

Understanding the Issues and Becoming a Change Agent



**Presented by: Lisa Elijah &
Julie Howell**



Welcome & Webinar Process

- Today's webinar will be recorded and available for viewing on PVA.org
- Closed Captioning is available. Click the CC button in the meeting controls bar at the bottom of your screen to turn it on.
- If you have a question, please type it in the Q&A box. Questions will be answered at the end of the program



Introductions

- Lisa Elijah – Grassroots Advocacy Manager, Air Force Veteran, PVA member
- Julie Howell – Associate Legislative Director, Army Veteran





Series Overview

- **The 5 W's & an H–**
 - Fundamentals of Government
 - The Legislative Process
 - **Understanding the Issues & Becoming a Change Agent**
 - Who is Advocating & Who With
 - The Art of Advocacy



As a reminder: Last Time

- The Legislative Process
 - Origins and Creation of a Bill
 - House & Senate
 - Committees
 - Presidential Action
- Budget
 - Appropriations and Authorizations



Advocacy!

- The pursuit of influencing outcomes, including public-policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions that directly affect people's lives.
- Handing over to Lisa to start our conversation about advocacy



Conceptual Framework of Advocacy

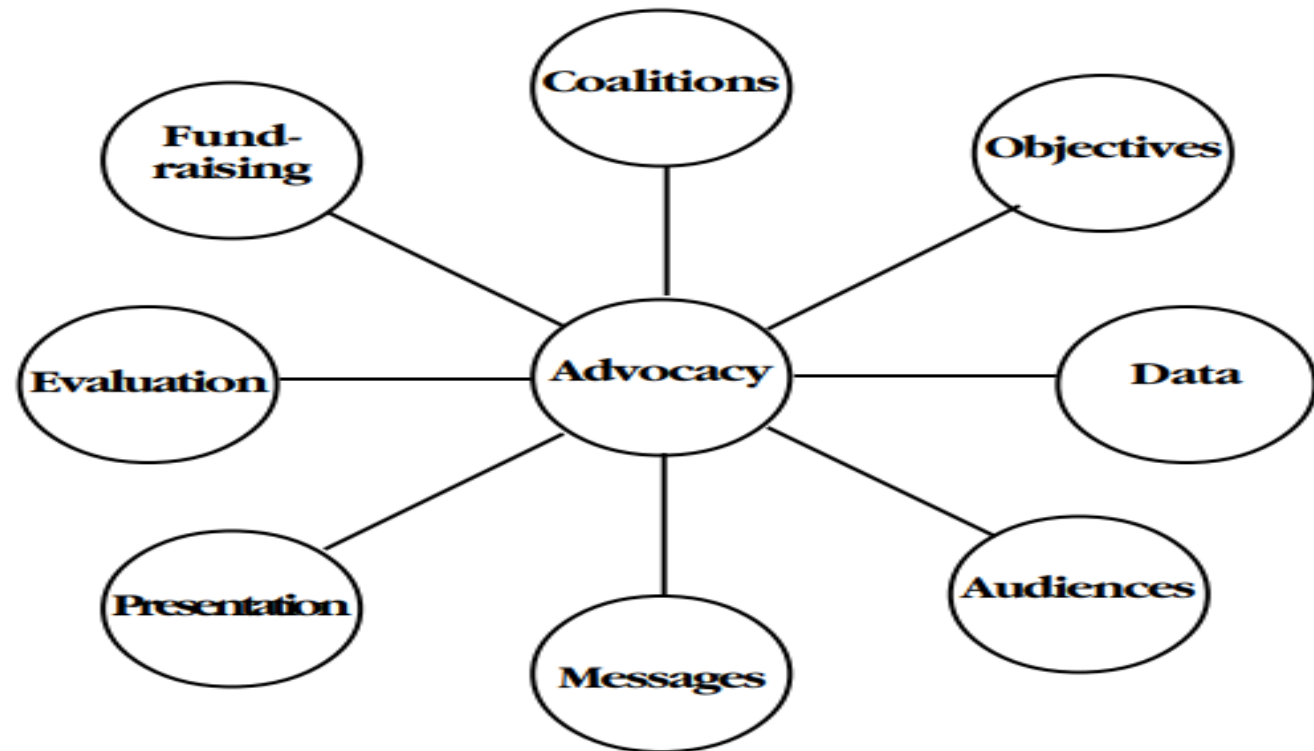
- What is Advocacy?
- What is a Change Maker?



