introduce themselves with their name, relevant organizational affiliation, and how they are connected to the lawmaker's district. For example, do you live there and/or work there, and/or serve people there?
- ☐ If you do not have a direct connection to the district, identify the particular knowledge or experience that you have about the issue. For example, you study laws that criminalize homelessness.
- ☐ Introduce the issue and be sure to ask if the decision maker is familiar with it. This will help you assess how much background information to give. Even if they say they are familiar with the issue, you should make the key points you want to share.
- ☐ Briefly and succinctly explain the issue. Explain why it is important and how it impacts you and your family (if relevant).
- ☐ Lead with values. For example: "Everyone should have the opportunity to live in a safe, healthy, and affordable home."
- ☐ Share anecdotes from those directly affected and direct service providers.
- ☐ Share relevant data. See the [County-by-County Fact Sheet on Housing Affordability](#) from the Department of Commerce.

[bit.ly/meetingchecklist](https://bit.ly/meetingchecklist) >>

# Testify on a bill

- Public hearings are a critical point in the legislative process for advocacy
- Good testimony has many of the same elements of a lawmaker meeting...
- BUT with much less time to make your point



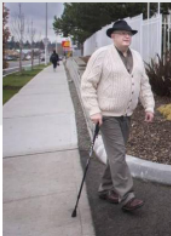
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# Share personal stories

You don't need to be an expert on the issues. Personal stories have a lasting impact on lawmakers that numbers and statistics alone don't.

Be sure to:

- Focus on the most relevant parts of your story - don't try to cover it all
- Identify the problem and the solution
- Ask for specific action to move toward the solution that's needed



## JOHN'S STORY

John Hannaman has used a Housing Choice voucher to pay his rent since 1990. In his earlier years, he was a federal firefighter with the Bureau of Land Management, but when the vehicle



## LUPE'S STORY

In the summer of 2013, Lupe and her son Miracle finally found a place to call home. The previous few years had been spent



## MELINDA'S STORY

In 2010, Melinda found herself in an unexpected spot - suddenly she was a single mom of a five year old boy.

# Use social media



**Washington Low Income Housing Alliance**

December 27, 2017 at 1:08pm · 🌐

"Don't assume a homeless person is a drug addict. You need to listen to their story first. Let a homeless person tell you their story, and you'll totally change your idea of what homelessness is."

Our friend Lisa Sawyer has an article this week in Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project. It's worth a read!



## In their own words: Lisa Sawyer | Real Change

Lisa Sawyer is a member of our Homeless Speakers Bureau, a group of homeless and formerly homeless people who speak in the community about their personal experiences with homelessness. Here's her...

REALCHANGENEWS.ORG

👤 2,605 people reached



Like



Comment



Share



46

18 Shares

**Resident Action Project** @RAPWashington · 22 Dec 2017

Ruvim in Federal Way wants his lawmakers to invest in the #WAHousingTrustFund so he can find an affordable place to call home! @RepReeves @markmiloscia



# Questions

- Why bother advocating to a lawmaker who agrees with me on an issue?
- What about a lawmaker who *doesn't* support the issue?
- It's hard to schedule time with my lawmaker by phone or in person. What can I do if they're unavailable?
- I already sent an email to/called/had a meeting with my lawmaker about an issue. Why are you asking me to contact them again on the same issue? Won't it annoy them?



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# We are here to support your advocacy

- Email action alerts & updates: [bit.ly/housingallianceemails](https://bit.ly/housingallianceemails)
- Upcoming webinars & archives: [wliha.org/resources/webinars-and-tools](https://wliha.org/resources/webinars-and-tools)
- Fact sheets on legislative priorities:  
[wliha.org/resources/fact-sheets-and-publications](https://wliha.org/resources/fact-sheets-and-publications)
- Bi-weekly member calls during legislative session: [michele@wliha.org](mailto:michele@wliha.org)
- Help preparing testimony & getting to Olympia: [dimitrig@wliha.org](mailto:dimitrig@wliha.org)
- Resident Action Project & Emerging Advocates Program: [nickw@wliha.org](mailto:nickw@wliha.org)
- Engage your board of directors in advocacy: [dimitrig@wliha.org](mailto:dimitrig@wliha.org)
- For custom advocacy plans, endorse our 2018 agenda: [bit.ly/2018priorities](https://bit.ly/2018priorities)
- Voter engagement plans: [teresac@wliha.org](mailto:teresac@wliha.org)

And don't forget...



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# **Housing and Homelessness Advocacy Day Thursday, February 1, 2018 Olympia, Washington**

**Join more than 600 Housing and Homelessness advocates in  
Olympia for a powerful day of action. At Advocacy Day you will:**

- **Gain inside information on housing policies.**
- **Attend workshops to build your advocacy skills.**
- **Meet with lawmakers. (don't worry, we'll train you!)**
- **Become a part of the growing movement for a safe, healthy,  
and affordable home for everyone in Washington.**

***Register now at [wliha.org/HHAD](http://wliha.org/HHAD)***

***Follow #HHAD2018 on social media for updates***



# Thank You

## Questions? Contact:

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