



Welcome

ADVOCACY 101 BY UNITED WAYS OF TEXAS

I chose to attend this training because....

CHAT BOX

Because government is a critical decision-maker and the major provider and funder of health and human services, United Way must actively engage in public policy.

YOU ARE THE VOICE
OUR **COMMUNITY** NEEDS.



Advocacy is

- Raising awareness about how issues manifest in our communities
- Reminding decision-makers of our shared values and beliefs
- Sharing tested solutions to community challenges
- Helping leaders understand the impact of their decisions
- Rallying others to action
- Transforming our communities for the future

The Advocacy Continuum



Advocacy Actions

Share stories, data, and resources with elected officials to illustrate the implications of their decisions.

Get the policymaker to issue a resolution for your cause.

Engage in budget process to advance awareness about the issues you care about.

Write an op-ed or letter to the editor to share your expertise on a priority issue.

Organize a rally, town hall, or press conference to build public awareness about an issue.

Call your elected officials' offices to weigh in on a legislative issue.

Draft a sign-on letter to express views on an issue and ask coalition members to sign on.

Submit comments or feedback on proposals being developed.

Calls, emails, and personal visits to offices.



Community Voice at the Texas Capitol

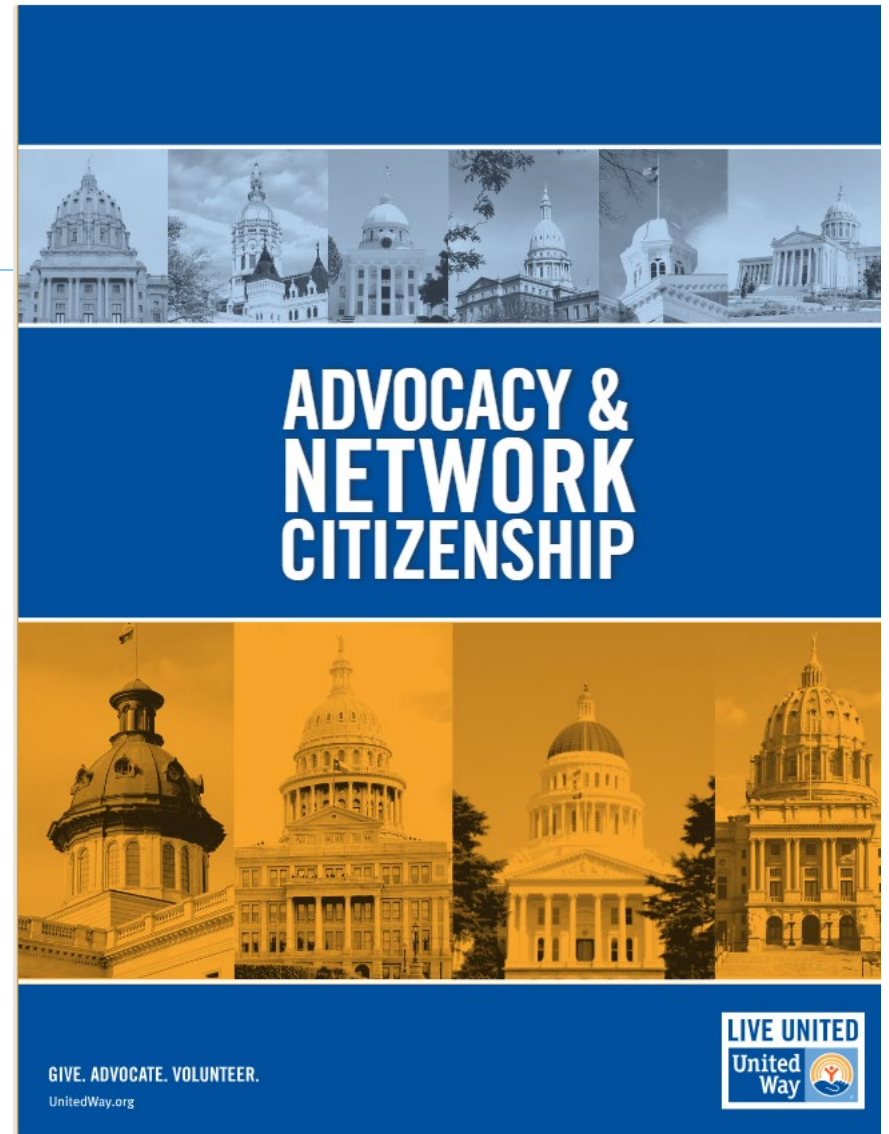


Our Approach

- Non-partisan
- Issue-focused
- Inform, Educate, Build consensus

Based on:

- Relationships! (first step)



Do you know your State legislators? Let's take action right now, & identify YOUR state representatives

1. Pick up your phone or open your web browser to <https://wrm.capitol.texas.gov/home>
2. Type street address, city, or ZIP
3. Click 'find'
4. Rows 2 & 3 are your **state Legislators (1 Senator, 1 Rep)**
Write these down!

