



The SPF industry needs champion advocates like you. We want contractors, suppliers and consultants around the USA to stand up for policies in your state and in your communities. Whether you are an industry leader or just getting started in the SPF industry, you can raise your voice to control policies impacting your business.

Be a Successful SPF Advocate

[The SPFAdvocacy Network](#) has been created to raise awareness among elected officials and regulators about how public policies impact contractors, suppliers and other supporters of the spray polyurethane foam (SPF) industry. These policies can include a variety of topics such as energy efficiency, infrastructure, safety, chemical regulations, taxation and general operations – all of which will impact you, your family and your business.

SPFA provides SPFAdvocacy Network members the skills and tools to be effective advocates and to develop and strategically leverage thought leaders for the built environment. Learn how to become an influential SPF advocate by following this guide.

Follow these 12 simple recommendations to increase your effectiveness as a leading advocate for our industry:

1. Tell Your Personal Story



The key component of every tactic in this advocacy guide is the personal story. Personal stories are so powerful with policy makers. One of the priorities of most elected representatives is to keep in touch with their constituents. A substantial amount of time and resources is set aside to meet with residents from their district or state.

The most influential meetings are those where the constituent shares a personal story and explains why the support or opposition to a proposed bill will make a difference to them. These stories are likely to be remembered by legislators far longer than any set of facts and figures.

Your story connects the dots for policymakers: how a bill hurts or helps a resident, and what the practical impact of the bill is for constituents in that district. The more time an advocate spends thinking through their story and how to deliver it, the more effective it will be when the story is shared as part of an event or conversation.

2. Develop Compelling Videos



Capturing video testimonials is now a common practice by advocates - and very effective.

The most common videos from contractors and suppliers include testimonials, impacts of a particular issue, explanation or procedural/how to. Recorded video messages that highlight the successes and challenges of your daily operations can provide focus on why a particular bill could hurt or help. These videos can be sent to lawmakers or shared on social media.

A virtual job site visit is a great alternative to a job site visit by a legislator or staff member. A first-person video can provide a different perspective for virtual visitors. They can provide policymakers with context by putting them 'in your shoes'.

Remember: Keep it short and simple. Videos should be clear enough that the content is quickly understandable.

3. Sign-Up to Receive SPFAvocacy Alerts



Staying up to date on important policy and regulatory actions in your state capital and Washington, DC is easy. Sign up for SPFAvocacy Alerts and you will receive email notifications of legislative activity related to your industry in your state or federally. Your voice, combined with thousands SPF industry members across the country, is needed to support our issues.

4. Find Your Legislators



There are multiple resources available to find your elected officials at each level of government. For members of the US Congress, visit www.house.gov or www.senate.gov. For state legislators, www.openstates.org/find_your_legislator is useful as well. Be sure to enter your complete address to be sure these websites find your lawmakers.

For issues that directly impact the SPF industry, the SPFAvocacy Network provides an easy means to email or call your elected officials. Watch for these on our [SPFAvocacy Alert](#) page or from email notices.

5. Send Personalized Emails



Emails are one of the most effective and efficient means to contact elected officials. As a voting constituent, you carry a lot of power with your elected officials — **remember, they work for you.**

With most of our SPFAvocacy Alerts, you'll find pre-written letters to your legislators that you can personalize with your own thoughts or simply push "send" and the email will be sent to your elected official. Many legislative staffers believe a personalized letter is more influential than a pre-written form letter because it shows the constituent took the time to tell their story.

While SPFA's pre-written letters will address the fundamental issue, here are some more tips on personalizing an email for your legislators:

- **Begin by introducing yourself as a constituent and a member of the SPFAvocacy Network. Remember that legislators and their staff won't accept letters or emails from people outside their district.**
- **Make "The Request" up front and personal. In the opening paragraph, specify what action you want taken and please refer to bills by name or number. Legislators and their staff are responsible for hundreds of bills and can't know what you want them to do unless you specifically tell them.**
- **Briefly share your story about how your legislator's actions will directly impact your community, your job, you and your family.**
- **Limit the length of your email to 100 words or less.**



6. Interact on Social Media

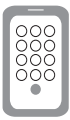


Over the past decade, social media has drastically changed the communications between constituents and elected officials. Legislators now focus their energy and attention to Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and blogs to be quickly and cost-effectively accessible to those they represent.

