

Amplify Your Voice

10 SIMPLE ADVOCACY TIPS

Being a good library advocate is vitally important as issues and challenges are brought to your attention, and you must find ways to deliver library messages to legislators, the media, and public officials who shape public opinion and control support for library services.

- 1. Build Relationships.** Get to know your local public officials before you need their help.
- 2. Know the Facts.** Look to the Michigan Library Association for background on the specific issue and how best to frame the message.
- 3. Contact Public Officials Personally.** The ultimate goal – be able to text your legislators or call them directly. But ultimately, a meeting is better than a phone call, a phone call is better than an e-mail, and an e-mail is better than no contact.
- 4. State your Case.** Share only the most important facts and best arguments.
- 5. Make it Personal.** Explain how the issue impacts you and your library...and your patrons!
- 6. Make a Clear Request.** Ask them specifically to SUPPORT the legislation, or OPPOSE the legislation, or help to change the legislation.
- 7. Be Polite, but Direct.** Try to get a commitment from your legislators to support the library position.
- 8. Encourage Others.** Ask your library leaders, staff, friends groups, library supporters, civic leaders, and others to also contact their public officials.
- 9. Utilize the Media.** Draw broader attention to the issue and the library perspective using all media channels - letters to the editor, blog comments, list serves, social media, etc.
- 10. Follow Up.** After the issue is resolved, make sure to thank those that supported the library.



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