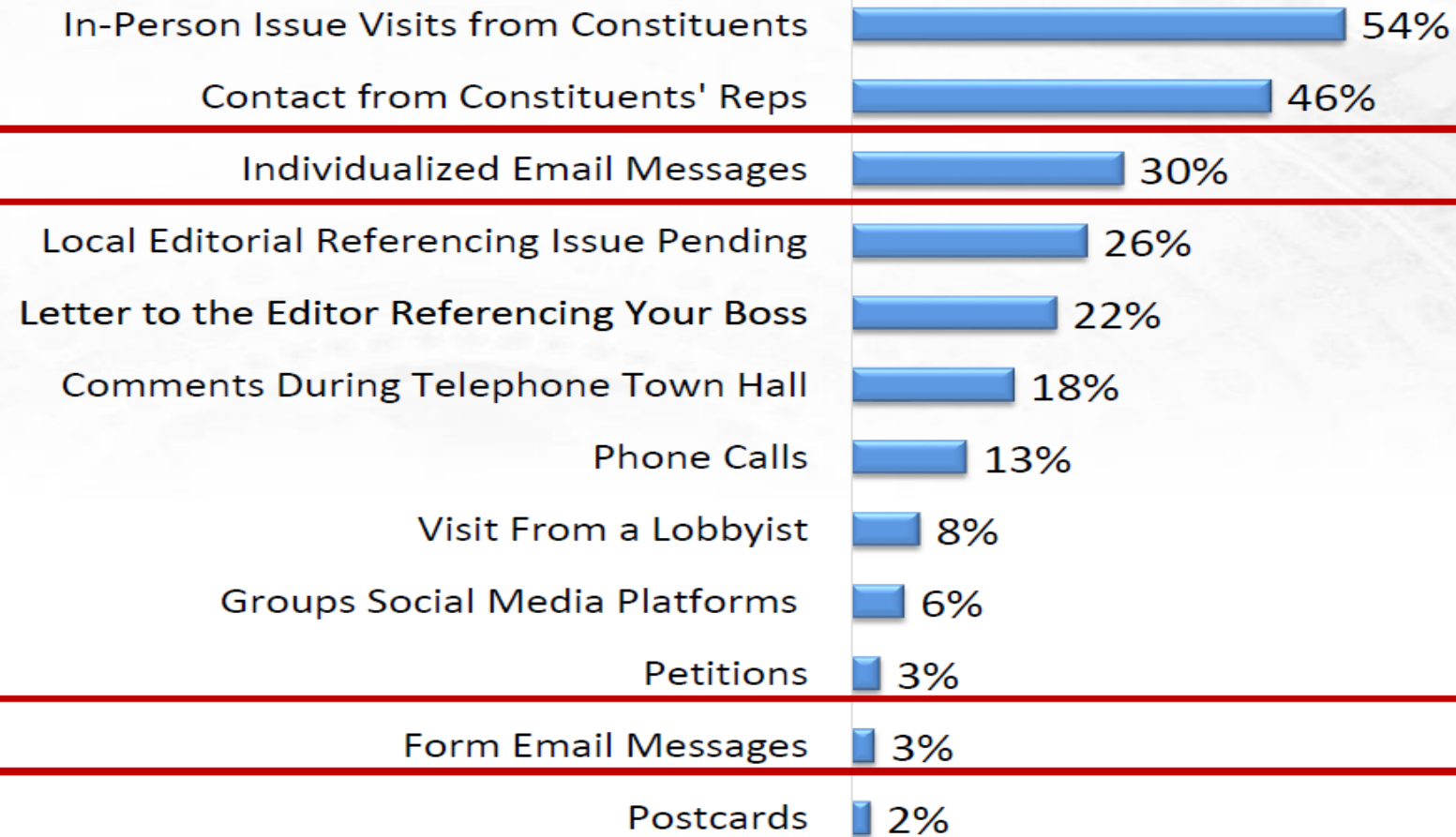


The screenshot shows the Texas Legislature Online website for the 84th Legislature Regular Session. The header includes the text "84th Legislature Regular Session Texas Legislature Online" and a navigation menu with links for Home, My TLO, House, Senate, Legislation, Search, Committees, and Calendars. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled "Texas House", contains a list of links: Home, Speaker of the House, Members, Committees, Committee Meetings, Committee Witnesses, Calendars, Current Amendment, Journals, News, House Research Organization, and Kids' House. Below this is the "Texas Senate" section with links for Home, Lieutenant Governor, and Members. The right column features a "Search Legislation" section with a dropdown menu for "Legislature: 84(R) - 2015", radio buttons for "Word/Phrase" and "Bill Number", and a search input field with a "Go" button. Below the search section is "Additional Searches" with links for Text Search, Statutes, Bill Lookup, Constitution, Bill Search, Reports, Amendments, View Votes, Sections Affected, Administrative Code, and Legislative Archive System. At the bottom right, there are sections for "Access Mobile Version of TLO" (with a note that some features may not be accessible on all mobile devices), "Legislative Activity" (with links for Video Broadcasts, Today's Calendars, Today's Meetings, Today's Filed Bills, and Today's Votes), and "Legislative Process" (with links for How a Bill Becomes Law, How to Follow A Bill, Dates of Interest, and End of Session Deadlines). A star icon is visible in the bottom right corner.

POLL QUESTION:

If your legislator has not already arrived at a firm decision on an issue, **WHAT ARE THE TOP 5** advocacy strategies for influencing his/her decision?

A Lot of Positive Influence



What Members Want to Know

- What actions do constituents want me to take?
- Why do constituents want me to do that?
- What are the current and/or potential *local* impacts?
- What are constituents' personal stories or connections to the policy?

Meeting DOS

- Get to know your legislator in advance of asking for his/her help.
- Let your legislator know you are a constituent.
- Be on time for appointments.
- Have one chief spokesperson who will manage all discussion during a large group meeting with a legislator.
- Keep the “bottom line” in mind. Be concise, clear, and to the point in your remarks to legislators. Time is limited.
- Be (and sound) convinced of the essential value and importance of the issue you are bringing forth. You will never convince anyone else if you are not convinced yourself.
