

Nonprofits + Advocacy

What You Need to
Know: A Guide to
Common
Questions About
Advocacy

Laurie Liles, Chief
Public Policy
Officer





No way!

**It's
illegal!**

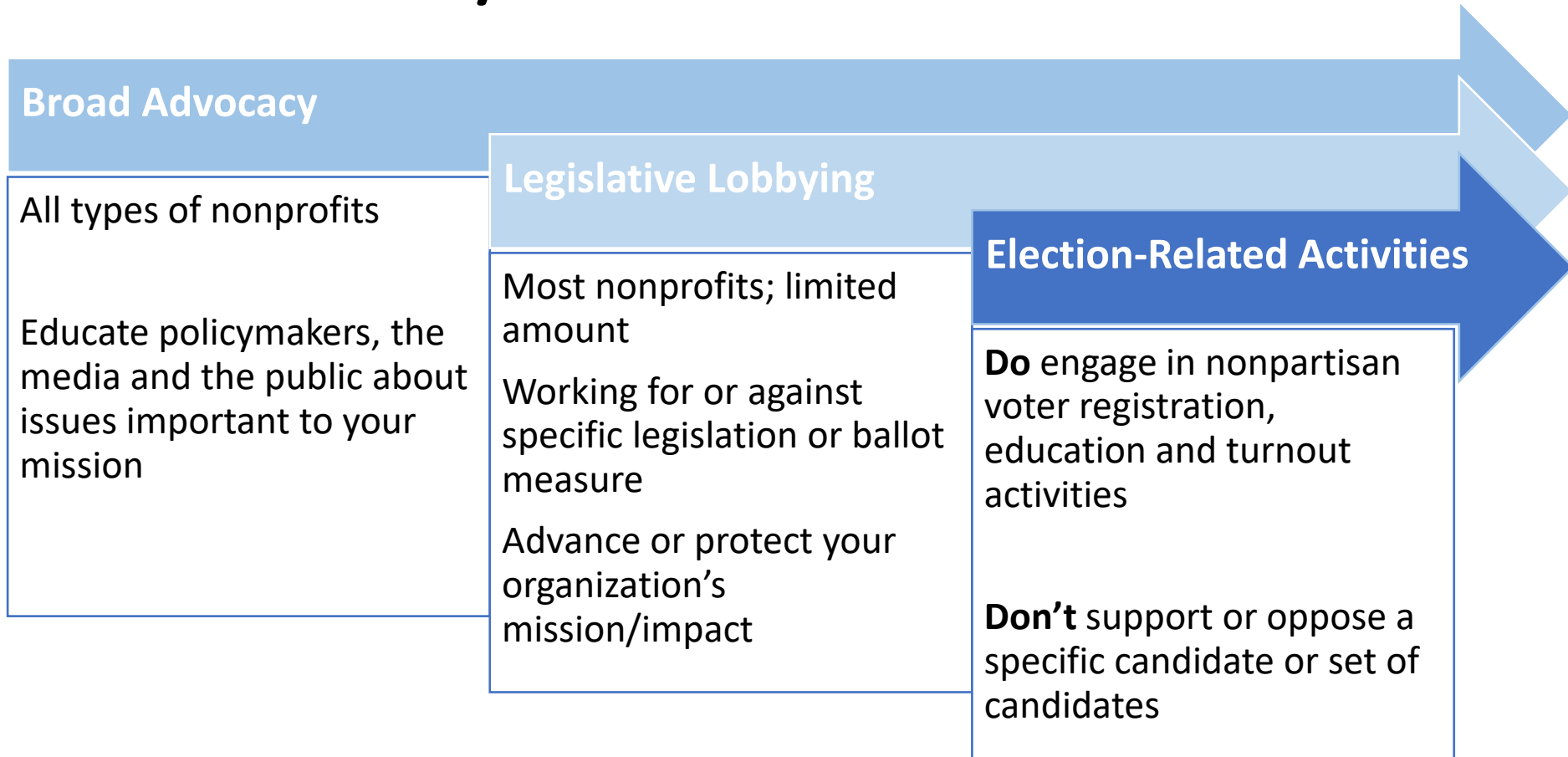
**It doesn't
affect us...**

**We will
lose our
tax status!**

**I can't be at
the Capitol all
day!**

**Haven't you
seen House of
Cards?**

What is advocacy?



That's advocacy?

Appealing	Appealing to the zoning board
Requesting	Requesting a parking variance
Educating	Educating a legislator
Partnering	Partnering with public agencies
Convening	Convening community leaders



Advocacy is about your mission

Issue Education Tactics

- Conducting and sharing research
- Surveying the public to better understand public opinion on regulations
- Sharing success stories of other communities' efforts
- Sharing personal stories of impact

Lobbying Tactics

- Urging elected officials to support or oppose specific legislation



Who should advocate?

