

NCLR
40 YEARS
*A Stronger
America Together*

STATE ADVOCACY DAY EVENTS



TOOL KIT

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR) – the largest national Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States – works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of nearly 300 affiliated community-based organizations (CBOs), NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. To achieve its mission, NCLR conducts applied research, policy analysis, and advocacy, providing a Latino perspective in five key areas – assets/investments, civil rights/immigration, education, employment and economic status, and health. In addition, it provides capacity-building assistance to its Affiliates who work at the state and local level to advance opportunities for individuals and families.

Founded in 1968, NCLR is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt organization headquartered in Washington, DC. NCLR serves all Hispanic subgroups in all regions of the country and has operations in Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Antonio, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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State Advocacy Day Events Tool Kit

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Background on the National Council of La Raza and Civic Participation **SECTION 1**

As part of its mission to reduce poverty and discrimination and improve opportunities for Hispanics, NCLR believes that increased civic engagement is an essential part of any community empowerment strategy.

State and Local Advocacy Project

NCLR has amplified its field advocacy activities, adding a state and local dimension to its policy analysis and advocacy work.

NCLR's public policy expertise at the federal level, which includes a number of key issues also significant at the state level, has provided fertile ground for collaboration with state and local groups engaged in education, health, economic mobility, civil rights, and immigration issues. Through this work, NCLR hopes to increase collaboration among advocates working at all levels; provide a state perspective in shaping the organization's national advocacy work; and disseminate information to Affiliates and other partners regarding the implications of federal policy debates in their states.

Civic Engagement Project

NCLR believes that Latinos* in the United States have an important role in improving our nation's future. That role includes increasing Hispanic participation in the political process by encouraging eligible applicants to become citizens, motivating citizens to register and vote, and creating a new generation of Latino leaders to educate voters about issues affecting Hispanics. NCLR assists those eligible to become citizens through a campaign called *ya es hora ¡Ciudadanía!* (Citizenship, It's Time!). The organization encourages voter registration and participation through another campaign called *ya es hora ¡Ve y Vota!* (It's Time, Go Vote!) and through its Latino Empowerment and Advocacy Project (LEAP). Finally, NCLR encourages college students to participate in the electoral process and educate voters through *Día de Avanza Latino y Enseñanza (¡DALE!)*, formerly Latino Education and Advocacy Day (LEAD).

Definition of Advocacy

“Advocacy represents the strategies devised, actions taken, and solutions proposed to influence decision-making at the local and state level to create positive change for people and their environment.”¹

Advocacy occurs on a variety of levels; “individual advocacy” means to provide consistent service to specific clients, while “large-scale advocacy” means to act on behalf of people for a particular change in policy. For example, CBOs can engage in advocacy efforts to educate decision-makers and the broader public about the lack of access to health care services for the Latino community. Empowering the Latino community to engage in advocacy efforts requires:

- Educating constituencies on political power structures and how they can influence those structures (helping people understand their role in changing/building power)
- Educating constituencies on specific public policy issues

* The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to identify persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish, and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race.

- Engaging clients in the organization's advocacy efforts
- Prioritizing advocacy issues to match the capacity and interest of the organization

Examples of Advocacy

- Testifying at public hearings
- Coordinating a rally
- Holding a press conference
- Writing a letter to the editor
- Organizing on an issue forum

In its most basic form, advocacy is about seeking change by speaking up about what is happening in your community and finding ways to improve individual lives. The lives of people in your community might be improved through increased funding for schools and health clinics, after-school programs for youth, or higher wages and more jobs. Whether you address these needs by delivering the services directly, or supporting/opposing legislation, you are making a difference.



Introduction to State-Level Advocacy Day

SECTION 2

This tool kit is a guide for how to plan and carry out an advocacy day event at the state level. You may already have an advocacy program, and want to add an advocacy day to your organization's regular events, or advocacy and civic engagement might be entirely new for your organization. There are opportunities for organizations at every level to participate in an advocacy day. Through this tool kit you will find tips, ideas, and models for almost any stage of planning.

Description of an Advocacy Day

In this tool kit, advocacy day and issue briefing are combined into one term, "advocacy day," to simplify the concepts of several different events, which fit the same general activities and goals.

What is an advocacy day and issue briefing? Generally, advocacy day and issue briefing events educate participants on issues of impact and connect decision-makers with community members. Some common advocacy day events include lobby day, legislative day, issue briefing, issue forum, and legislative briefing.

The primary goal of an advocacy day is for staff and community members associated with your organization and your issues to speak with legislators. Most of the time this involves traveling to the state legislature and meeting with elected officials. Some organizations that host an advocacy day also plan trainings for participants to learn about the state government, how to lobby, and the major issues facing their community. Additional events can include a keynote speaker, evening receptions for legislators and participants, or a rally.

Why do community-based organizations organize an advocacy day in their state?

CBOs organize advocacy days for many positive reasons. An advocacy day energizes you, your staff, and your supporters. Some of these benefits include: recruiting new members, building excitement for civic engagement, and establishing your presence as an expert on issues that affect the Latino community. Executive Director of the Latina Initiative Dusti Gurule explained that her organization hosted an advocacy day to “build a bridge” between decision-makers and the Latino community. Additional potential outcomes from an advocacy day are listed below.

Outcomes Gained by Latino CBOs

NCLR believes there are some unique reasons Latino CBOs in particular can benefit from hosting an advocacy day. As a growing community, it is more important than ever to participate in the civic process.

Share the Perspective of the Latino Community with Your Elected Officials

Nonprofits are in touch with their community every day and have an in-depth knowledge of their issues. Community-based organizations that work with the Latino community know the challenges we currently face. State legislators want to know what is happening in their communities. Encouraging community members to share their personal stories with state legislators and their staff has proven to be one of the most powerful ways to move an advocacy agenda.

Build Long-term Relationships with Elected Officials and Their Staff

The success of your advocacy efforts over the long term depends on the strength of your network. When you build a relationship with elected officials and their staff you will get a response when you call on certain issues. Eventually, they may come to you for information that will support a particular piece of legislation, to testify at hearings, or to help mobilize the community.

Develop Leadership and Mobilize the Latino Community

These events are a great opportunity for leadership development. You can educate and empower your base through trainings on the legislative process, public policy, and how to lobby. These activities help people feel connected to their legislators.

Advocacy day participants frequently express their surprise at how easy it is to speak to their legislators. Participants are more likely to make a phone call, write a letter, or testify at a hearing because they now have a vision of how to make change.

Increase Advocacy Capacity at the Local Level

The current trend is for states to assume more legislative and governing power. Budget issues at the local level also impact nonprofit organizations, such as Head Start centers and health clinics. Increase your organization's advocacy capacity and effectiveness at all levels of government.

Strengthen Ties Between Latino Organizations

In many states there are several large organizations that work with Latino and immigrant communities, but they might not all work together. In some areas, the organizations might serve Latinos from different nationalities or backgrounds. A state advocacy day is a unique opportunity for Latino and immigrant-serving organizations to work together and establish long-term working relationships.

Demonstrate the Power and Presence of the Latino Community

Latino CBOs are limited in how they can influence the political system. Community-based organizations cannot endorse candidates or donate to campaigns. Their power lies in their constituents. An advocacy day demonstrates to state legislators that your community is large, present, and engaged. A media strategy will also draw attention to your organization, your community, and your issues.

