





Policy and Advocacy for Food Systems Change

April and May 2022

In partnership with Equity Advocates and the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition Hosted by the Wallace Center's Food Systems Leadership Network

ZOOM TECH -- WEBINAR

- All participants are muted and off video
- Audio bottom left corner, "Join with Computer Audio"
- To ask a question Q&A option on the bottom of your toolbar
- **Use the chat box** Comments? Reflections? Challenges? Share them in the chat box!

- A national peer learning community of people and organizations working towards more just, equitable, and sustainable food systems
- Online community + platform: <u>www.foodsystemsleadershipnetwork.org</u>
- Facilitated by the Wallace Center



Connects and fosters relationships of solidarity and trust among food systems leaders – through mentorship, peer coaching, and network building



Strengthens individual and collective leadership capacity through systems leadership training, technical assistance, and building organizational effectiveness



Inspires and catalyzes
innovation and
collaboration across
communities for greater
impact through incubators,
accelerators, cohort
approaches and
member-led initiatives



Advances racial equity individually and systemically through developing shared analysis, shifting narrative, and centering equity in network practices

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Policy & Advocacy for Food Systems Change Series

Building our collective knowledge and power for enacting policy change

Date	Session Title	Trainer
April 5	Advocacy to Build an Equitable and Sustainable Food System	Equity Advocates
April 6	Best Practices for Meeting with Elected Officials	Equity Advocates
April 7	Q&A Session / Office Hours	Equity Advocates
April 20	Farm Bill 101	National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
May 2022	Policy and Advocacy for Food Systems Change: A Conversation with Seasoned Leaders	Paula Daniels (Center for Good Food Purchasing), Kate Fitzgerald (Fitzgerald•Canepa, LLC), & Edna Rodriguez (RAFI International)



Equity Advocates - Introductions



Gabrielle BlavatskyEquity Advocates
Policy Director



Leah Kabran EdenEquity Advocates *Grassroots Advocacy Director*

Introductions

Equity Advocates fights the underlying causes of food inequity through policy and systems change.

We partner with NY nonprofits working to alleviate hunger and poverty, and provide them with the tools they need to be more civically engaged—including policy education, advocacy training and coalition building.



Commitment to Racial Equity

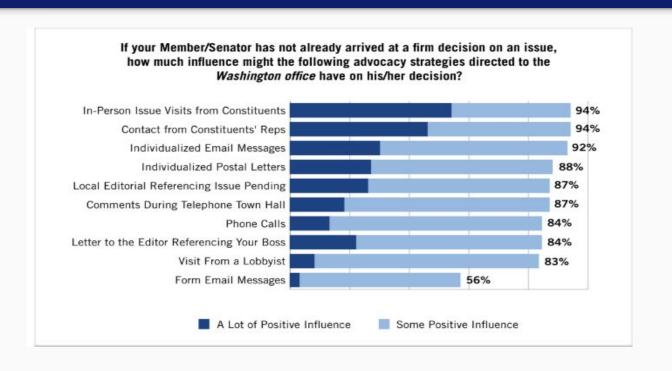
We believe access to healthy, affordable food is a basic human right and understand that the food system has been created and maintained by historical and ongoing racial inequities.

- Core to our mission and program structure is elevating the voices of community food leaders who have traditionally been disenfranchised and lacked the resources and access to drive policy change.
- We actively recruiting, supporting, connecting and organizing those most impacted by food inequity to ensure that they have a seat at the policymaking table.

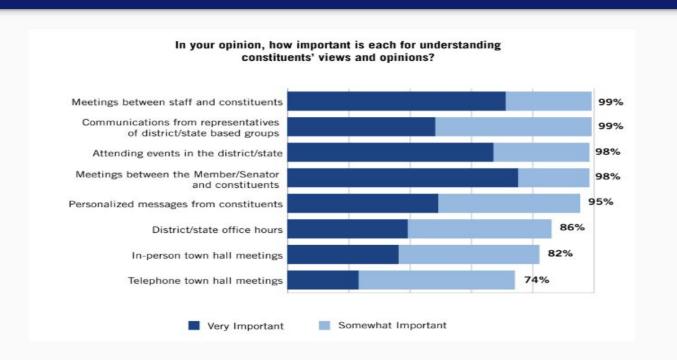
Our goals

- Review research on most impactful advocacy
- Understand how to develop a comprehensive strategy that centers meeting with elected officials
- Tips on how to schedule, plan for and run an effective meeting
- Develop strategies to maintain and leverage the relationship

In-person visits from constituents are most impactful



Constituents who establish relationships with legislator are valued



FYI: This is lobbying and it works!