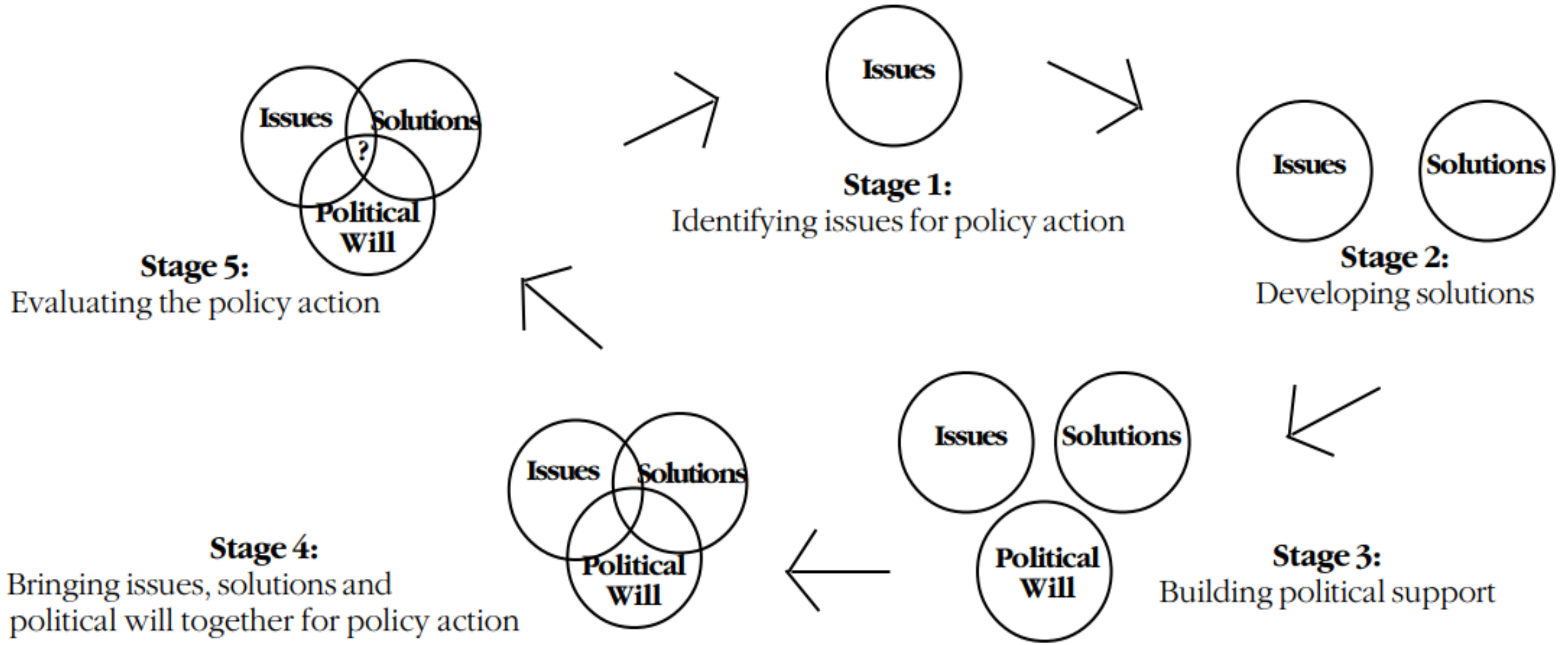
Basic Elements of Advocacy

- Objectives
- Data
- Audiences
- Messages
- Presentation
- Evaluation
- Fundraising
- Coalitions

The Basic Elements of Advocacy



The Dynamic Advocacy Process





Stage 1: Identify Policy Issues for Policy Action

- Agenda setting
 - Unlimited number of problems which need attention, not all get action
 - Advocates decide which to address
 - Stories
 - Surveys



Stage 2: Developing Solutions

- Advocates and key actors propose solutions to problem
 - Some compromises may need to be made
- Create a strategy
 - Build a network/coalition



Developing Your Messages

- What is an effective message?
What, why, & how
- 5-Key Elements
 - Content or Ideas
 - Language
 - Source &/or Messenger
 - Format
 - Time & Place



Three Tips for Message Development & Delivery

- Deliver a consistent message to your audiences through a variety of channels over an extended period of time
- Make sure your message is being delivered by credible advocates that show your authenticity
- Create a message that is easy to understand and will resonate with audiences