Advocacy Day: Highlighted Latino CBOs

Different types of Latino organizations put on different types of advocacy day events. This tool kit uses examples from Latino and immigrant advocacy days in six different states. The advice given in this tool kit builds off of the experience of NCLR Affiliates, partner organizations, and the NCLR National Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day.*

* The case study information was gathered by the author through interviews with staff from each of the organizations. The author also attended several, but not all, of the events and trainings as a participant observer. Comments or specific details about each organization refer to information obtained by the author in interviews and participant observation.

CASA de Maryland

CASA de Maryland is a community organization founded in 1985 to address the needs of Central American refugees arriving to the Washington DC area. CASA's programs include education and leadership, community organizing, direct services, and day laborer centers. The full range of CASA's programs includes legal services, social services referral, employment program, and workshops and classes in a range of subjects. The Community Organizing and Political Action Department engages low-income community members in organizing campaigns to advocate for community improvements in committees of women, workers, and tenants.²

Congreso de Latinos Unidos

Congreso de Latinos Unidos is a human service agency located in Eastern North Philadelphia. Congreso is a large direct service agency with more than 50 programs targeted at youth and adults that range from truancy intervention, drug and alcohol counseling, and HIV/AIDS services to housing counseling and workforce development. Congreso employs more than 300 staff and volunteers. Congreso formed a civic engagement committee to expand its advocacy and civic engagement work. One staff member from each department, from health to finance, participates in the civic engagement committee.

Congreso is located in a neighborhood where the majority of Latinos in Philadelphia reside. Among Latinos in Philadelphia, 77% are of Puerto Rican origin. Other growing populations include Latinos from Colombia, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico.³

The Latina Initiative

The Latina Initiative was founded in 2002 with the mission to "cultivate, support, and maintain the civic involvement of Latinas in Colorado."⁴ The Latina Initiative fulfills its mission through civic engagement activities, such as registering and mobilizing Latinas to vote, leadership training, citizenship classes, issue education through conferences and workshops, and research and analysis. The Latina Initiative hosted its first Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day in 2007. Latinas make up 20% of the population in Colorado. Of the foreign born population, the majority are from Mexico.⁵ Historically, Colorado has a multigenerational Mexican immigrant population.

Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates (MIRA)

MIRA is a coalition of 32 member organizations including diverse immigrant rights organizations, religious groups, labor unions, nonprofits, and employee organizations. MIRA works to build support for comprehensive immigration reform at the federal level and to oppose “all measures in the state of Missouri that create an unwelcoming climate for immigrants and refugees.”⁶ MIRA grew out of the Immigrant Rights Action Task Force (IRATF) of Jobs with Justice. The task force worked on the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride in 2003. IRATF brought together other groups and was able to generate support from 1,000 people who greeted the two buses of freedom riders that went through St. Louis. Missouri’s foreign-born population makes up 3.4% of the state. Of the foreign-born, 28% are born in Latin America, mostly in Mexico.⁷

NCLR-California Policy Office

NCLR’s policy office in Sacramento works on various issues affecting California’s Latino and English language learner students, from early childhood education through higher education. NCLR also promotes culturally and linguistically appropriate access to health care, human services, and a variety of issues that affect immigrants’ rights. The California NCLR Affiliate Network (CNAN) includes 70 of NCLR’s nearly 300 affiliated CBOs among its members. NCLR’s California office works with CNAN to educate state legislators about the critical issues facing the community and to shape the development of policies that will reflect the needs of Latinos in California. NCLR has engaged its California Affiliates in direct advocacy efforts through policy briefings, lobby days, various press events, and dissemination of policy-related information, research, fact sheets, capitol reports, and legislative action alerts.

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)

TIRRC is a membership coalition of individuals and organizations. The majority of organization members are grassroots immigrant and refugee groups. TIRRC chooses its issues at an annual statewide convention. Once the priority issues for the year are chosen, the local work is transferred to local councils. TIRRC defines its mission as, “to empower immigrants and refugees throughout Tennessee to develop a unified voice, defend their rights, and create an atmosphere in which they are viewed as positive contributors to the state.”⁸ The key strategies for achieving this mission include building the immigrant and refugee base, promoting diversity through public awareness and defending the American Dream.



Getting Started

SECTION 3

Needs Assessment

Take into account your organization's level of involvement in advocacy as well as your resources and willingness to carry out advocacy day events. An advocacy day can be set up and carried out as a small event, a large event, as town halls, or individual meetings. This tool kit is meant to give you some ideas to get you started, but you can be creative and find the right set of activities that work for your organization. This section provides some questions to help you narrow down what type of event you would like to conduct. At this stage dream big and do not rule anything out. In the next stage, you can assess your resources and potential areas of support to choose the events and plan an agenda for your advocacy day.

What are your goals for the advocacy day?

Determining the goals for your advocacy day will help you plan the events. For example, if you want to educate legislators about key issues, you will host an issue briefing for legislators. The goals for the day will also help you decide who to target as participants. If you are planning on focusing on immigration as an issue you will recruit community members who are immigrants to talk about their experience. Most organizations have more than one goal for their events. This list will help you start developing your goals:

- Educate legislators about key issues
- Provide leadership opportunities for key staff, volunteers, and community members

- Demonstrate the presence of the Latino community
- Address a specific piece of legislation
- Build a coalition of Latino organizations

What advocacy day events are a good fit for your organization?

Each activity should reflect and address specific goals you determined for hosting an advocacy day. If you need some ideas, look at the case studies in this section and use this list of just a few of the different types of events used by other organizations:

- A briefing for legislators
- Issue briefing with panels of speakers
- Advocacy training for participants
- Scheduled meetings with legislators
- Town halls with legislators by region
- Reception with legislators
- Panel of legislators to brief participants on policy issues
- A rally with a keynote speaker

Who do you want to participate in your advocacy day?

Based on your goals and the types of events you want to host, you will have an idea of who you think the best participants are for your events. Also keep in mind your target number for attendance and set a goal accordingly. The following are some of the different categories of people who participate in other advocacy days:

- Community members
- Staff at your organization
- Community advocates from other organizations
- Youth

What will you need?

This list will build on the previous questions you answered to help you think about what you need and what you have to carry out an advocacy day. You can use the need/have worksheet in the appendix to work through this exercise. If you want more information about the logistical details you can skip ahead to Section 4. Below is a list of the basic elements an individual organization or a coalition needs to host an advocacy day.

CASE STUDY

The Latina Initiative

The Latina Initiative carries out the majority of the planning and executing of events, but like CASA, reaches into the community for fundraising, outreach, and some planning. Latina Initiative is unique in that it established committees that incorporate community leaders from other local and national organizations. The Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR) works closely with Latina Initiative to plan and execute the event.

Planning. The Latina Initiative established a planning committee and an advisory committee. The planning committee was divided into logistics, legislative committee, scheduling, fundraising, outreach, media, and volunteers. The key planners are on more than one committee, but this helps separate and divide all of the tasks. The advisory committee is made up of community leaders from partner organizations located in different parts of the state and a representative from a national organization, the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health. The advisory committee held conference calls once a month to give input on current plans and choosing issues for the advocacy day. The advisory committee also helped generate a list of potential speakers for the rally and keynote address.

Fundraising. Latina Initiative fundraised for its event by submitting proposals to potential sponsors. Organizations, foundations, and corporations can donate at different sponsorship levels. The main financial sponsor for the 2008 event is the Gay and Lesbian Fund for Colorado.

Community Outreach/Recruitment. Latina Initiative recruits participants through its partner organizations. The advisory committee was also asked to recruit community members in their organizations. They also recruit volunteers to help with breakout sessions during the training, serve as table captains for the different regions, and help with registration.

Executing Logistics. “The planning committee, consisting of staff from Latina Initiative, Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR), and the Latina Initiative board of directors, carries out all of the final logistics.”