- If you care about an issue, then you can be an advocate
- Engage your board members, who have a responsibility to advocate for your organization's mission



What if I'm not an expert?



How do I know if it will work?

You don't.

But that's not the point.

The potential is real.

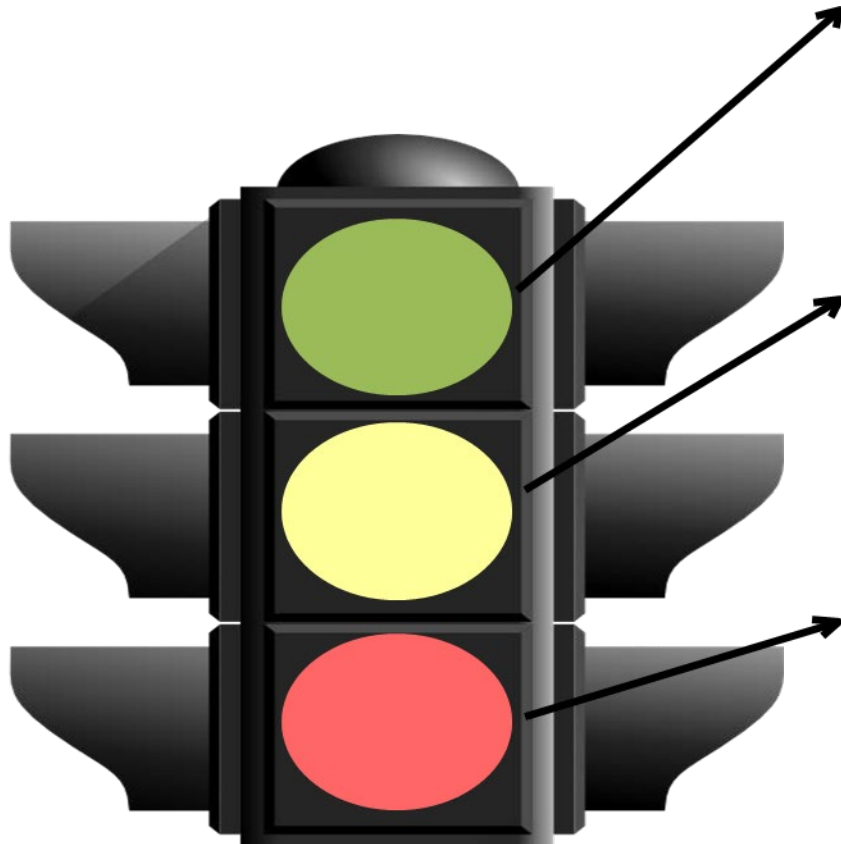
And that's what makes it worth it.



How can I make sure we're following the rules?

	501(c)(3) Public Charities (most nonprofits)	501(c)(3) Private Foundations	501(c)(4) 501(c)(5) 501(c)(6)
Electioneering Working for or against candidates or a political party	Prohibited	Prohibited	Allowed as a secondary activity. Must follow federal and state election laws.
Legislative Lobbying Working for or against specific pieces of legislation or ballot measures	Must be reported and within legal limits. Use IRS Form 501(h) to simplify reporting.	Prohibited, except with specific exceptions.	Unlimited
Broader Advocacy Most things related to public education, research and educating policymakers	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited

Guidance for 501c3 Charities



- **Definitely OK**
- Educating the public and decision makers about your work in a nonpartisan way
- Sharing information about how public dollars positively impact your work and community
- Communicating how broader issues impact your mission and the people you serve

OK, But Check the Fine Print

- Voter education, registration and candidate forums
- Naming legislators who support (or oppose) a specific piece of legislation
- Limited lobbying on behalf of the organization
- Lobbying and campaigning as private citizens

Definitely Not OK

- Organizational support or opposition of a candidate or set of candidates
- Spending federal grant funds on lobbying

WHERE
DO I
START



First, know thyself

- Is our mission clear?
- What issues are important to us?
- What do we support or not support?
- How do we decide?

Second, get to know your elected officials

- Find your legislators at www.azleg.gov
- Set up a meet-and-greet
- Keep communication concise and personalized

Third, get to know the issues

- Track bills using www.azleg.gov
- Get involved with the Arizona Nonprofits + Grantmakers Policy Council

Fourth, make your voice heard

- Request to Speak app on www.azleg.gov
- Phone calls, emails, meetings, events
- Communicate with and mobilize your supporters



Wrap-Up + Resources



standforyourmission.org



councilofnonprofits.org

www.bolderadvocacy.org

A Program of Alliance for Justice

