

Why Lobby? Seven Reasons to Lobby for Your Cause

1. **You can make a difference.** In Connecticut and other states and in local communities, mentoring initiatives have been created and funded because a passionate advocate made a strong case for how mentoring will benefit young people.
2. **People working together can make a difference.** Congress has passed a series of mentoring initiatives because mentoring advocates from across the country called or wrote their Congressional delegation.
3. **Lobbying is easy.** Many of us think lobbying is some mysterious rite that takes years to master. It isn't. You can learn how to lobby—whom to call, when, what to say—in minutes. While there are a few simple reporting rules your organization needs to follow, it isn't complicated. Countless numbers of people have learned how. Lobbying is easier and more effective when many committed people work together. One person does not have to do everything or know everything.
4. **Policymakers need your expertise.** Few institutions are closer to the real problems of people than nonprofits and community groups. They see problems first-hand. They know the needs. They see what works and what doesn't. They can make problems *real* to policymakers. They *care* about the problems. Their passion and perspectives need to be heard. Every professional lobbyist will tell you that personal stories are powerful tools for change. People and policymakers can learn from your story.
5. **Lobbying helps people.** Some people become concerned that lobbying detracts from their mission, but quite the opposite is true. Everything that goes into a lobbying campaign—the research, the strategy planning, the phone calls and visits—will help fulfill your goal whether it be finding a cure for cancer, beautifying the local park, or helping some other cause that helps people. You may not personally provide a direct service, but through your advocacy work, you enable thousands of others to do so.
6. **The views of local nonprofits are important.** Increasingly, the federal government has been allowing local governments to decide how to spend federal money and make more decisions than in the past. This change gives local nonprofits even more responsibility to tell local policymakers what is needed and what will work. And because more decisions are being made locally, your lobbying can have an immediate, concrete impact on people in need.
7. **Lobbying advances your cause and builds public trust.** Building public trust is essential to nonprofit organizations and lobbying helps you gain it by increasing your organization's visibility. Just as raising funds and recruiting volunteers are important to achieving your organization's mission so is lobbying. You miss out on an important opportunity to advance your cause if you don't think as much about relationships with local, state, and federal government.

Adapted from "Ten Reasons to Lobby for Your Cause from Charity Lobbying in the Public Interest"