



# Chapter Event

## **Advocacy 101**

### Facilitator Guide

#### Materials Needed

- Two chairs placed on opposite sides of the room (these represent a D.C. office and home district office for a member of Congress)
- 8-10 volunteers
- 8-10 pieces of paper (one for each volunteer)
- Hot topic or issue being discussed in Congress or other regulatory agency that is important to higher education human resources (FLSA overtime, DACA, etc.)

#### Cast:

- A Member of Congress (MOC) — consider using one of your state's U.S. Senators or Representatives
- Higher Ed HR Advocates in D.C.
  - Josh Ulman, Chief Government Relations Officer for CUPA-HR
  - A reporter with *The Chronicle of Higher Education*
  - One or two higher ed HR and public policy representatives from large universities in the MOC's district, who are in D.C. to advocate on behalf of higher ed.
    - For example, if you're using a Pennsylvania member of congress in your exercise, use Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education and Pennsylvania State University as your higher ed representatives; or if you're using a Tennessee member of congress, consider including Vanderbilt University or University of Tennessee-Knoxville as your higher ed representatives
- Home District Stakeholders
  - CHRO from a large institution or system office in member of Congress' state
  - President from a large institution in the member of Congress' state
  - Local reporters from large news agencies



## Event Activity

### Share the Following Introduction

#### [SLIDE 2]

CUPA-HR has identified four strategic priorities that drive its work and align with its values and ethics.

One strategic priority is to proactively influence legislative and regulatory issues that impact human resources, higher education and the higher education workforce.

#### [SLIDE 3]

CUPA-HR receives support and guidance for this strategic priority from its government relations team and the public policy committee.

The public policy committee supports this priority by:

- Identifying key legislative and regulatory issues, primarily at the federal level, and help higher ed institutions address them proactively;
- Advising CUPA-HR on the development of its policy positions and advocacy efforts on behalf of institutions of higher ed; and
- Ensuring our members have access to timely legislative and regulatory updates and requirements.

#### [SLIDE 4]

CUPA-HR also frequently partners with other higher education and HR management associations to advocate on legislative and compliance issues that impact the higher ed workplace.

You may be wondering “How does this affect me?” or “How can I support CUPA-HR’s efforts?”

I’m going to answer those questions, but let’s start by outlining how an advocacy campaign works.

#### [SLIDE 5]

Before we begin, I need some volunteers!

*(After you have selected the volunteers and assigned their roles, instruct the D.C. people to stand near the chair that represents D.C. and the home district people to stand near the chair that represents your home district.)*



## Begin the Activity

Our member of Congress is hard at work at his or her office in Washington, D.C., when Josh Ulman, CUPA-HR's chief government relations officer visits to discuss [*insert the topic or issue you have identified*].

*(Instruct the CUPA-HR person to circle the chair.)*

The member of Congress responds that he or she would like to help but has not heard much about this issue. Josh realizes he'll need help to inform [*insert name of Congress person*] about this issue.

*(Instruct the attendee playing the part of Josh Ulman to step back and join the other D.C. people.)*

Josh Ulman then engages his colleagues in Washington, D.C., who will be impacted by the identified issue and asks for their help sharing the important issue with the member of Congress.

*(Instruct all D.C. representatives to circle the member of Congress and chant "Fix it!")*

The member of Congress decides to take a break from the hectic nature of Washington, D.C., by visiting his or her home district.

It's important for CUPA-HR to keep the issue at the forefront of the Congressperson's mind, so Josh Ulman contacts the people in the Congressperson's home district who will be impacted by the identified issue and asks for their help.

*(Instruct the attendee playing the part of the member of Congress to sit in the home district chair and ask the home district representatives to circle his or her chair and chant "Fix it!")*

*(Instruct the attendee playing the part of the member of Congress to head back to the chair representing Washington, D.C.)*

The member of Congress is now back in Washington, D.C., and our D.C. and home district representatives are now CUPA-HR members who have been asked by CUPA-HR to support this advocacy effort by participating in a letter-writing campaign.

*(Instruct the MOC to sit in the chair representing D.C. and ask everyone else to take a piece of paper and start walking in a circle around the member of Congress while chanting "Fix it!")*

Of course, the CUPA-HR members have complied with the request to contact the MOC and are emailing and mailing letters to the MOC regarding the issue and asking for the MOC's help.



*(Instruct everyone to crumple their pieces of paper and lightly toss them at the member of congress.)*

Because of the continued attention, information and letter writing campaign, the member of Congress realizes how important the issue is for higher education and decides to research the issue and identify a solution.

*(Instruct everyone to return to their seats and thank them for volunteering.)*

## Conclude the Presentation

I hope this demonstration has illustrated how important it is to alert our members of congress to the issues that will impact our campuses.

Advocacy and public policy issues are not just the concern of the president or CHRO.

While public policy issues can seem far away from the frontline HR professional, the opposite is true. Each of us can play a vital role in the public policy arena.

### [SLIDE 6]

Now that you understand how advocacy happens on your behalf, let's talk about how you can become a public policy advocate.

- **Talk with your HR peers.** Explore where they are advocating on campus and beyond. Who are their contacts? What policy issues have they engaged in?
- **If you're the CHRO, build a relationship with your Government Affairs office on campus.** Start with just a quick hello or phone call. Keep them up to date on what's happening in labor policy that impacts the bottom line and large areas of campus. They often don't have time to keep up on HR and the issues we face, so send them a quick email each quarter about what is going on. Ask them to do the same for you.
- **If you're the CHRO, share CUPA-HR emails with your chancellors and provosts.** Forward the whole email or just the portions you need to help your leaders understand the issue.
- **Regardless of your position, periodically review the Advocacy Section of the CUPA-HR website** to find out what CUPA-HR is doing to support higher ed issues in D.C. There you'll find links to recent blog posts and email alerts related to public policy issues that are important to higher education and higher ed human resources.
- **If you're not the CHRO,** talk with your CHRO about the issues on which your department is focused. Share information that you've researched from CUPA-HR and other sources, and talk about how you see those issues impacting the areas on which you work.



**[SLIDE 7]**

On the state level, your state legislature's website is a great place to begin. Use it to:

- **Find out which bills** your local senators and representatives sponsor and support,
- **Find out which legislators** serve on higher ed or personnel/employment committees in your state,
- **Look for bills** in those committees that interest you, and
- **Keep informed about local laws that may impact your work.** Living wage ordinances, paid sick leave requirements, and other locally mandated employee rights can be a challenge to the local HR professional. If your municipality has open hearings on a subject that could impact your employees, make sure to attend and share your perspective as a community member.

Some states offer bill tracking on their legislative websites. You can find a list at the URL on your screen (or just do a search for "legislative bill tracking").

*[Conclude and thank participants.]*