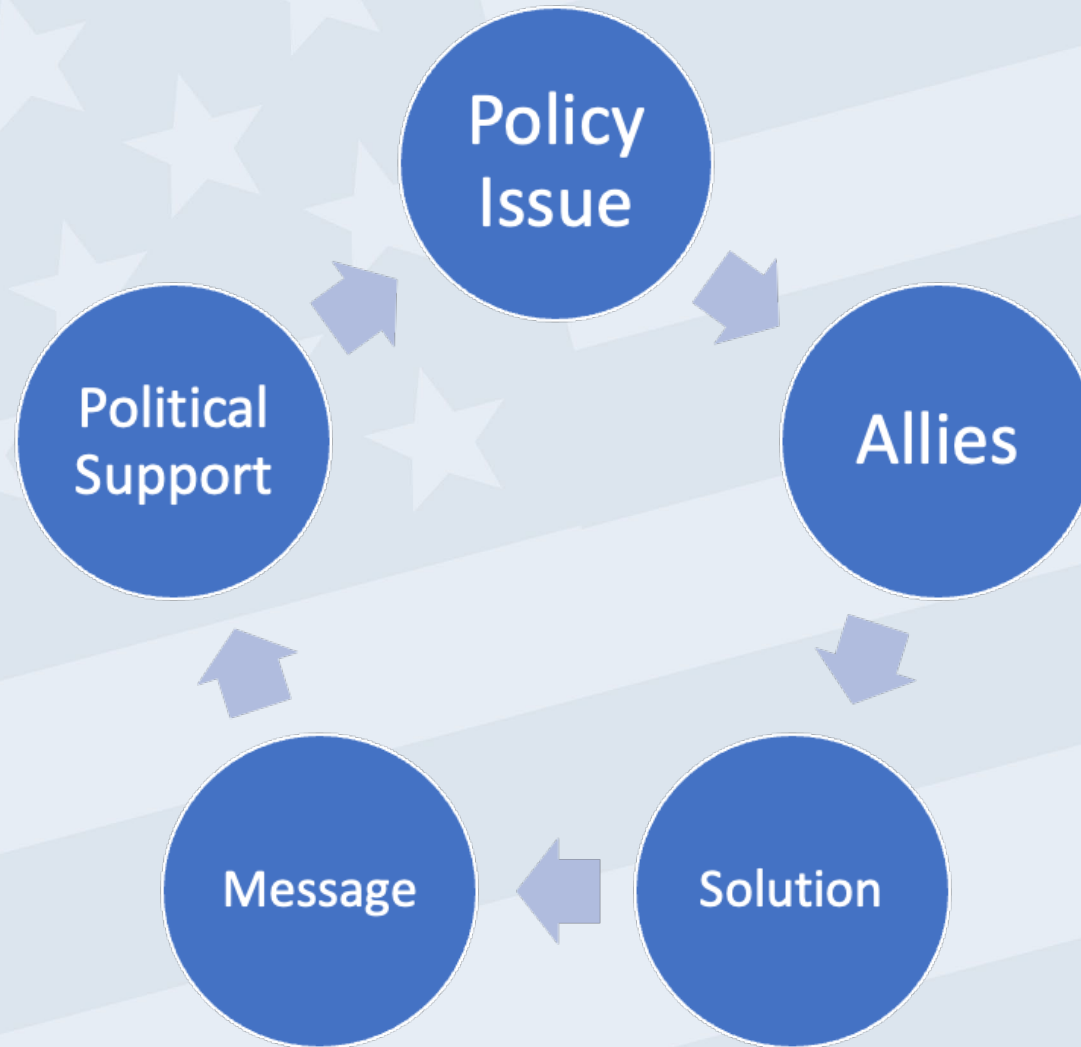


Stage 3: Building Political Support

- Political support is the centerpiece of advocacy
 - One of the more difficult pieces of the advocacy fight
 - Lots of research – data and research are critical
- Think of a fantasy football team
 - You pick your champions – who makes the most sense
 - What alliances will have the biggest reward
 - Who would be the best messenger



Stage 4: Connect the Dots



Stage 5: Evaluating the Policy Action

REMEMBER:

- Adaptability
 - Creativity
 - Persistence
-
- Assess the effectiveness of past efforts
 - Set new goals based on experience



Levels of Advocacy

- Local, State, National
- Reach out to Chapters – each Chapter has a government relations lead
- Other Chapters may have already had similar fights
- Nothing gets accomplished alone – work with your Chapter
- If it's a national issue, reach out to PVA National GVR reps or the Chapter, review the policy priorities to see if we're already paying attention to the issues
- Maybe you're already a member of another org (VFW/DAV). If so, maybe there's a chance to reach out to different communities that might be focused on different issues of importance to veterans





Q&A

We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Again, this was just an overview of certain aspects of the Government





Webinar Code

- For participants viewing the recording that would like credit for session one, please email the code 3A3CA to Lisa Elijah at lisae@pva.org
- Join us next time on Tuesday, July 25th @ 3pm
 - We will cover: Who is Advocating and Who With

