A woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark jacket, is holding a white sign with red and black text. The sign reads "STOP REPEAL" in large letters, with "#CARENOTCHAOS" written below it. In the background, other protesters are visible, some holding similar signs. The scene is a protest or rally.

Choosing Advocacy Tactics

Goals for this session

- 1 Understand what an issue ecosystem is and how it drives an issue campaign
- 2 Be able to identify what kind of actions motivate elected officials to take certain stances on issues
- 3 Feel confident choosing effective tactics to encourage elected officials to take the action you want to see

Agenda for this session

Issue Ecosystem 101

Persuading Elected Officials

Choosing Effective Tactics

Debrief

An issue ecosystem is the environment surrounding a decision maker.



Our goal:

To create the conditions for decision makers to take action on the issue we care about.

Conditions for a healthy issue Ecosystem

**Variety of
tactics**

**Variety of
voices**

**Appealing
messages**



Variety of tactics

Using multiple tactics—press, digital, and in-person—ensures that your message is heard by the decision maker and shows him or her that people who care about your issue are everywhere. Tactics that are strategically spaced on a calendar keep the issue popping on the decision maker’s radar.



**Variety of
voices**

Multiple groups working on an issue shows more support for that issue and each organization contributes its unique voice to the conversation on the issue.



Appealing Messages

All decision makers are motivated by something. It is the job of you and your partner organizations to figure out what that motivation is and how to appeal to it.

Agenda for this session

Issue Ecosystem 101

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Debrief

**We need elected officials
to vote our way.**

**We need elected officials
to vote our way.**

What motivates them?

Meet State Senator David Mendez

Moderate

No previous public statements

Pro-business

Positive, mainstream image in the state

Represents high share of independents



Letters to the Editor

“Marriage equality will put our state on the right side of history”



Calls to the office regarding marriage equality

*184 support
61 against*



Social media

*Flooded Facebook with
comments*

56 @mentions on twitter

187 emails



Rallies outside of office

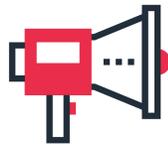
*Message: “we want equality!
It’s good for the economy!”*



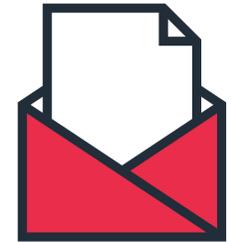
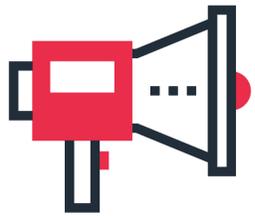
Earned media events

“Passing marriage equality will bring jobs to our state and help my business, so I hope State Senator Mendez supports it”

-Small Business Owner



We put issues on elected leaders' radar.



**One tactic alone
does not persuade
a decision maker.**

**It takes a combination
of strategically-planned
tactics to ensure your
message is heard.**

Agenda for this session

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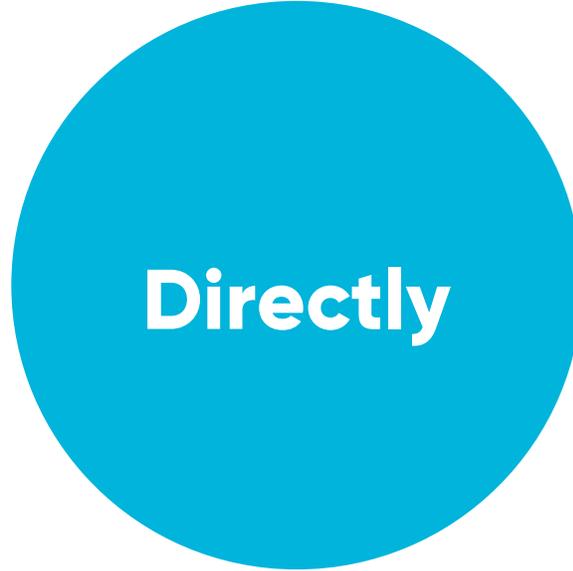
Communicating with an elected official



Press



Online



Directly

Influencing Sen. Mendez

Moderate

**No previous public
statements**

Pro-business

**Positive, mainstream
image in the state**

**Represents high share of
independents**

**If you were hosting an Earned Media event to convince State Sen. Mendez to support this issue, what would it look like?
How would it attract the press?
How would it persuade him?**

Note: for this example, you cannot host the event anywhere he can see it in person.

Influencing Sen. Mendez

Moderate

**No previous public
statements**

Pro-business

**Positive, mainstream
image in the state**

**Represents high share of
independents**

**Now imagine I can't see your
event in person, and there is no
news outlet anywhere near you,
so you can't gain my attention
via earned media.**

What is your event like?

Agenda for this session

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Debrief

What was your biggest “aha” moment?

Why do you think this is important?

What is the next thing you’d like to do as part of an issue ecosystem?

Goals

- 1 Understand what an issue ecosystem is and how it drives an issue campaign
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Key takeaways

An issue ecosystem is the slice of reality surrounding an elected official and must persuade him/her to take a stance on the issue

An effective action appeals to an elected official's motivations, either through the press, online, or directly

We have prepared action toolkits for you that walk you through how to be effective action takers. Find them at bit.ly/ActionToolkits