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Advancing Mission During the August Recess, Part 2

Nonprofit advocacy days, whether on Capitol Hill or at State Houses, create the opportunity for nonprofit leaders to meet with elected officials and staff to share the stories from their communities and the legislative solutions to champion. As the expert on your organization's mission and impact, nonprofit people can share with elected officials the news on what is happening at the local level and provide testimonials from your staff, members, clients, and partners. This helps build relationships and makes it more likely for the officials to support your policy priorities.

Making It Local

In a [Lobby Day reflection](#), GP McLeer of **Together SC** made the case that “it’s the local touch that makes the issues more than just a handout. Local impact stories help illustrate how policy impacts the real world. Knowledge of the policy framework and political landscape helps you connect the issue to realistic actions you can request of your elected officials. DC offices can feel isolated from Main Street, and it’s our job to help our elected officials understand the impact back home.”

Making It Happen

Advocacy doesn't start and end during a meeting at the Capitol with elected officials and staff. If you haven't been able to connect with your representatives and senators in their offices, now is the time. Elected officials are in their districts and states for the August recess and nonprofits have several options to create opportunities to show them the impact they have on their communities. Several organizations have released materials to make outreach and advocacy more accessible.

- For example, **Meals on Wheels** is promoting a [Summer Recess Rush](#) to invite as many representatives as possible to visit their local program and discuss topics like funding for Fiscal Year 2025 and the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. A template invitation was provided and information on connecting with the Meals on Wheels advocacy office.
- The **National Low Income Housing Coalition's** (NLIHC) [August Recess resource page](#) includes their [Capitol Hill Day Advocacy Toolkit](#) that provides proposed talking points and other templates on the organization's top policy priorities. NLIHC suggests that advocates email or call their offices and share stories about people "directly impacted by homelessness and housing instability," noting that the stories add "emotional weight to your message" and can sway elected officials' decisions.

Only a few weeks remain to make sure your elected officials hear about your impact and the challenges you and your communities are facing. Now is the time, when they are home and somewhat relaxed, to build relationships you need to advance your mission. Also read [Advancing Mission During the August Recess, Part 1](#), Advocacy in Action, *Nonprofit Champion*, July 29, 2024.