

## ADVOCACY BEFORE AND AFTER LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS: Building Relationships with Our Legislators to Help End Hunger



**BEFORE THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION, GET ON AN ACTION-ALERT LISTSERVE.**

- ❖ Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-NM [www.lutheranadvocacynm.org/](http://www.lutheranadvocacynm.org/)  
(Click on Get Involved. Then click on Join our Advocacy Network.)
- ❖ New Mexico First [www.nmfirst.org](http://www.nmfirst.org)
- ❖ New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty [www.nnmpovertylaw.org](http://www.nnmpovertylaw.org)
- ❖ New Mexico Voices for Children [www.nmvoices.org/take-action/](http://www.nmvoices.org/take-action/)

**DURING THE LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS, you will receive**

- ❖ Summaries of bills that need advocates' support.
- ❖ A list of legislators to call (e.g., members of a committee hearing a bill).  
Call as many as you can. Even one call or email is a gift of advocacy.

**IF YOU CALL LEGISLATORS, you typically will speak to staffers. Offer them**

- ❖ Your name and place of residence (county or street address).
- ❖ Number/title of the bill; ex: HB 207, Food, Hunger and Farm Bill.
- ❖ Your 'ask' for the legislator to support the bill.
- ❖ A thank-you to the staffer and legislator. (Expect a good experience!)

## AFTER THE LEGISLATIVE SESSION, STAY IN TOUCH: 4 ACTIONS

### 1. WRITE A NOTE OF THANKS TO YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE AND SENATOR

After each legislative session, send a personal note of thanks to your state senator and representative for their service. A handwritten note is especially good.



2. ATTEND INTERIM COMMITTEE MEETINGS: Much work happens in these meetings between sessions. Among the ones important for us advocates are

- ❖ The Legislative Finance Committee.
- ❖ The Legislative Health and Human Services Committee. (Key to legislation on food insecurity.)

Check this website for meeting dates/times: [www.nmlegis.gov/](http://www.nmlegis.gov/)

### 3. HAVE COFFEE WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

In the spring or summer, plan with one or two fellow parishioners from the same district to invite your legislators for coffee. The coffees can be *virtual* for now but later in a local coffee establishment in your district.



If your state representative and/or senator are not part of the Legislature's Hunger Caucus, encourage them to contact Representative Joanne Ferrary to join. [www.Joanne4nm.com/](http://www.Joanne4nm.com/) [ferraryrep37@gmail.com](mailto:ferraryrep37@gmail.com) 575-649-1231

#### 4. HAVE YOUR CONGREGATION HOST A RECEPTION OF THANKS

- ❖ Invite state legislators of both parties who represent members in your congregation to a nonpartisan gathering hosted by your church.
- ❖ For example, on a summer or fall evening, gather in a parishioner's backyard. Focus on thanking the legislators for their public service.
- ❖ Use the time for parishioners and legislators to get to know one another in the welcoming, relaxed setting that you've arranged. Give each legislator the opportunity to say a few words. This is not necessarily the time for specific policy asks, but do have a list of your social justice concerns available to hand out.



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