Goals. Engage the Latino community in public policy. Help break down barriers and create a place where people can come to learn and then go advocate together, as a community.

Website: <http://www.latinainitiative.org/>

Congreso de Latinos Unidos

Congreso de Latinos Unidos hosted its first Statewide Advocacy Day on January 30, 2008. Congreso partnered with two Latino organizations: Eastern North Philadelphia Youth Services Coalition (ENPYS) and PALO. The three groups worked together to plan and execute the day's events and divided up some responsibilities based on geographic location.

Planning. The coordinating groups organized a steering committee to plan the trainings and advocacy day. One representative from each group sat on the committee. The committee communicated through conference calls and email, increasing the frequency of meetings as the event drew near. Congreso offered to be the coordinating body and bring other groups to the table. Congreso also reached out to experts in their chosen issue areas, immigration and education, to help at the trainings and set up meetings with key legislators. These experts had experience with lobbying on these issues.

Fundraising. Congreso used funds set aside for its civic engagement budget as well as agency-wide resources. Pennsylvania Association of Latino Organizations (PALO) contributed staff time. Congreso printed materials in house and kept their out-of-pocket expenses to food, hotel, and transportation to the training sites.

Community Outreach/Recruitment. The partnering organizations divided recruitment based on geography and constituencies. Congreso recruited in Philadelphia and supplied its staff as leaders for meetings. Congreso created a civic engagement committee which includes representatives from all of the agency's programs. The civic engagement committee attended the events and served as meeting coordinators. ENPYS is a youth services agency and brought youth from two coalition members: a charter high school and an after school program. PALO recruited attendees to trainings and advocacy day in western Pennsylvania.

Executing Logistics. The advocacy coordinator from Congreso was responsible for most of the logistics, specifically in Philadelphia. Congreso also offered to produce materials, such as issue summaries and packets for participants. PALO was responsible for the western half of the state.

Website: <http://www.congreso.net>

People

- Staff and volunteers to plan, fundraise, and execute events
- Staff and volunteers to outreach, recruit, and publicize
- Staff, volunteers, or a community partner with lobbying experience

Money

- Funding for logistical details, such as food, transportation, printing, and accommodations
- Unrestricted funding for lobbying activities*

Time

- Enough time for planning, fundraising, outreach, and executing the event (at least two to six months)

Network

- Individuals and organizations to work with you and attend the event

¡Ganas!

- The desire and willingness, to do the work that it will take to carry out an advocacy day as an individual group or as part of a coalition effort

What do you have?

“Do not be discouraged if your organization or coalition does not currently have everything in the “needs” list. This set of questions will help you think about what you have and where you might be able to obtain anything you are missing. Organizations frequently receive support from their network to fundraise, strategize, and publicize the event. Community partners also share in-kind donations in the form of food, vans and buses, and staff and volunteer time.

- How much advocacy work does your organization do?
- How will an advocacy day fit in with your current advocacy work?
- How much money can you devote to an advocacy day?
- How many staff members can work on planning and executing the event?

* * For more information about lobbying rules for nonprofits refer to the *NCLR Legislative Advocacy for Community-Based Organizations Tool Kit*.

- When is the legislative session in your state?
- How much time do you have to plan an advocacy day for this year's legislative session?
- What time of day do legislators meet in your state capitol?
- In what existing networks (coalitions, task forces, etc.) do you participate?
- How can you use your existing networks to promote the event to the community and media?
- What organizations might make good partners for an advocacy day?
- What other allied organizations have expressed interest in hosting an advocacy day or already hold an annual advocacy day?
- What other events are taking place to which you might be able to link your events?
- What training materials and curriculum do you have?
- Who are you connected with in the state legislature?
- Who else do you know in the community who can help?
- Who do you know in the media?
- Do you have staff or know someone with lobbying experience?
- Do you have the ability and willingness to execute a statewide advocacy day independently?

CASE STUDY

CASA de Maryland

The planning and executing of the event is internal, but CASA de Maryland reaches out to the community for fundraising, cosponsorship, and to draw in participants.

Planning. All planning is internal and is carried out by staff in the Advocacy and Community Organizing Department. Advocacy day is part of department functions.

Fundraising. Funding is built into the budget for the department, so it is part of larger fundraising efforts. They also ask unions, which they identify as community partners, to donate money for buses.

Community Outreach/ Recruitment. CASA recruits community members to attend the large town hall-style meetings and a rally. CASA's strategy for recruitment is to draw on their existing community organizing projects. Community-organizing staff are expected to recruit participants from each of the projects they oversee. There are committees for organizing women, tenants, and workers. Community-organizing staff bring participants from these committees to the two-day training. They also do outreach in all of their classes and at the day laborer center. The training participants then do outreach, speak during the town halls, and help CASA staff in the two weeks building up to the event. CASA has a statewide presence that makes it easy to draw participants from different areas of the state. They also go into churches and do outreach at religious services and at a phone bank.

CASA also partners with Asian-Pacific American and African immigrant groups. They highlight these groups' participation in press conferences. This participation helps their Friends of New Marylanders campaign, which is dedicated to defeating anti-immigration bills.

Executing Logistics. CASA staff and community leaders help execute all of the logistics.

Goals for the Event. Exhibit power of immigrant presence to legislators, develop leadership in their base, address all of their issues on one day instead of waiting for hearings, highlight Friends of New Marylanders campaign, and increase organizational growth, specifically grassroots.

Website: <http://www.casademaryland.org/>

Working with Others

From the needs assessment above, you have defined the goal for your advocacy day, the types of events you would like to include, and the people you want to attract. The most important thing to remember is to reach out to your networks. This section will talk about working with the community and using your networks – which include other organizations and individuals - to plan, fundraise, mobilize, execute, and attend the event.

There are different levels of partnership between organizations who work together to host an advocacy day. Consider how partnering with groups will further your goals for

the advocacy day. A partnership or coalition should fill a need for all groups involved. Look at the case studies below for innovative ideas on how to partner with other groups and tap into your local and national networks.

Benefits to Working with Other Organizations:

- You will have better turnout, the ability to host a larger event, more publicity, and more meetings with legislators.
- Divide the work and gain expertise.
- Other organizations bring out different sectors of the community who wish to become involved in the same issues.
- Make a strong impact with media if you show a broad coalition of people advocating on the same issue
- Develop more meaningful relationships with coalition partners.

All organizations face challenges when working in coalitions or partnerships. Keep these tips from other organizations in mind:

- Establish clear and reasonable expectations and guiding principles for the partnership.
- Contact and bring partners in early on so everyone is on the same message and goals for the event.
- Communicate goals and messages for the day to all partners.
- Divide work based on what each organization can and is willing to do.
- Organize regular meetings to check in.

EXAMPLE OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP:

CASA de Maryland is recognized as a leader on immigration issues in Maryland. They also have the time, staff, and people to bring more than 1,000 participants, mostly Latino immigrants, to the state capital city for their *Noche de Immigrantes en Acción* (Immigrants' Action Night). Their event is part of a larger advocacy goal to defeat anti-immigrant legislation. Part of their strategy is to shift immigration from a Latino-only issue to an issue that affects the whole community, including other immigrant groups. CASA de Maryland established a coalition, Friends of New Marylanders, to include a broad range of allies and other immigrant groups. The coalition participates in advocacy day events by sending participants from different groups. CASA de Maryland also holds a press event to highlight the participation of allies and other immigrant groups.

