

ICBA Grassroots Advocacy

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is ICBA Grassroots Advocacy and how can I lend my voice to this important effort?

- The Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA) is the nation's voice for community banks. When Congress is considering legislation that affects community banking, ICBA calls on its members to act as a loud and clear collective voice that is vital to our advocacy efforts. By answering ICBA Calls to Action, you and your fellow community bankers ensure that your franchise will remain strong. Your voice is important and it is crucial that you use it to influence the legislative process.

Why should I get to know my lawmaker and their staff?

- Lawmakers seek out reliable and trusted sources for information as they make key decisions on legislation and policy. You should be their trusted source for community banking. Members of Congress seek to make decisions that best serve their home districts and the needs of their constituents. When a lawmaker has questions about financial service or banking issues, your bank should be one of the first points of contact for reliable information. As a leader in your community, you should consider inviting your lawmakers to visit the bank to see first-hand the vital role it plays in your community.

Is it appropriate to directly engage my employees in advocacy?

- Your staff has a significant stake in the continued growth and success of your community bank. They too are deeply affected by rules and regulations that affect the industry. Your influence as a community leader matters a great deal and can easily be amplified by the voices of your bank employees. By educating your staff about the importance of being politically involved, they will be primed and ready to answer Calls to Action and have their collective voices heard on Capitol Hill. Congress listens to influence, and also to those who shout the loudest and most often.

When should my employees get involved?

- You can engage your employees to act at any point in the legislative process and ICBA will keep you informed as to when there is an urgent need for action. Creating a culture of advocacy among your employees will lead to your bank developing a solid relationship with your lawmaker. Speak regularly with your staff about the importance of advocacy so your employees are ready to engage their lawmakers and staff when the opportunity strikes. ICBA has resources to help foster this discussion with your employees – check www.icba.org/beheard frequently for the latest action items.

What about my bank directors? Should I involve them in the legislative process?

- Your bank directors are an invaluable asset to push a legislative priority over the top. As prominent community leaders, your bank directors are likely to have their own relationships and personal connections with lawmakers. Recognizing and cultivating these relationships will help amplify the community banking voice. Leveraging the relationships of your bank directors helps to further demonstrate the critical role of community banks in the lawmaker's district.

How do I go about engaging my employees and bank directors?

- ICBA Advocacy staff is here to help. When meaningful opportunities to act arise, we will reach out to you directly with resources and tools to engage your staff and directors. These include Calls to Action and social media campaigns, among others.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please reach out to Joshua Habursky, Director of Advocacy, at (202) 821-4355 or joshua.habursky@icba.org.