- Emphasize local examples and the local impact of any legislation.
- Leave material (if appropriate) with your legislator and provide information about how to get in touch with you later.
- Let your legislator know if you do not know the answer to their question. Tell them you will follow up with the information they requested.
- Let UWT know if your legislator had any questions you were unable to answer or concerns you were unable to address adequately.
- Write a thank you note to your legislator for meeting with you, and be sure to thank him/her if s/he supports your position on a bill, or an issue.

Making an Effective Ask

- Introduction
- Present the Problem
- Build your technical argument
- Tell Your Story
- Connect with the Audience
- Ask for Something





Influencing via social media

- *Social Media To-Do List*
- **Follow policymakers at all levels on various social media.** Understanding what your federal, state, and local policymakers are saying on social media will help you craft the speaking points and messages you'll need to communicate with them on your issues.
- **Join or create groups on Facebook.** You can do this to build advocacy coalitions for funding increases with lawmakers; build grassroots support; as well as “asks” during.
- **Use social media to establish relationships with members of the media, especially on Twitter.** Reporters have massive followings, and they're always looking for a good story that furthers their following even more. Use these relationships to tell your story and share good news and/or concerns with your community.

[The Texas Tribune](#) has a [public Twitter list of legislators](#)

Policy & Advocacy Resources:

- [Who Represents Me?](#), Texas Legislature
- [Who Represents Me?](#), U.S. Congress
- [Texas Legislature Online](#) (Look up bills, Legislators, Committees, calendars, and information on the legislative process)
- [State Government Resources](#) (Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches)
- [Texas House of Representatives Homepage](#)
- [Texas Senate Homepage](#)
- Live Broadcasts: [Texas House of Representatives](#) and [Senate](#)
- Statewide news coverage from the [Texas Tribune](#)
- 211 Texas Data
- ALICE Data

**United
Way**



United Ways of Texas

**2021
PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA
of Texas United Ways
for the 87th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature**

EDUCATION

Texas UWs believe that equitable educational opportunities should be available to all – children, youth, and adults – to ensure that we all reach our optimal potential, and that Texas has a strong workforce for years to come.