Engaging the Community

Engaging the community can be one of the biggest challenges of an advocacy day. Set a target for how many people you want to attend your event. Consider setting the target higher than the number you actually want to attend, but not too much more than you can accommodate. The scale of the events does not have to be large. Many organizations start small in their first year and increase the number of participants and fine-tune their events for the following years. Whether you plan a small or large event turnout can be difficult. For the advocacy day portion of the event, meetings with state legislators take place on weekdays. Many of your targeted participants will probably have to work on that day. Many state capitals are not in major cities. Transportation may be an obstacle for some of your participants, depending on where the state capital city is located.

These challenges can be addressed by planning the events to meet your goals for participation. Develop a plan for outreach and recruiting. Begin to publicize the event early - as soon as you have set a date and finalized an agenda. In Section 4 and the case studies, you will find more examples of how to reach out to the community.

Planning Ideas for Engaging the Community:

- TIRRC holds its event on one day and splits it into two shifts, a short orientation and training in the morning and in the afternoon.
- Latina Initiative will hold a rally at noon on Monday for people who want to participate but cannot attend meetings. The state capital is in downtown Denver and the event is at lunchtime, increasing the likelihood of large numbers of participants.
- MIRA provides a bus in St. Louis and a van in Kansas City for participants to travel to the state capital, Jefferson City. They also schedule all of the speakers and meetings for one day and end by 3:00 p.m. to allow people to return home at a reasonable time.
- CASA de Maryland organizes large town hall-style meetings at night to show the large immigrant community presence and draw more participants who work during the day.
- Congreso de Latinos Unidos is based in Philadelphia and partnered with the Pennsylvania Association of Latino Organizations (PALO), which is based in Harrisburg, to recruit participants from the western region of the state.

- NCLR-CA targeted community leaders as participants of the 2007 State of Latinos Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day. The NCLR California Policy Office works closely with the California NCLR Affiliate Network (CNAN). By recruiting within CNAN, NCLR was able to bring large numbers of executive directors and their staff to their advocacy day.

Strategizing

Planning your advocacy day requires strategizing as much as carrying out the basic logistics. A strategy will help you finalize the events, choose a date, and choose issues to focus on. To think of a strategy, reflect on the goals you want to achieve with your advocacy day. This is another area where working with other partner organizations can make a difference in the decision-making. Keep your goals in mind to develop a message, choose issues, pick a date and time, schedule key meetings, and develop your media outreach.

Message

Create a message that you want participants, the media, and legislators to remember. The message should reflect your goals. The message should consist of a basic banner, or title, for the event and at least a few key points that explain the purpose of your event. In addition, think of choosing the legislative issues that you want to focus on as part of your overall message and strategy. The banners listed below give the reader an introduction to the purpose of the event and the types of participants.

Examples of Banners:

- NCLR-CA: 2007 State of Latinos Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day
- TIRRC: New American Day on the Hill
- Latina Initiative: Colorado Latina/o Advocacy Day. Dialogue. Action. Impact.
- CASA: Noche de Inmigrantes en Acción (Night of Immigrants in Action)

Choose Issues

Choose one or a set of issues to focus on for your event. Choose broad issues, such as education or anti-immigrant legislation. Within these issues find pieces of legislation to support or oppose based on whether you think they will benefit your community. While it may be difficult to narrow down to only a few issues, this will make it easy for your participants to know what to talk about in their meetings with

legislators. When you are choosing your issue, consider the political climate in your state. Find out about the issues legislators are working on. Some organizations pick issues that all participants can talk about and that legislators cannot say “no” to, such as increased funding for education. Other organizations find ways to frame sensitive issues, such as anti-immigrant legislation, by focusing on measures that most people can agree to, such as in-state tuition legislation. If your goal for your advocacy day is to pass or defeat certain pieces of legislation, you will want to look more into the political climate and conduct a power analysis.

Choose a Date

There are several factors that go into choosing a specific date for an advocacy day. Each state has a different calendar for the legislative session. In addition, legislators are not in their offices on every day of the week. Plan the event for a day and time when legislators will be available to meet. Familiarize yourself with the legislative calendar in your state. Decide if you want to host the event at the beginning or middle of the session. The timing of your event can affect your strategy. Organizations that want to use the event as a kick-off for their advocacy activities throughout the session hold their event at the beginning of the legislative session.

Schedule Key Meetings

Develop a strategy for setting up your meetings. While you want to try to schedule meetings with as many legislators as possible you should decide which legislators you want to target. Your organization should also try to set up meetings with leadership in both of the major parties and on key committees.

Media Strategy

A media strategy will help you get out the word about your event and get press coverage of the day itself. A media strategy is an important component to an advocacy day. Work with your coalition partners or, if you are on your own, think about what you want the media to discuss about your event and what you need to do to reach out to the media. You can use your own staff as the media contact/coordinator or look into your networks for someone who has media outreach experience.

Media Activities:

- Write a press release and email it Monday morning the week of the event.
- Hold on a press conference before or during the event.

- Call reporters and tell them about the event.
- Identify a few participants who are willing to talk to the press, prepare them, and let them serve as spokespeople.
- Create template press releases for groups of participants to circulate in their local markets.
- Write an article and submit it to the independent media center.
- Write a blog.

Media Tips:

- Build relationships with reporters who cover the state government, political, and immigration beats.
- Hold a list of media contacts.
- Reach out to Spanish-language newspapers; they are eager for stories.
- Create a press sign-in sheet.
- Suggest an angle for the story or an activity for reporters, such as following a group on lobby day.
- If your event is taking place at the same time as a related large event you can draw more press.
- Let participants know that they have the right to not talk to the press and can say they do not want to be photographed or videotaped.

Resources for Strategizing:

Legislative Advocacy for Community-Based Organizations: An NCLR Tool Kit

<http://www.nclr.org/content/publications/detail/49474>

National Conference of State Legislators

Information on legislators and the dynamic in the state legislature

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/about/LOPOverview.htm>

CASE STUDY

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC)

TIRRC hosted its first large-scale advocacy day in 2006. TIRRC did not partner with other organizations, but as a coalition it included the involvement of many other groups. The organization as a whole decided to put on the event.

Planning. TIRRC collaborated with two lobbyists, with whom they work on policy issues, to plan their advocacy day. The lobbyists helped plan the trainings. Representatives from the community provided input during weekly check-in meetings. TIRRC staff, including the policy director and event planning staff, planned the event.

Fundraising. TIRRC received funding from sponsors, some of whom were member organizations. Sponsors donated at two levels: lead sponsor and regular sponsor.

Community Outreach/Recruitment. TIRRC keeps community organizers on staff to work directly with the immigrant and refugee community. TIRRC organizers were assigned the task of recruiting participants for its event New American Day on the Hill. Organizers were responsible for asking members to fill out registration forms and turning these forms in to the staff coordinating the event. The organizers were given a goal for the number of people they were expected to recruit.

Executing Logistics. Staff from different departments at TIRRC worked together to execute the event. The events staff person set up reservations for space and arranged buses for transportation. The project coordinator oversaw scheduling of meetings. The lobbyists who already work closely with TIRRC also assisted in scheduling meetings with legislators.

Goals. TIRRC's goals for its advocacy day were to educate members of their constituency to speak to their representatives and let the representatives know that immigrants are a growing voice in Tennessee and some that are voters.

Website: <http://www.tnimmigrant.org/>



Working out the Details

SECTION 4

Logistics

This section outlines some of the main logistical considerations for planning an advocacy day event. Some of these elements will depend on the specific events you choose. These are suggestions to get you started.

