



## Increase Your Advocacy Capacity

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*Building local power to fight corporate control.*



# Overview

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How to leverage *ADVOCACY* to build thriving local economies and support local businesses.



# My 'Why'



- 1) Educate the public
- 2) Advocate for better environment for local businesses
- 3) Provide programs, education, networking



**LOWCOUNTRY**  
LOCAL FIRST

**IISR**

# Who we are

The Institute for Local Self-Reliance has a vision of thriving, diverse, equitable communities. To reach this vision, we build local power to fight corporate control.



Our Independent Business Initiative champions locally owned businesses, leads efforts to fight the unchecked power of corporate giants like Walmart and Amazon, and seeks to reverse the government policies that work against these small, independent businesses.

# Who we are



Small Business Rising is a coalition of independent business organizations standing up for a level playing field.

We're urging elected leaders to break the power of monopolies and safeguard our right to compete and serve the needs of our communities.

- Nearly 40 independent business org partners, representing 200,000+ businesses.



# Why We Advocate



Photos: Reuters; Quartz; Food and Wine; Investopedia; Salon.

# Why Advocate?

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Simply put, nonprofit advocacy ensures your nonprofit's mission will be heard.

Advocacy allows the legislators to learn what your mission is and how it helps your community.

Through the process of advocacy, legislators can make informed decisions about passing laws that benefit the community.

- *Source: BoardEffect.com*



# Why Advocate?

Nonprofit advocacy is broadly defined and includes a limited amount of lobbying.

Another way to think of nonprofit advocacy is to equate it with ambassadorship.

Educating others about your nonprofit's mission, advocating for legal changes, and educating voters in a nonpartisan way are all activities that fall under nonprofit advocacy.

- *Source: BoardEffect.com*

## Voters pack Charleston Music Hall to hear from remaining Charleston mayoral candidates





# Why Advocate?

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## Rule of Thumb:

If you are encouraging supporters to weigh in on an issue that is associated with a vote (local, state, or federal level), that is **Grassroots lobbying**.

If you are urging a legislator (local, state, or federal) to vote a certain way on an issue - that is **Direct lobbying**.

501c3 organizations are **NOT** permitted to endorse or support specific political candidates.



# Process and Priorities

**GOAL:** empower your organization to efficiently and effectively advocate for your mission.

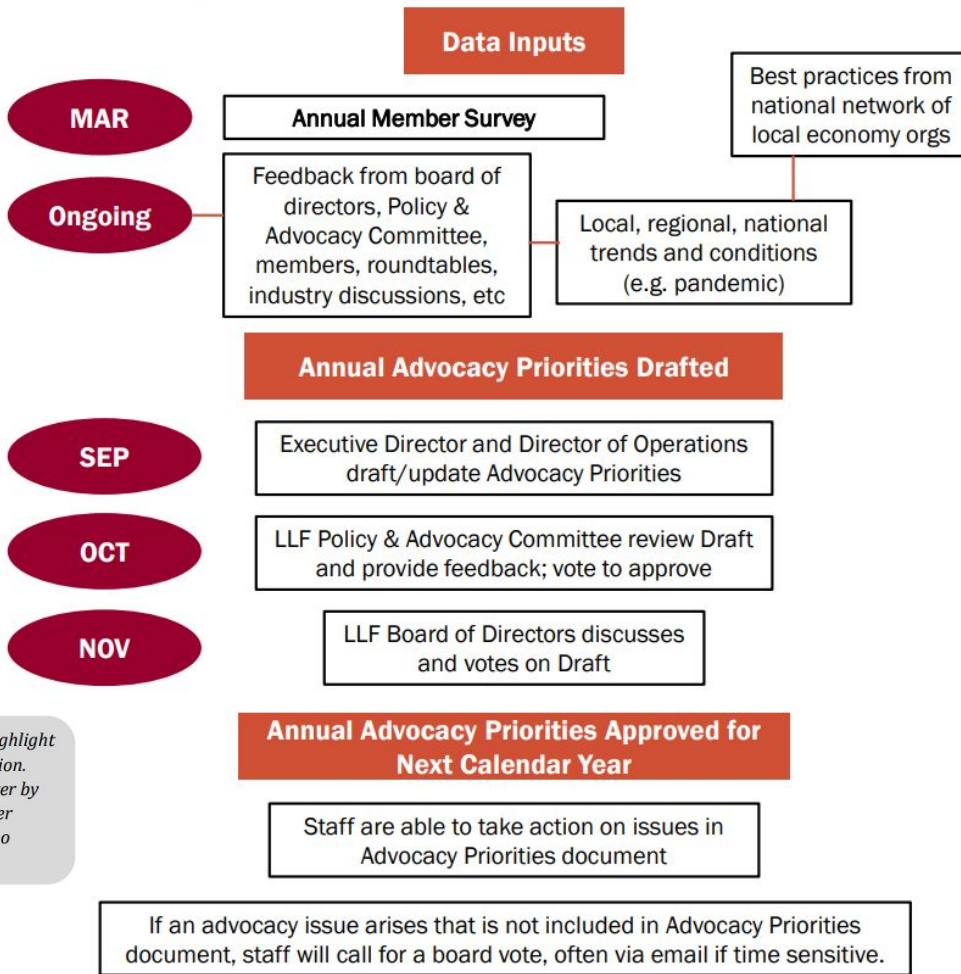
- Get clear on a decision-making structure.
- Determine core advocacy priorities to empower staff to take action.
- Get leadership and constituent buy-in.



