

APPENDIX 2

Checklist for Library Advocates



- Stay informed about national issues: follow ALA; International City/County Mgmt Association (ICMA); National League of Cities (NLC); National Association of Counties (NACO), etc.
- Stay informed about state issues: follow your state library association; state municipal or county associations, particularly for legislative/policy issues.
- Stay informed about local issues: follow library ecosystem partners; local press; community-based organizations; local events; staff expertise.
- Get to know your federal legislators—visit their websites, determine which committees they sit on, examine their priorities, look at their voting record, think about how your priorities for libraries dovetail with their expressed priorities/voting record.
- Get to know your state legislators—visit their websites, determine which committees they sit on, examine their priorities, look at their voting record, think about how your priorities for libraries dovetail with their expressed priorities/voting record.
- Get to know officials at key state agencies whose work intersects with libraries.
- Get to know your local elected officials—attend their events, learn their priorities, follow them on social media, look at their voting record, think about how your priorities for libraries dovetail with their expressed priorities/voting record.
- Contact your state/federal legislators when your state library association or ALA asks you to reach out to them on a specific issue.
- Keep your legislators informed about library/community happenings through an email once a month/quarter that highlights events that dovetail with that legislator’s area(s) of interest.

- Invite your elected officials to a library event. If they are not invited, they definitely won't come.
- If your state library association holds an annual legislative day, attend that and network with others that share your passion for advocacy.
- Create and distribute some written 1-pagers that reflect your library's community impact (and that can be tweaked annually so that you have visually appealing handouts that aren't reinvented every year).
- Hold an event around a nationwide initiative such as National Library Week. See ALA's list of celebrations and events for other ideas: ala.org/conferencesevents/celebrationweeks.
- Hone your library story and talk to others informally about why you love libraries.
- Develop an elevator speech about libraries in general or about a specific issue facing your library/community now. Practice with friends and then use it when out and about!
- Develop and share an elevator speech about your library with a group (such as Friends or Trustees), keeping the message consistent and emphasizing that importance to those who want to help spread the word.
- Talk or write more formally about a specific community issue and its relationship to the library, or find others who feel passionately like you do and harness their support to write/speak (Community e-newsletter? Radio? TV? Newspaper? Letter to the editor? Op-Ed?)
- Offer to speak to community organizations about how the library is a community resource for them (Rotary? Lions Club? Elks Club? Garden Club? Chamber of Commerce? PTA? School Board?)
- Build relationships with key community stakeholders. This is a long-term effort that requires consistent work year-round. Don't just reach out because you want something from them at that moment. Reach out to listen to their ideas and perspectives—it will inform how you continue to advocate for the library.
- Develop and share your advocacy contact list. (See Appendix 3.)