Timeline

A timeline is the key to success for your event. Most organizations start the early stages of planning five to six months prior to the event. Some only take two to three months. Once you set a date, build a timeline that includes when each of the logistics will be completed. Ariel Safdie, project coordinator from TIRRC, advises setting strict deadlines and sticking to them. If this is your first large-scale advocacy day, you might want to start planning earlier. Add a little more time than you think you will need. You should also consider the amount of staff time and resources you and any partner organizations can dedicate to planning and executing the event. The earlier you get started, the more likely that you will have a good turnout. Also, make arrangements for space and transportation. If you need to fundraise, you will also need to start earlier. Schedule regular check-ins and meetings into your timeline. Increase these meetings as you get closer to the event.

Agenda

Pinpoint the specific events you want to include in your advocacy day. A list and schedule of exact events will help you plan the rest of the logistical details. Think about pacing and attention spans when you are planning your agenda. Build in breaks or breakout sessions for participants.

Develop a Budget and Fundraise

Draw up a preliminary budget and include any expense that you will incur. It is important to have a comprehensive budget to know the exact cost and value of the event. Two of the biggest expenses for this type of event are food and transportation. Include staff time and in-kind donations in the budget. The budget will help you identify gaps in funding and can be used when you approach potential funders and cosponsors. If you do not have funding for staff to work on this event, you should also include this in your budget. Do not be discouraged if you or your potential partner organizations do not currently have sufficient funding for this type of event. The examples from NCLR Affiliates and partner organizations show that community sponsors and foundations are willing and excited to fund an advocacy day. CASA de Maryland builds its advocacy day into the overall budget of its Advocacy Department. NCLR-CA included its advocacy day events into grant proposals.

Coordinator/Staff

Think about which staff at your organization will be assigned to planning and executing the events and who will make sure that it gets done. One staff member can be the main coordinator for the event, or you can divide the tasks among staff based on their roles in the organization. Whether you divide the responsibilities or put one person in charge, you will need to have someone who can coordinate and verify that all of the details are covered. If you are working with partner organizations, decide at the beginning of planning who will be responsible for each part of the logistics. Whether you partner or not, be as clear as possible about who will do what. There are many details involved in organizing these events and communication among coordinators will go a long way to make sure that everything is getting done. A coordinator also needs to have the authority to assign tasks and to hold people accountable. Try to establish a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities.

Space

Select and reserve a space for each of the events you plan to hold. The most important space consideration is where your participants will be on the day of the main event. If you hold the events in different locations, consider how participants will get from one place to another. Participants will need somewhere to gather before, between, and after their meetings. Many capitol buildings have rooms or other space that can fulfill this purpose. Find out how you can reserve space in your state capitol building. In some states, you will need a staff person who works for a legislator to reserve the space. If you do not have contacts with staff in the legislature, reach out

to your networks to find someone willing to help. You might be able to also use this space for your training or issue briefing. If you cannot secure a place inside the capitol, designate a meeting area for your participants. TIRRC set up a table in the capitol and asked people to put pins on a map of the world to demonstrate the diversity of the participants.

For an issue briefing, training, or reception, you might choose a space outside of the capitol building, such as a nearby hotel, restaurant, or other meeting facility.

Ideas for Event Locations

- TIRRC held its orientation at the Tennessee Bar Association, which was a short walk to the capitol building.
- For its training the night before, Congreso met at a YWCA in Harrisburg.
- CASA de Maryland held one of its trainings in a school gym on the weekend.

Accommodations

If your organization is not based in the state capital city, you will need to arrange accommodations. Your staff might need to go to the capital the day before to make sure everything is in place. If you hold a two-day event, your participants will need somewhere to stay. Arranging accommodations for a large event can require additional planning. Consider whether you will try to arrange special rates for your participants or offer hotel scholarships. The budget for accommodations might also play a factor in whether your events take place on one or two days.

CASE STUDY

NCLR-California Policy Office

In April 2007, the NCLR-CA policy office partnered with Latino Issues Forum (LIF), the Latino Coalition for a Healthy California (LCHC), and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) to host an issue briefing and advocacy day. The issue briefing took place on the first day in the form of an advocacy 101 training and panels on specific policy issues. On the second day, participants, grouped by district, went to scheduled meetings to talk to their state assembly members and state senators.

Planning. NCLR and partner organizations coordinated big picture issues for the day. The organizations met weekly and then twice weekly two months before the event. At least two staff from each organization were responsible for sitting in on conference call meetings and carrying out tasks. Senior- and junior-level staff took part in the planning, with junior-level staff carrying out most of the logistics. Initial conversations took place in October and planning began in November.

Fundraising. An advocacy day was built into a grant for the NCLR-CA policy office. NCLR provided the majority of staff time and funding.

Community Outreach/Recruiting. Each organization was responsible for recruiting participants. NCLR recruited from within the California NCLR Affiliate Network to bring executive directors and staff from NCLR Affiliates.

Executing Logistics. The organizations divided some of the work based on issue-area expertise. NCLR worked on pre-K education and health; MALDEF on K-12 education; Latino Issues Forum on air quality issues and telecommunication; and LCHC on workforce development and obesity prevention. Each organization was responsible for choosing the legislation they wanted to focus on. NCLR coordinated the issue briefing by asking each group to send a fact sheet and presentation about their issues. The NCLR staff divided big picture and legislative tasks. Team leaders, mostly staff from each of the partnering organizations, were asked to contact participants grouped by region and schedule their own meetings.

Goals. Train participants on how to advocate on a specific issue, attract a broad base of people to attend advocacy day and group visits by people who were from the district, and engage the community in advocacy.

Website: http://www.nclr.org/section/regions/california_sac/

Registration

Develop a registration system that works for you and your event. Some organizations required staff organizers to encourage participants to fill out a paper registration form and turn them in to the event coordinators. The majority of organizations set up online registration through their website or a website developed for the event. You will need to send out information about the agenda, locations for events, accommodations, and transportation when you send out the registration. This information can be posted on your website with a link to a registration form. The NCLR registration form for the National Issue Briefing and Advocacy Day is an example of what type of information

to ask for. One option is an online service, such as SurveyMonkey.com, which will allow you to design the registration as a type of survey. By using a survey format you can ask more detailed questions of participants. You might want to ask if they know the name of their representatives and if they have met with their representatives in the past. SurveyMonkey.com will collect the information and allow you to convert it to an Excel spreadsheet.

Speakers

If you plan on having any speakers during your event, think about who you want and for what purpose. For an issue briefing, you might want to recruit policy experts. For example, Congreso invited policy analysts from Good Schools Pennsylvania and the Education Law Center to brief their participants on education issues in Pennsylvania. If you are going to put on advocacy trainings, you might want to bring in someone experienced in lobbying to give your participants some pointers. Also think about having a keynote speaker who will inspire your participants. For its second advocacy day the Latina Initiative invited Dolores Huerta, cofounder of the United Farm Workers of America, and Christine Chavez, granddaughter of Cesar Chávez, as keynote speakers and to speak briefly at a rally. Congreso invited the highest ranking Latina in Pennsylvania state government, Deputy Secretary Sara Manzano-Diaz, to speak at the end of their event. She gave examples of how government impacts all of our lives and encouraged participants to stay involved by voting and contacting their elected representatives.

Schedule Meetings

One of the main activities of an advocacy day is for community members to meet with state-level elected representatives. Scheduling meetings is the biggest task and one of the most difficult challenges you will face in planning an advocacy day. Most offices follow similar guidelines for scheduling a meeting with an elected representative. A sample meeting request letter will give the basics for starting the scheduling. You should identify how many people will attend the meeting, that they are attending as part of an advocacy day, and, if applicable, that they are from the representative's district. You will need to follow up your letter with a phone call to get an exact time.