We encourage you to use social media to talk about SPFA's policy priorities and use your pictures and stories to really highlight the issue. You can also use social media to:

- 'Follow' lawmakers to know what they are saying about particular bills.
- Communicate with them as needed.
- Let your personal and professional networks know where you stand on critical issues and encourage them to act.

7. Use the Phone



The opportunity to influence legislation when Congress or a state legislature is in-session can be very short. A personal phone call to your legislator's office is always an effective and timely advocacy tool.

When calling your legislator's office:

1. Provide your name and address so you are recognized as a constituent. Also, identify yourself as a SPFA Advocacy Network member.
2. Identify the bill or issue you are calling about by its name and/or number if you have it.
3. Briefly state how you would like your legislator to vote.

It is important to keep your phone calls quick and simple since most staff receive a high volume of communication from constituents.

Here's an example of a good introduction/90-second speech:

"Hi, I'm John Smith. I am a constituent who lives at 12345 Main Street, Springfield and a SPFA Advocacy Network member. I am calling to ask you to vote yes on H.R. 1234 and support ____ programs. My phone number is 555-555-5555 if you have any questions. Thank you for your time today."

If you have more time or need to relay a detailed position, follow these steps:

1. Ask to speak to the staff member who handles the issue; this staffer will relay your comments and concerns to the legislator.
2. Ask for your legislator's stance on the bill or issue and for a commitment to vote for your position. Remember to make "the ask."
3. Don't guess at answers to questions. If the elected official's staff requests information you don't have, tell them you will gladly follow-up with requested information.

The SPFA Advocacy Network will be rolling out a program to help streamline the process of calling your elected representatives.

8. Visit Your Legislators



Visiting your legislators is by far the most effective means of delivering your message.

Most Congressional staffers state that an in-person visit carries the most weight in terms of conveying a constituent message.

Building a positive face-to-face relationship requires planning. If you would like to visit your legislator, you may want to consider contacting SPFA to ensure that your efforts and messages are coordinated.

Please note that legislators have busy schedules and rely on their staff to manage meetings with constituents. An effective meeting with the right staff member is often just as influential as a meeting with the legislator.

Here's an example of a good introduction/90-second speech:

"Hi, I'm John Smith. I am a constituent of yours, and I am here to talk with you about ____ programs. I am asking you to vote yes on H.R. 1234, which ensures ____ . Here's a sheet with some more information. My phone number and email address are included if you have any questions. Thank you for your time today."

After your visit:

Always follow-up with a thank-you letter or email and include any information that was requested by the legislator or staff. This will grow your relationship and leave a positive lasting impression with the legislator's staff.

SPFA partners with other insulation and roofing trade associations to coordinate DC Fly-Ins to discuss relevant issues with key members of the US Congress. These typically take place in the spring of the year. Watch for notices about these DC Fly-In days on our advocacy news page and calendar.



9. Attend In-District Meetings and Events



Meetings with your elected officials provide an opportunity for you to discuss the work you do and how the issues they are working on impact your local community. You are their constituent.

Legislators come home regularly to their districts/states. During these, they often hold events and meeting with constituents, often in the form of ‘town hall’ style meetings. These types of meetings are less frequent and impactful that they were in the pasts, as they have been replaced electronic communication and social media.

If you do interact with a legislator at an event, it is important to be prepared. Be sure to provide your story on the key issue and “ask” the legislator for their position. We urge you to look for opportunities for smaller meetings with your legislator.

10. Engage in Regulatory Issues



Regulatory advocacy is becoming more important. The SPF industry is affected by the increasing number of regulatory proposals at the state and federal levels.