(and it is ok!)

Develop a comprehensive strategy

Identify your policy & funding goals

KEY STEPS	EXAMPLES
1. ID the key issues or problems your community/org is facing	Food in local school is not culturally relevant
2. ID big picture changes you want to see in your community or City	School food staff better trained and equipped to serve culturally relevant food
3. Determine what SMART policy changes/goals will achieve it	More \$\$ for school food managers in NYC public schools in 2022
4. Determine how much and what kind of public funding you need	\$3.5 Million for additional School Food Managers at The Office of Food and Nutrition Services (OFNS)

Identify your advocacy targets

- Deciding on the right people to target is key:
 - What is your goal?
 - Who has the power (both legally and politically) to make it happen?
 - Don't know? Ask your own representative!
- **Primary Targets:** the key individuals who have the power to bring about the change(s) you are advocating for. Don't overlook staffers, they are the gatekeepers!
- Secondary Targets: People and groups who can champion your cause
- Helpful to meet with electeds with a range of opinion on your issue

Do your homework (i.e. research the target)

- What bills have they authored, co-sponsored and voted on in the past that are related to your issue?
- What committees are they on?
- What public statements have they made on relevant issues? What are they posting on social media? What news clips are they quoted in?
- What is happening in their district related to this issue?
- How does issues you are talking about connect with issues that are of personal interest to them?

Identify the right time

- Creating a campaign plan will help determine the RIGHT times to meet with policy makers for different asks
- Think about how to build a year-round advocacy strategy
- Get familiar with the timeline of the political process and the timing of decision-making
- Recognize political windows

Scheduling & planning a meeting

Arranging a meeting

Call or email the legislator's district or DC office:

- Contact info is on website.
- Introduce yourself and organization, say you are a constituent
- Ask to be connected to scheduler
- Ask to set up a meeting with specific staffer based on your ask or meeting goal (ie. budget director for a budget ask, legislative director or legislative assistant for your issue area for legislative ask)

Scheduling Emails

Effective Email

Hello (Full Name),

My name is Jane Doe and I am the Program Director for Delicious Gardens, a non-profit organization in Council Member Smith's district. We operate a beautiful, large scale demonstration garden at PS 45 in your district. Our executive director Liz Klepper would like to meet with the Council member and/or his budget staff to introduce our organization, let him know about the exciting work we are doing to cultivate healthy students and communities through gardening and nutrition education in his district. Finally, we would also love to discuss our Budget priorities for the coming year.

Our team is available: Tuesday, January 14 - 11am to 1pm Wednesday, January 15 - 1pm to 4pm

Please let us know if any of those dates work for you. Thank you and we look forward to hearing from you.

Best, Jane Doe

Ineffective Email

Hello (First Name),

My name is Jane. I'd like to come in and speak with the council member about our organization, Delicious Gardens. Council Member Smith hasn't been doing enough to protect gardens at schools and we demand answers. Please let us know when the council member is available.

Best, Jane Doe

Not clear what tie is to district

Doesn't explain role, mission

Adversarial in nature

No dates/times offered

Not clear what you want

Prepare & Practice (Please)

- Do your research. Know who you're meeting with.
- Pre-meeting prep with colleagues: agree on ASK and top messages
- Establish clear roles and have a basic plan for who is going to say what
- Develop and *practice* talking points
- Create or bring one-pager with key relevant district data & issue impact
- Bring business cards

Meeting Agenda

Well Organized Meeting Agenda

Sen. Smith Meeting Agenda 5.5.20 12pm 222--222-2222 Conference ID: 82616 GOALS

- Review Coalitions' Federal Level Recommendations
- Ask them to help push these asks forward
- Ask to meet again in the coming weeks

12:00-12:10 - INTRODUCTIONS (Bob)

- Round Robin of Intros
- Overview of Coalition process, how we developed recommendations.

12:10-12:40 REVIEW FEDERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Support local economies by helping farmers impacted by Covid-19 find new markets, retain workers and access emergency funding.
 - Increase funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) for food banks and waive all state and local match requirements for these expenses. (John/Jane)
- 2. Strengthen and expand access to federal nutrition programs
 - a. NY waiting on P-EBT Approval, URGENT this is extended (Jane)
 - b. Thank you for bill to Boost SNAP & being a champion (Bob)

12:40-12:45: - NEXT STEPS & ASKS (Jane)

- Can you help us push these recommendations forward?
- Would you be willing to sign on to this platform and ask your other colleagues to do the same?
- Can we set up a call with you in a few weeks to follow up about these recommendations?