You have a few options for setting up these meetings. The first option is for participants to organize themselves by region or district in the state and set up their own meetings. Participants communicate their schedule to the event coordinator, and the event coordinator can keep a master schedule. A second option is for the

coordinating organization to group participants and schedule the meetings. This can be done by one person or by several staff members. As you receive registration information, you can start building groups from the same district. A third option is to get creative. MIRA scheduled meetings with legislators they wanted to target. When participants arrived at the advocacy day they were asked who their legislator was and handed a folder with the information about the legislator and talking points. If they did not have a scheduled meeting, they could go to the office and see if there was a staff person available to talk to them. CASA de Maryland holds large town meetings where they invite legislators from a region. Although they also have a difficult time pinning legislators down, they can concentrate their efforts on getting legislators to the meeting instead of scheduling a lot of small meetings.

It may be difficult, but you should try to include at least one person from the district in each meeting. In the appendix you will find an example of how TIRRC organized participants' information about their meetings.

Transportation

If you have the capacity and funding, you might want to rent buses to bring people from different parts of the state to the capitol. You will also need to consider transportation for staff and any invited speakers. This is another area where you will need to factor in the location of your events. You might be able to find a location for an event further from the capitol, but then you will have to consider adding transportation to your budget. The same is true if you plan on holding a one-or two-day event.

CASE STUDY

Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates (MIRA)

MIRA organized its second statewide legislative briefing and advocacy day on January 14-15, 2008. The briefing took place in the state capitol. MIRA invited legislators to attend the briefing. A longtime community advocate, an attorney on immigration law, and a community member married to an undocumented immigrant, presented detailed information about immigration in Missouri.

Planning. MIRA staff and the board of directors planned the advocacy day events. MIRA decided to hold its event at the beginning of the legislative session to build a relationship with legislators. Its strategy included focusing on setting up meetings with urban and African American representatives and all senators.

Fundraising. MIRA's budget included funding for advocacy day.

Community Outreach/Recruiting. MIRA recruited attendees from its member organizations. The leadership from some of these organizations attended. In addition these organizations reached out to advocates and community members who care about immigration reform.

Executing Logistics. MIRA hired one full-time organizer who coordinated all of the logistics of the event with assistance from the Director of the Board.

Goals. Kick off advocacy work for the session, get a feel for where the legislators are so they can work with them through the session, and bring a different perspective to the immigration debate.

Food

The amount and types of food you provide will depend on the time when events will take place and how much funding you have available. If you have all of your meetings scheduled for early in the day, you might want to offer a simple breakfast. Some organizations plan issue briefings with a lunch break in the middle of the day. If you plan an event around a meal, such as breakfast or lunch, plan on providing the meal. If you will not provide the meal advise participants ahead of time and provide a list of places to eat near the event location.

Materials

There are several different types of handouts you should think about producing for your event. One useful strategy for giving handouts to participants is to create folders that will include basic information and talking points. You will need to include logistical info, such as a map of the capitol building, the meeting location, a copy of the agenda, information about your organization, and if applicable, a list of sponsors. Also include issue briefs, which are talking points on the issues that you have chosen to focus on for your advocacy day. The issue briefs present participants with key information that relates to what they are going to talk about in their meetings. You might want to include an extra copy for or create a separate folder with talking points for participants to leave behind with their legislators.

TIP:

Print sheets of paper in different colors to help participants find the information in their packets.

Publicity

If you already have one person in your organization who publicizes your events and works with the media this individual should do the same for your advocacy day. If you do not have a designated person, don't worry; you can still publicize your event. Once you finalize the date and events, post this information on your website. Create an e-mail flyer if you do not have a website. A sample press release will give you an idea of how to write a press release. Create a list of media contacts if you do not already have one and email the press release prior to your event.

Another way to use the Internet to publicize your event is to set up a blog. You can go to Congreso's blog for some great ideas: <http://statewidelatinoadvocacyday.blogspot.com/>.

Volunteers

Volunteers will be a great asset for your advocacy day. Volunteers can come from within your own organization, from community partners, and anywhere else you can think to recruit. If you are going to schedule meetings for participants, you should assign someone to the group with the experience to moderate the meetings. You do not want them to do all of the talking, but you do want them to be able to step in when necessary and be a cheerleader for participants. Set up an orientation and training for volunteers and be clear about what you need them to do and how you need it to be done.

Lobby Report Form

Give participants a lobby report form to fill out when they complete their meetings. Use this form to ask what they talked about in the meeting and the response from the legislator or the legislator's staff. Even if your organization is just getting started with advocacy, this information will give you insight into the legislators' views on your issues.

Evaluation/Debrief

Create an evaluation form and ask participants to complete the form and turn it in at the end of the day. You can use the evaluation form to collect data about how many people attended, where they were from, and how many meetings were held. You can also ask participants what they thought about the event throughout the day. Within your organization and coalition partners, debrief and find out what everyone perceived as the event's successes and challenges.

Follow Up with Sponsors and Legislators

There are several steps you can take to follow up on your advocacy day. Write thank you letters to sponsors. The Latina Initiative sent their sponsors a sheet that included how many people attended the event, where they came from, and how many meetings they scheduled. Ask participants to send a thank you letter or postcard to the legislators they met. MIRA gave participants postcards to sign and turn in at the end of their event. Your organization should follow up with media to find out what stories were reported about your event. Include this information on your organization website.

Keep the Community Engaged

Keep the community engaged by following up and informing participants and community partners about legislation. The ideas below are a great way to engage community members in your organization's ongoing advocacy efforts. Don't forget to stay in touch with community partners to work together on future events and begin planning for next year's advocacy day.

Ideas for Engaging the Community

- Create an email listserv and send regular updates and action alerts.
- Hand out a list of action items for participants to follow up with legislators.
- Invest in software, such as Databank, which helps you maintain contacts.
- Ask participants to attend hearings or meetings when key legislation is being considered.
- Use a blog to update participants about what's happening in the state legislature.

Pointers

- Consider keeping at least one staff person or coordinator in main meeting space at all times
- Advocacy days tend to be somewhat chaotic. Do not worry if things seem hectic. As long as everyone knows where to go or where to get information, things will run smoothly.
- Hand out a list of committee hearings or capitol building tours to keep participants occupied between meetings.

- Think about whether you will need translators. TIRRC encouraged participants to speak in English at their meetings, regardless of their fluency, to show their desire to learn English.
- Think about what your organization can do well and go for it; you don't have to do it all!
- As with any event, planning an advocacy day is a balancing act. There are trade-offs with almost every logistical decision. Find the right balance for your organization.
- Pay attention to the details, but don't forget your goals. Most participants will feel empowered just by being able to meet with legislators.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS SAY ABOUT ADVOCACY DAYS:

*"At first I felt scared. Then I felt good and that it was okay. I had something to say and my opinion and experience were important."*⁹

– Participant at CASA de Maryland training for Noche de Inmigrantes en Acción

*"I came today for my kids. My son is 18 and says, 'Why should I study, I can't go to college in the United States.' Mothers want their kids to get ahead."*¹⁰

– Participant at MIRA Advocacy Day

*"The second legislator we visited, Rosita Youngblood, was so sweet. She made us feel comfortable and really made us feel that our opinions mattered ... we were informing her and she was informing us as well."*¹¹