HEALTH

Texas UWs believe that all Texans should have access to equitable health services that protect and improve health and well-being among individuals and enhance measurable health outcomes of communities.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Texas UWs believe that all families should have opportunities to achieve what we all want: good jobs with good wages, opportunities for workplace advancement, safe and affordable housing, and the resources and support needed to weather emergencies and make investments toward a bright future.

NON-PROFITS & COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

Texas UWs believe that strong communities and an adequately resourced and supported nonprofit sector are critical to ensuring an equitable and thriving Texas.



2021 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA of Texas United Ways for the 87th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature

Texas United Ways advocate for issues of critical importance to the communities they serve. With the advent of COVID-19, United Ways across the state quickly mobilized to provide supports to all Texans, especially ALICE and groups hit hardest by this pandemic. To ensure an inclusive recovery and the future success of our state, Texas United Ways are championing data-driven policies that address disparities in the areas of education, health, financial stability, and the nonprofit sector.

EDUCATION

Texas UWs believe that equitable educational opportunities should be available to all – children, youth, and adults – to ensure that we all reach our optimal potential, and that Texas has a strong workforce for years to come.

- Ensure equitable access to affordable, high-quality early and out of school care and education opportunities, especially for underserved communities.
- Strengthen efforts to effectively engage and support all caregivers in their roles as partners in learning and literacy from birth through adulthood.
- Strengthen previous improvements and efforts aimed at closing long-standing gaps in student outcomes among the state's low-income and communities of color.
- Support strategies and initiatives aimed at improving student health, emotional wellbeing, and academic outcomes.
- Strengthen pathways to college and career, including wraparound supports, to provide equitable access to postsecondary opportunities.

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In addition, UWT will advocate for work-based learning; adult education and literacy; English Language Learners (ELL); mentoring; reducing absenteeism; elementary/middle school career development opportunities; career technical education; drop-out prevention strategies; and adequate funding for quality public education.

HEALTH

Texas UWs believe that all Texans should have access to equitable health services that protect and improve health and well-being among individuals and enhance measurable health outcomes of communities.

- Support promising and evidence-based practices that reduce abuse and neglect, toxic stress, improve maternal and child health, encourage positive parenting, and promote healthy child development and school readiness.
- Ensure access to comprehensive, equitable, and quality physical, mental, and behavioral health services, including substance use treatment.
- Ensure access to healthcare coverage as well as maintaining eligibility extensions provided as a result of COVID-19, such as telehealth, CHIP, and Medicaid for pregnant women.
- Address social determinants of health, such as housing instability and food insecurity, especially within healthcare delivery systems by leveraging 211, the statewide information and referral system.

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In addition, UWT will advocate for targeted resources for special populations such as veterans, adolescents and young adults, and seniors; access to basic food and nutrition assistance; foster care improvements; prevention and intervention of trauma, including human trafficking and exploitation; and culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS).

Download the 2021
Public Policy Agenda
<https://bit.ly/3nD0mf4>



UNITED for a future where all Texans thrive

Next Steps/Action Opportunities

- Take action on alerts & share with your networks
- Connect with your local United Way on Advocacy
- Build relationships with your elected officials
- **Join your local United Way at Virtual Advocacy Days happening February 23rd-25th**



**REGISTER
NOW**



**2021 TEXAS
UNITED**

**VIRTUAL
ADVOCACY
DAYS**

**FEBRUARY 23RD-25TH
2021**

#TexasUNITED

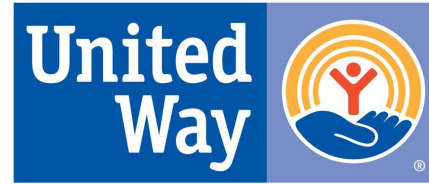
- **February 23rd ADVOCACY
BOOTCAMP**
- **February 25th UNITED
WAY CAPITOL DAY**
- ****January 28th UWT
MEMBER EVENT PREVIEW
at 2:30pm**

**For more information & to
register:**

<http://bit.ly/TexasUnitedDays>

Join the cause. Make your
voice heard. Create real
change.





United Ways of Texas

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Connect
with Us



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