

A woman with blonde hair is shouting and holding a sign that says "STOP REPEAL" and "#CARENOTCHAOS". She is surrounded by other people at a protest, some holding similar signs. The background is slightly blurred, showing more protesters and signs.

# Choosing Advocacy Tactics

# Goals for this session

- 1 Understand what an issue ecosystem is and how it drives an issue campaign
- 2 Be able to identify what kind of actions motivate elected officials to take certain stances on issues
- 3 Feel confident choosing effective tactics to encourage elected officials to take the action you want to see

# Agenda for this session

## Issue Ecosystem 101

Persuading Elected Officials

Choosing Effective Tactics

Debrief

# An issue ecosystem is the environment surrounding a decision maker.





## Our goal:

To create the conditions for decision makers to take action on the issue we care about.

# Conditions for a healthy issue Ecosystem



**Variety of  
tactics**

**Variety of  
voices**

**Appealing  
messages**



## **Variety of tactics**

Using multiple tactics—press, digital, and in-person—ensures that your message is heard by the decision maker and shows him or her that people who care about your issue are everywhere. Tactics that are strategically spaced on a calendar keep the issue popping on the decision maker’s radar.



## **Variety of voices**

Multiple groups working on an issue shows more support for that issue and each organization contributes its unique voice to the conversation on the issue.



## **Appealing Messages**

All decision makers are motivated by something. It is the job of you and your partner organizations to figure out what that motivation is and how to appeal to it.

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**We need elected officials  
to vote our way.**

**We need elected officials  
to vote our way.**

**What motivates them?**



# Meet State Senator David Mendez

**Moderate**

**No previous public statements**

**Pro-business**

**Positive, mainstream image in the state**

**Represents high share of independents**



# Letters to the Editor

*“Marriage equality will put our state on the right side of history”*



# Calls to the office regarding marriage equality

*184 support  
61 against*



# Social media

*Flooded Facebook with  
comments*

*56 @mentions on twitter*

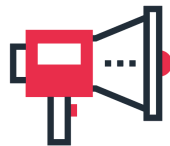
*187 emails*





# Rallies outside of office

*Message: “we want equality!  
It’s good for the economy!”*



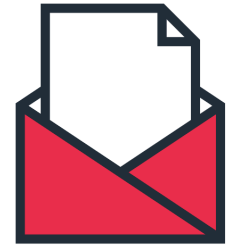
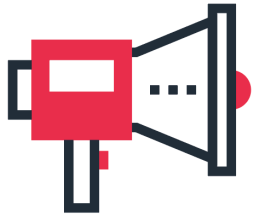
# Earned media events

“Passing marriage equality will bring jobs to our state and help my business, so I hope State Senator Mendez supports it”

-Small Business Owner



# We put issues on elected leaders' radar.



**One tactic alone  
does not persuade  
a decision maker.**



**It takes a combination  
of strategically-planned  
tactics to ensure your  
message is heard.**

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# Communicating with an elected official



**Press**

**Online**

**Directly**

# Influencing Sen. Mendez

**Moderate**

**No previous public  
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independents**

**If you were hosting an Earned Media event to convince State Sen. Mendez to support this issue, what would it look like?  
How would it attract the press?  
How would it persuade him?**

*Note: for this example, you cannot host the event anywhere he can see it in person.*

# Influencing Sen. Mendez

**Moderate**

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independents**

**Now imagine I can't see your  
event in person, and there is no  
news outlet anywhere near you,  
so you can't gain my attention  
via earned media.**

**What is your event like?**

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# Debrief

**What was your biggest “aha” moment?**

**Why do you think this is important?**

**What is the next thing you’d like to do as part of an issue ecosystem?**

# Goals

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# Key takeaways

**An issue ecosystem is the slice of reality surrounding an elected official and must persuade him/her to take a stance on the issue**

**An effective action appeals to an elected official's motivations, either through the press, online, or directly**

**We have prepared action toolkits for you that walk you through how to be effective action takers. Find them at [bit.ly/ActionToolkits](https://bit.ly/ActionToolkits)**