– Youth participant at Pennsylvania Statewide Latino Advocacy Day

***Congratulations, you did it.
Time to start planning for next year !***

Endnotes

1. Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources, "Advocacy and Action: What Is Advocacy," <http://wch.uhs.wisc.edu/11-Action/11-Action-01WhatIsIt.html> (accessed September 9, 2007).
2. CASA de Maryland, "Mission,"
3. Congreso, "General Information About Latinos Living in Philadelphia," <http://www.congreso.net/factsheets.php> (accessed February 28, 2008).
4. Latina Initiative, "Our Mission," <http://www.latinainitiative.org/who-we-are> (accessed February 28, 2008).
5. U.S. Census Bureau, "Colorado: Selected Characteristics of the Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth: Latin America," 2006 American Community Survey, available at <http://factfinder.census.gov> (accessed February 4, 2008).
6. Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates brochure, January 2008.
7. U.S. Census Bureau, "Missouri: Selected Characteristics of the Foreign-Born Population by Region of Birth: Latin America," 2006 American Community Survey <http://factfinder.census.gov> (accessed February 4, 2008).
8. Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition, "Mission, Principles and Goals," <http://www.tnimmigrant.org/news.php?viewStory=65> (accessed February 28, 2008).
9. CASA de Maryland training participant, in discussion with the author, January 12, 2008.
10. MIRA Advocacy Day participant, in discussion with the author, January 15, 2008.
11. Lache Marcus from Esperanza Academy, Statewide Latino Advocacy Day Blog, posted January 30, 2008 <http://statewidelatinoadvocacyday.blogspot.com/search?updated-max=2008-01-30T11%3A25%3A00-05%3A00&max-results=5> (accessed February 28, 2008).

Appendices

Statewide Latino Advocacy Day Agenda Wednesday, January 30th, 2008

8:00am – 8:30am

Gather for breakfast in Section B near Capitol Cafeteria

Section B is right by the cafeteria. When you enter the capitol from the fountain side (Commonwealth Avenue), you turn right, you will see the cafeteria, and to the right of the cafeteria you will see the room. The Capital Tour's staff sits right by the Commonwealth Avenue entrance (red vests) and they can certainly point you in the right direction.

8:30 – 9:00

Welcome – Nick Torres, President of Congreso and Margaret Barajas, President and CEO of PALO

Top 5 Things to Communicate – Andrea Morato-Lara, Vice President of PALO OR Lisa Cordeiro Kricun, Vice President of External Affairs, Congreso

Logistical Notes – Sarah Cortés, Civic Engagement Coordinator, Congreso

9:00 – 11:00

Participants go to legislative appointments

- Please see maps with room numbers in folders
- Break into groups

11:00 – 12:00

Reconvene in Section B

Lunch

Closing Remarks – Margaret Barajas and Nick Torres

Depart

New American Day on the Hill

March 27, 2007

Evaluation Form

Please return this evaluation form to TIRRC staff before you leave today. If you take this form home with you by mistake, please fax it to Kasar Abdulla at 615.833.0387 or send it by postal mail to 442 Metroplex Dr, Bldg D, Ste 118, Nashville, TN, 37211.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by circling a number to the right of each statement. Use the following scale as a guide:

1= Very Dissatisfied 2= Dissatisfied 3= Neutral 4= Satisfied 5= Very Satisfied

Prior to New American Day on the Hill:

I was provided with sufficient advance notice to the event. 1 2 3 4 5

Information related to the Day on the Hill was adequately conveyed to me. 1 2 3 4 5

What can we do to improve the planning of future New American Day on the Hill?
(Use back of the sheet if needed)

During the New American Day on the Hill:

The facilities were adequate. 1 2 3 4 5

The orientation sessions were educational. 1 2 3 4 5

Meeting with legislators was beneficial. 1 2 3 4 5

The overall event was beneficial. 1 2 3 4 5

I would be willing to participate in future New American Day on the Hill. 1 2 3 4 5

What could be done to improve New American Day on the Hill? (Use back of sheet if needed)

New American Day on the Hill

March 27, 2007

Legislative Visit Reporting Form**AMBASSADORS:**

Please take a moment after your meeting with your legislator and/or their staff to complete this form. **Please return your completed form to TIRRC staff before you leave today.** Please use one form for each meeting. If you take this form home with you by mistake, please fax it to Kasar Abdulla at 615.833.0387 or send it by postal mail to 442 Metroplex Dr, Bldg D, Ste 118, Nashville, TN, 37211.

Name of Participant:

Organization Contact (If applicable):

Phone:

Email:

Name of Legislator you met with:

Additional Contact(s) in Office:

Description of Meeting/Issues Raised:

Suggested Follow-up from Meeting:

New American Day on the Hill

March 27, 2007

Afternoon Shift
Appointment Card

Team:

1

Participant Names:

(Ambassador in blue)

Catherine	Montoya
Elandria	Williams
Glenda	Keyes
Irma	Murillo
Izet	Sanchez
Josue	Olmedo
Marcus	Keyes

Appointments:

1:00 PM	Rep David Hawk	District 5	219 WMB
3:00 PM	Senator Micheal R. Williams	District 4	310 WMB
stop by	Senator Steve Southerland	District 1	318 WMB



Priority Legislative Issues

www.latinaadvocacyday.org

SB087: EXPANSION OF IMMIGRANT ENFORCEMENT UNIT

Sponsors: Sen. Harvey & Rep. King
Doubles the number of officers in the Colorado state patrol immigration enforcement unit from 24 to 48.

Position: **Oppose**
The Latina/o Advocacy Day platform states that local law enforcement and the state patrol should not be required to enforce immigration laws, nor should they ask people for documentation of immigration status. Increased local enforcement of immigration laws leads to racial profiling. In addition, requiring local law enforcement to implement immigration laws makes communities less safe by creating fear of reporting crimes.

SB079: IN-STATE CLASSIFICATION & TUITION IN HIGHER ED

Sponsors: Sen. Sandoval & Rep. Massey
This bill would ensure that citizen students have access to in-state tuition even if their parents are not U.S. citizens. States that a student who is a U.S. citizen shall be eligible for in-state tuition if they graduated from a public or private high school in Colorado, and they attended high school in Colorado at least 3 years immediately preceding the date they enrolled in higher education.

Position: **Support with amendment & qualification**
SB079 clarifies that citizen students, regardless of their parents' immigration status, should receive in-state tuition. This bill will help avoid confusion in higher education admissions offices throughout Colorado. However, **SB079 should be amended to lower the number of years to qualify for in-state tuition from 3 years to 1, which is the normal standard for determining residency.** Additionally, the Latina/o Advocacy Day Platform calls for all students, regardless of citizenship status, to have access to higher education and in-state tuition to truly meet the needs of all Colorado high school graduates.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT – WILL BE PART OF HOUSE ECONOMIC STIMULUS BILL

Sponsors: To be announced
The earned income tax credit would restore funding for a refundable tax credit for Colorado's low-income working families for 2008 & 2009. The credit would be based on the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The state credit would be equivalent to 10 percent of the federal credit.

Position: **Support**
Restoring the EITC would provide an economic boost by pumping an estimated \$52 million into the state economy in 2008. It would also provide tax relief to 259,000 low-income Colorado taxpayers, which would immediately enter the local economies throughout the state. The EITC encourages people to work, helps the local economy, and can make up for job and income losses during times of recession. **In the future, the Earned Income Tax Credit should be made permanent.**

COVER ALL KIDS 2010

Position: **Support**
Ensuring that all children in Colorado have access to healthcare coverage is an important first step towards the goal of achieving healthcare access for all people in Colorado.

