Advocacy and Lobbying for 501(c)3 Organizations
• 501(C)3 organizations can lobby with limits.
• Not all advocacy is lobbying.
What is lobbying?

Attempting to influence specific legislation and/or a ballot measure.
Examples of advocacy*:
• Educating legislators and/or the public;
• Community organizing;
• Writing an op-ed;
• Organizing a rally;
• Voter registration drives.

*Not advocating for specific legislation
Examples of lobbying:

- Meeting with legislators to express views about specific legislation;
- Drafting a sign-on letter;
- Organizing an event asking the public to support/oppose legislation;
- Writing talking points for volunteers to use when calling legislators about legislation;
- Going door-to-door in support of ballot measure
501(C)3’s should track their time lobbying. Two options:

• No substantial part of activities;
• 501(h) expenditure test: generous dollar limits on how much lobbying an organization can engage in – calculated as a percentage of organizations total expenditures.
Arizona organizations also need to register with the Arizona Secretary of State if they engage in ongoing lobbying.
501(C)3 organizations cannot endorse or oppose candidates running for office.
Permissible 501(C)3 activities:

• “Thanking” and “spanking” lawmakers;
• Publish annual voting records for your members;
• Educating candidates and voters about the issues;
• Sponsoring candidate debates and forums;
• Encouraging citizens to vote.
Additional Free Resources/Advice for 501(C)3 Advocacy/Lobbying:
• Alliance for Justice/Bolder Advocacy
• Bolderadvocacy.org
Contact information

David Lujan – 602-266-0707 ext 203
Dlujan@AZEconCenter.org

Social Media

Twitter @AZEconCenter
Facebook https://www.facebook.com/AZEconCenter/
Website: www.azeconcenter.org