LegiTrack

Advocacy vs. Lobbying:

What's the Difference?

Advocacy:

Generally a positive act, advocacy publicly calls attention in support of a specific cause, idea, or policy, and encourages others to join the cause.

Advocates:

- Raise awareness pertaining to a cause, idea, or policy
- Educate their community about the importance and/or implications of a cause, idea, or policy
- Encourage citizen engagement
- May use methods such as writing letters/emails, making phone calls, posting on social media, and conducting in-person events
- Tend to spend more time with the public vs elected officials

Lobbying:

- While each states' definitions may vary depending on regulations, the act of lobbying broadly refers to influencing governing bodies or individuals in an effort to take action on new legislation or to amend existing legislation. (Also see "direct lobbying" and "grassroots lobbying")
- Definitions for lobbying by state

Lobbyists:

- Are generally paid by a group or an individual
- Often attempt to draft legislation examples to present to policymakers, elected officials, or governing bodies
- Provide financial assistance to further their goals, in some cases
- Conduct research to present tangible solutions and provide expert-driven data
- Must expose their identity/identities and activities by law

Direct Lobbyists:

- Directly communicate with policymakers and representatives face to face

Grassroots Lobbyists:

- Assemble public involvement to form opinions on specific subjects to indirectly influence policymakers and representatives

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