10 Tips for Successful Advocacy at the State Legislature MIRA Advocacy Day, January 15, 2008

1. **Research your target in advance.** Get to know a little bit about your legislator from the information in your packet.
2. **Inform yourself.** Make sure to read all the talking points and pick out the points that you feel most comfortable using.
3. **Listen more than you talk.** Your goal is not just to educate but to gather intelligence. Try opening your conversation by asking where the legislator stands on immigration related bills. Also make sure to leave relevant information with the legislator.
4. **Tell your story.** If you have a relevant personal story, share it! A story will be more memorable than statistics.
5. **Don't be disappointed if you meet with a legislative aide.** Aides have direct contact with and often advise their legislators.
6. **Be honest and positive.** It's ok to say you don't know. Don't guess or offer unsubstantiated information. Simply let the legislator know that you will find out, and note the question on your report. Don't antagonize the legislator.
7. **Be flexible.** Your scheduled meeting may not start on time or you may not have a meeting at all. Work courteously with staff people because they can get you a meeting.
8. **Fill out your report.** Use the guidelines on the "How to fill out your report" page to take down all the important information from your meeting. This report will help MIRA in continuing to work with each legislator and get them appropriate information and education.
9. **Say thank you.** Besides thanking the legislator in person, make sure to write a postcard thanking the legislator for his or her time.
10. **Build a relationship.** This is especially important with your own Senator and Representative. Check out the tips below for continuing advocacy throughout the 2008 session.

Tips for Continuing Advocacy

1. **Stay in touch with your legislators.** Just 10 calls to a state legislator can signal that an issue is really important to constituents. Make sure your Senator and Representative hear from you on important bills and issues...especially when you get a MIRA Action Alert! Look for opportunities to make contact either at the capitol or in your district.
2. **Testify.** If there is a bill that is particularly important to you, sign up to testify by contacting MIRA.
3. **Read the paper.** Monitoring the news – especially editorials and letters to the editor – is a great way to keep up on all issues, not just immigration. If you are short on time, sign up for MIRA immigration news digests and alerts.
4. **Write a letter to the editor.** Legislators always monitor the news. You can even send a copy of your letter to your legislators. Plus, the general public will see your message if your letter is printed.
5. **Volunteer with MIRA.** Throughout the year we do education, advocacy, service, and more!

Thank you for helping to make this advocacy day a success!

Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates
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M_{issouri} I_{mmigrant} and R_{efugee} A_{dvocates}

Afghan Women's
Interfaith Initiative

African Mutual Assistance
Association of Missouri

Airport Taxi Council

American Immigration
Lawyers Association

Anti-Defamation League

bleedingbrown.

Catholic Charities
Community Services
Southside

Center for Survivors of
Torture and War Trauma

Centro Latino de Salud,
Educacion y Cultura

Coalition Against Racism,
Anti-Semitism, & Bigotry

Council on American-Islamic
Relations

Cross Border Network

FOCUS St. Louis

Grupo Latinoamericano

Inter-Faith Committee on
Latin America

Interfaith Legal Services for
Immigrants

International Institute

Jewish Vocational Services,
Kansas City

Jobs with Justice

Kansas City Worker Justice
Center

Labor Council for Latin
American Advancement

Manos Unidas

Missouri ACORN

Missouri Association for
Social Welfare

Missouri AFL-CIO

National Farm Worker
Ministry

Office of Hispanic
Ministry—Archdiocese of
Saint Louis

Service Employees
International Union, Local 1

Somali Foundation

Sons & Daughters of
Immigrants, Kansas City

UNITE-HERE

Westside Community Action
Network

For Immediate Release
January 15, 2008

Contact: Jennifer Rafanan
Cell: 610-405-7898

Immigrant Advocates Host Lobby Day in Jefferson City

*As immigration becomes 2008 political wedge, advocates emphasize danger
of hurting communities, families, citizens*

Jefferson City, MO – This morning, over 50 immigrant rights advocates from all over Missouri convened at the Capitol for Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates' second annual Advocacy Day. This advocacy day followed a legislative briefing and reception the previous evening that 30 legislators, both Republican and Democrat, attended. While the briefing focused on immigration trends and policy in Missouri, Advocacy Day focused on the negative unintended consequences that this session's host of anti-immigrant legislation could produce. These bills, many fueled by Governor Blunt's "immigration crackdown," will divide communities, create fear, and families and individual citizens and residents.

"This year politicians are looking for a wedge issue, and they want it to be immigration," said Joan Suarez, Chair of Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates. "Our goal is to help legislators think through these immigration policies they are considering instead of just trying to score political points on the backs of immigrants – citizen and non-citizen alike."

Bonnie, a MIRA advocate (whose last name was omitted for privacy reasons) and wife of an undocumented immigrant, spoke out on the dangers of these policies to real families saying, "I am here today because so many of the bills that have been filed this session will hurt innocent people, citizens, and above all kids and families. As a mother I feel it is my duty to do whatever I can to try to keep our family together as a whole family – with a home, a job, affordable medical care, stability, the promise of a future and higher education for my kids, and a daddy... All we want is to live without the constant fear of losing my husband, my children's dad. I say dad because it takes a pretty special and positive role model to carry that title. My husband is that special person to my children and me."

"Bonnie's family and so many other families are the reason we are here," said Suarez. "We expect the Governor will continue his anti-immigrant political rhetoric in the State of the State Address, and we wanted to be here to show our presence. This is about real people, hardworking people," she added. Advocates made over 70 visits to legislators throughout the course of the day.

See attached list for MIRA spokespeople available for response on immigration issues posed in the State of the State address.

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Statewide Latino Advocacy Day

Latino Voices United for Change

FOLLOWING UP WITH YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

- **ONE WEEK LATER**

- Begin to build a relationship with your elected official by sending a simple thank you letter.
- If the Congressperson has asked for additional information about your organization, don't forget to send this information to his/her office.
- Make calls to other Latino organizations you connected with on Advocacy Day and discuss how you can work together

- **ONE MONTH LATER**

- Subscribe the Staffer or elected official to your organizational newsletter if you have one.
- Send a letter to your Representative reminding them of the issues that are important to you. If no changes have been made, emphasize what changes you would like to see in Pennsylvania around immigration and funding for childhood education.

- **THREE MONTHS LATER**

- Towards the end of April, try to schedule an in-district visit with your Representatives' staff in your state. These are important relationships to cultivate. Let them know that you are staying abreast of developments on funding for education and around immigration legislation in Pennsylvania.
- Invite local staffers to any important events held by your organization.
- Hold a community forum to make sure Latinos in your area are as informed about these issues as you are.

- **SIX MONTHS LATER**

- Call the Education Law Center or Good Schools PA and see if there are any advocacy efforts you can be involved in
- Call the Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition (PICC) to learn about developments around immigration in Pennsylvania and learn where your advocacy efforts are needed
- Work with partner organizations you connected with on Advocacy Day and hold a regional forum that updates the community on progress made from the Costing Out Study, and the status of immigration in our state or in your community.
- Reach out Statewide Advocacy planning organizations to learn about statewide advocacy efforts and how to be involved.

New American Day on the Hill

March 27, 2007

Sorry I missed seeing you.

Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

E-mail:

Message:

CALIFORNIA ISSUE BRIEFING AND ADVOCACY DAY

April 22-23, 2008

Come to your state capital and meet with
your representatives to make your voice heard.

April 22, 2008
5:30pm - 9:00pm

Issue Briefing Dinner
Hyatt Regency
1209 L Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 23, 2008
Visits with
Your Legislators
California State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814



REGISTRATION IS FREE

For more information, please contact:
Ana Gamiz (CABE) ana@bilingualeducation.org
Eydie Mendoza (NCLR) emendoza@nclr.org