<u>Bad Agenda</u>

Sen. Smith Meeting Agenda

INTRODUCTIONS

REVIEW FEDERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- TEFAP
- Nutrition Programs and Pandemic-EBT
- SNAP
- Next Covid Aid Package

No info on meeting location

No follow up plan

Unclear who is speaking when

Unclear what goals are

No asks listed

Effective one-pagers are short, visual

- Background: 3-4 sentences setting context (the issue)
- Key Facts: 3-4 stats that illustrate the problem, visual when possible
- The Ask: be specific about what you/your community wants
- The Impact: specific, local impact of this action, district level if possible

Running an effective meeting

Tips for the meeting

- Dress professionally
- Know where you are going (or your Zoom password!)
- Be prompt, patient, and POLITE
- Keep it short and to the point
- Stay on message for THAT meeting

Make an ask of your policymaker

Examples of an Ask:

- Introduce or vote on a bill, resolution
- Change a rule or regulation
- Write a Dear Colleague Letter
- Site visit to your program
- Request for a Hearing
- Push for a budget item
- Letter of support for grant proposal, project
- Discretionary funding for your organization

Before meeting with policy makers, touch base with allied groups about your ask!!

More tips for the meeting

- Don't make assumptions about the legislator's knowledge of the issue
- It is okay to say "I don't know"
- Offer to be a resource, leave behind one-pager and business cards
- Know when it is time to go and say THANK YOU

Mistakes to avoid!

- Being a lone ranger
- Missing the boat
- Don't hide key information
- Showing up without following the expected protocol

Stay in touch!

Follow up after the meeting

- Make a note about what happened, report back to your org or allies
- Write a thank you email to the person you met with
- Provide any follow up information that you promised in the meeting
- Track impact of meetings, campaign progress

Create regular touch points

- Attend relevant events/public forums
- Congratulate them on awards received, good press
- Thank them for a positive vote or action on your issue
- Sharing updates on your program to highlight impact
- Share relevant news articles, data they might be interested in
- Invite them to events, site visit, opportunities for positive publicity

Policy and Advocacy for Food Systems Change Virtual Series



April 5: Using Advocacy to Build an Equitable and Sustainable Food System with Equity Advocates

April 6: Best Practices for Meeting with Elected Officials with Equity Advocates

April 7: Office Hours with Equity Advocates

April 20: Farm Bill 101 with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

May: Panel Discussion with seasoned food systems policy leaders





Join us!

Contacts

Equity Advocates

www.nyequityadvocates.org

Gabrielle@nyequityadvocates.org Leah@nyequityadvocates.org

Additional Resources

Tools: Identify the appropriate targets

- House Members & Districts
- House Committees
- Senate Members and Districts
- Senate Committees

IRS definition of direct lobbying

- Direct lobbying targets legislators:
 - Refer to specific legislation and
 - Take a position on it
- Legislators includes federal, state or local representatives AND staff
- Grassroots lobbying targets the general public:
 - Refer to specific legislation,
 - Take a stand on that specific legislation, and
 - Issue a "call to action" that asks the recipient to contact legislators

Yes, nonprofits can & should lobby!

- 501(c)(3) public charities *can* engage in limited lobbying, but must comply with generous lobbying limits.
 - Internal Revenue Code <u>does not prohibit lobbying</u>, it does set limits.
 - State & city registration and disclosure laws <u>do not</u> limit lobbying, only require reporting.
- If nonprofits aren't speaking up for their communities, chances are nobody else is either.

Samples: Dos & Don't

Scheduling Emails

Effective Email

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Best, Jane Doe

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One Pager Handouts

<u>Impactful One Pager Template</u>

- 1. Background 3-4 sentences explaining the issue.
- 2. Key Facts: 3-4 stats that explain the problem. Any statistics that are local to the district or state of the Elected Official you are meeting with are particularly valuable. Charts and graphs a plus!
- 3. What is the Ask/Recommendation: Be as specific as possible about what you would like the policymaker to do or what the specific recommendation is. Be sure it is something the policymaker can do.
- 4. Results: Explain what the results/benefits would be of taking this action. For instance, it would lead to XX people being able to be served, or it would reduce the problem by Y amount in the next 5 years. Remember, it's better if there can be immediate results. If that's not possible, be honest about the effect.
- 5. (Optional) A Personal Story/Anecdote: If there's space or time, it's great to include an anecdote about a real person affected by the issue you're discussing or a real world example of what you're describing.