# Process and Priorities

## SAMPLE PROCESS: Lowcountry Local First

### LLF Advocacy Process – Nov 2021



*As a 501c3 organization, we do not endorse any political candidates. We do highlight the positions of candidates or elected officials on issues pertaining to our mission. Our membership contains incredibly diverse perspectives and we're made better by that diversity. Our annual Advocacy Priorities are informed by surveys, member meetings, our Policy and Advocacy Committee, and our Board of Directors, who approve the priorities annually.*

# 501c3: Taking the 501(h) election

A simple form 501c3 orgs can file to clarify allowable time/resources spent on grassroots or direct lobbying.

## 501c6: Business Leagues

The IRS does not set any limit on the amount of legislative activity that a business league can conduct. In fact, lobbying can be the sole activity of a 501(c)(6) organization. However, political campaign activity must be limited and cannot be the primary activity of the organization.

If the amount of exempt purpose expenditures is:	Lobbying nontaxable amount is:
≤ \$500,000	20% of the exempt purpose expenditures
>\$500,00 but ≤ \$1,000,000	\$100,000 plus 15% of the excess of exempt purpose expenditures over \$500,000
> \$1,000,000 but ≤ \$1,500,000	\$175,000 plus 10% of the excess of exempt purpose expenditures over \$1,000,000
>\$1,500,000	\$225,000 plus 5% of the exempt purpose expenditures over \$1,500,000

Source: [IRS Website](#)

Source: Council of Nonprofits

# Examples

LOCAL: for example...

- Zoning to prohibit dollar stores or chain businesses.
- Local procurement policies.

STATE: for example...

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- Strengthening antitrust laws.
- Disaster grants for small businesses.

FEDERAL: for example...

- Regulating Amazon by prohibiting 'self-preferencing.'
- Lowering credit card swipe fees by addressing monopoly power.
- Stronger rules on mergers and acquisitions.



The image shows a screenshot of a news article from the New York Daily News. At the top left, the logo for 'DAILY NEWS' is visible, with a red camera icon between the words. To the right of the logo is a blue banner that says 'ENDS SOON! SALE: Only \$3 for 1 Year'. Below the logo, the word 'OPINION' is written in blue. The main title of the article is 'New York can curb corporate monopolies: Albany should pass the 21st Century Antitrust Act to promote competition' in bold black text. Below the title, the author's name 'By Michael Arcuri' is listed, followed by 'New York Daily News' and the date 'Apr 01, 2023 at 5:00 am'. At the bottom of the article, there are three social media icons: a red envelope icon for email, a blue Facebook 'f' icon, and a blue Twitter bird icon.

# Resources: partnerships are key

## Resources for Local Business Alliances or business groups

- [Bolder Advocacy](#) - guides and trainings
- [Board Effect](#) - info on how to advocate focused on engaging your board members
- [National Council of Nonprofits](#) - Why advocacy is critical and information resources
  - [Benefits of filing the 501\(h\) election](#)
- [Your State Non-Profit Association](#) - [find your assn here](#)
- [TEDxTalk: Why we can't shop our way to a better economy](#) by Stacy Mitchell
- [Guide to Policy Tools that Expand Opportunity for Independent Businesses](#) - ILSR
- [Local Policy Matters: How to Grow Independent Businesses in Your City](#) - ILSR
- [Small Business Rising](#) - coalition of indie business groups taking on monopoly power

## Resources for Small Business Owners

- [AMIBA!](#)
- [Your local or state independent business organization](#) - ask AMIBA
- [Institute for Local Self-Reliance](#)
- [Main Street Alliance](#): trainings on how to advocate as a small business owner
- [Small Business Majority](#)
- [American Sustainable Business Network](#)



**Stop Dollar Store Proliferation in Your Community: A Strategy Guide**



# Questions & Comments

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