



North Carolina  
**Alliance for Health**

# ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING

**\*This presentation does not constitute legal advice.**

# ADVOCACY

- Advocacy is promoting an idea or cause through education, outreach, and organizing. Advocating often conveys a policy-related solution, but does not seek specific legislative action.
- Examples might include
  - Sharing with a legislator the number of food deserts in North Carolina
  - Sharing with a legislator your personal experience with access to healthy food
  - Writing a letter to the editor to say how happy you are that a new healthy corner store has opened in your community



# WHY IS ADVOCACY IMPORTANT?

- Educating
- Making it personal
- Getting the word out
- Creating change



# LOBBYING

- Direct lobbying is a communication to a legislator or staff
- Grassroots lobbying is a communication to the public

# DIRECT LOBBYING

- Direct lobbying is
  - A communication directly with a legislator (or staff)
  - That reflects a view
  - On specific legislation
    - Bills that have been introduced
    - Legislative proposals not yet introduced (“South Carolina should adopt North Carolina’s Healthy Corner Store Initiative”)
    - Budget bills
- **Important:** A communication must have **ALL THREE** of these elements to be lobbying. If **any** element is missing the communication is **NOT** lobbying.

# GRASSROOTS LOBBYING

- Grassroots lobbying is:
  - A communication to the public
    - Speeches, letters to the editor, ads
  - That reflects a view
  - On specific legislation, and
  - Includes a call to action
    - Contact a legislator
    - Identifies a legislator as being the audience's representative
    - Provides the legislator's contact information or includes a form email or petition
    - Identifies the legislator as having an undecided or opposing view
    - Identifies the legislator as being part of the voting committee
- **Important:** A communication must have **ALL FOUR** of these elements to be lobbying. If **any** element is missing the communication is **NOT** lobbying.

# LOBBYING EXAMPLES

- Direct
  - A letter to a legislator asking them to support the Healthy Corner Store Initiative
  - A communication with a legislative assistant that states the organization opposes a bill that would reduce funding for SNAP
- Grassroots
  - An email to your network asking them to ask a legislator to include funding for the HCSI in his budget
  - An advertisement asking a legislator to support the HCSI
- Not lobbying
  - An email that says your organization supports the HCSI
  - A conversation with a legislator where you discuss how having access to fresh food has helped you become healthier



# CLOSING THOUGHTS

- If you are not talking about specific legislation that has been introduced or is pending, the communication is not lobbying
- Communications should be considered on a case-by-case basis