<u>Ineffective One Pager</u>

- 1. Only includes information on your organization that can be found on your website.
- No relevant data or statistics from the Elected Official's district
- 3. No actions or asks included
- 4. Too busy or text heavy

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- 2. Strengthen and expand access to federal nutrition programs
 - a. NY Still waiting on P-EBT Approval and its URGENT this is put in place and extended through 2021 (Jane)
 - b. Thank you for bill to Boost SNAP in The Phase 4 package for COVID-19 relief and being a champ for these issues. (Bob)

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- Can you help us push these recommendations forward?
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No asks listed

Effective Thank You Email Example

Dear Jeffrey,

Thank you so much for meeting with us this week about the <u>policy recommendations that our coalition developed through the NY Covid-19 Food Coalition.</u> We truly appreciate all the hard work that Council Member Smith and your team is doing to feed New Yorkers in need. We would love the Council member's support pushing our attached recommendations forward in our City Level policy platform and for her to sign on if possible. As you said, our goals and asks are very aligned with the work the Council Member is already doing to strengthen our food system and make it more equitable.

As we mentioned, we recently signed on to the <u>Chinese American Planning Council's</u> letter to invest in social services, not over-policing of communities of color. We would specifically like to see the city invest in the following programs and services to help advance equity and fight hunger that has skyrocketed since the start of covid-19:

- Utilize the \$25M set aside by the City for food banks and pantries to meet the unprecedented demand for their services to pay for PPE, personnel costs and shelf stable food.
- Reinstate and fully fund the Summer Youth Employment Program for FY21. Would also like to see the city offer flexibility in remote work opportunities, placement with food access CBOs and EFPs and community gardens.
- Allocate more resources to the NYC Small Business Continuity Fund so it can re-start taking applications and distributing funds. Would like more resources put into this grant program and CBOs and food businesses prioritized.
- Advancing community wellness through support for CBOs doing this work in communities disproportionately impacted by Covid-19, increasing access to food, mental health resources, support in the LGBTQ community.
- Allocate additional funding to HRA to ensure the agency has enough resources and staff to adequately promote the Pandemic-EBT program, SNAP and WIC to help reduce the demand on emergency food provider

We'd love to continue this conversation and collaborate to move these recommendations forward. We will be in touch in the next couple weeks to set up a follow up call. Thank you in advance for your time and support.

Ineffective Thank You Email Example

Dear Jeffrey,

Thank you so much for meeting with us this week about our coalition. We really appreciate your time.

Best, Jane Doe

No reminder of what was discussed

Missed opportunity to reiterate specific ask

No follow up plan

PolicyMaker Profile

- Contact Info
- Background (personal, career)
- Positions
- Relevant projects, legislation

NYC Councilman Rafael L. Espinal Jr.

District Office: 1945 Broadway

Brooklyn, NY 11207

Primary Contact: Lloyd Lesperance, Chief of Staff llesperance@council.nvc.gov

Lauren Liles, Communications Advisor Ililes@council.nyc.gov

Background:

- District includes Cypress Hills, Bushwick, City Line, Ocean Hill, Brownsville, and East New York
- First elected in 2014
- Born in Brooklyn to Dominican immigrant parents
- Previously served as a New York State Assemblymember
- Chair of the Committee on Consumer Affairs and Business Licensing

Committee Membership:

Chair, Committee on Consumer Affairs and Business Licensing
Member, Committees on; Environmental Protection; Housing and Buildings; Rules, Privileges,
and Elections; Sanitation and Solid Waste Management; State and Federal Legislation; and
Transportation

Relevant projects and legislation:

Councilman Espinal has written several pieces of environmental and transportation legislation.

Recently, he wrote the Electric Bicycles Conversion Program - Intro 1265, Electric Scooters Pilot Program - Intro 1266, and Comprehensive Urban Agriculture Plan - Intro 1058.

In 2018, Councilman Espinal received a perfect score from the New York League of Conservation Voters Environmental Scorecard. Below is a list of the legislation that he has supported-

Legislation	Description
Expanding Investigations for Lead Poisoning - Intro 864 (Speaker Johnson)	This bill would require the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to conduct a more comprehensive inspection of a lead-poisoned child's environment. Lead poisoning continues to negatively affect the health of New York City's children and this bill would help ensure that any potential lead hazards are identified and fixed. Specifically,