Regulations can have a longer and more direct impact on your business and life.

What is driving the regulatory agenda in our industry? It is shifting toward the environmental, natural resource, social and economic aspects of construction and away from the traditional, public discussion centering on energy efficiency.

Therefore, when the public comment is open, advocates need to submit their comments to the public docket. Successful advocates need to make sure regulators know their position on key issues. Regulators need to know the impact and effect of regulations on your business.

Many times, regulators want numbers of identical comments to show broad support. This can be in the form of letters, postcards or petitions.

Finally, it is important to remember the regulation process is never-ending! Regulatory advocacy is a marathon — an ultra-marathon! As soon as a new administration enters office, they will try to “clarify” or undo what the previous administration proposed and/or finalized. In the area of regulatory advocacy, it is common to fight the same issue for many decades.

11. Media Advocacy



Construction, infrastructure and energy efficiency issues are a hot topic these days. You know the old adage, if you don’t tell your story, someone else will do it for you. And so often, those eager to tell our story have biases against how we do our jobs and what materials we use.

There are few opportunities to reach a wider audience than through the media outlets. So it’s important that when we get the chance, we have members who are willing and able to represent what they do and why they do it when the media calls.

Want to find a way to amplify your message? Interact with the media. Here are some tips to make the media interview a success.

INTERVIEW TIPS:

- Determine your interview goal.
- Stay focused on your key message(s), and repeat them frequently.
- Think and speak in terms of headlines, followed by the story.
- Block and bridge to refocus the interview or address difficult questions.
- Keep answers brief.
- Say only what you want to say, then stop.
- Avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Remember who your audience is.
- Never go “off the record.”
- Meet media deadlines.

WHEN THE MEDIA CALLS: QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- What is the reporter’s name and media affiliation (radio, TV, newspaper, magazine, website)?
- What are the reporter’s phone number and contact information?
- What is the topic of the interview?
- What is the story’s objective or angle?
- Who is the primary audience?
- Am I the appropriate person for this story?
- Who else will be interviewed for this story?
- What are the date and time of the interview?
- What are the format and length of the interview?
- What is the anticipated date of airing or publication?
- Are there any additional information needs?
- Who else should be notified of this media opportunity?



12. Year-Round Advocacy



Continuous year-round advocating efforts at home make all the difference on Capitol Hill. Advocacy shouldn't be something that only takes place in Washington, D.C. Partner with SPFA to try some of the following ideas throughout the coming year. The activities and times are suggestions, as many can occur at the same time or at various times of the year.

JANUARY

ACTIVITY:

Welcome Back Congress & Learn About New Legislators

ACTION:

It's time to reconnect with your elected officials or introduce yourself to the new members of Congress. The offices may have new staff and they need to know who you are. Knowing the staff members means you have a direct line to the lawmaker. Ask how they want to receive communications SPF Industry members – email, phone or personal visit?

FEBRUARY

ACTIVITY:

Advocate Recruitment

ACTION:

Thank your existing group of advocates and tell them about any success story. Keep them active and ask them to join your social media efforts. Plan to recruit new members through a key contact program.

MARCH

ACTIVITY:

Social Media Outreach

ACTION:

Comment on a news article critical to energy efficiency and infrastructure or each day share posts within your network. Find a way to share story about your business. Urge readers to contact their representatives and ask for their support on policy/legislation. Bring awareness on policy issues to contractors in your area.

YEAR-ROUND ACTIVITIES:

- **Recruit, recruit, recruit.** Urge friends, SPF industry members and others in your community to get involved. Urge them to join your state's advocacy program.
- **Take Action.** Take action online via alerts sent by SPFA.
- **Make phone calls.** A phone call may be the most effective alternative to in-person meetings with elected officials. It never hurts to call a local office with new information or to urge action on a bill.
- **Media Messaging.** Radio? TV? Blogs? Newspapers? Social networks? Each can help you get the word out. Whether Share information with legislators on Twitter and Facebook or find mutual connections on Linked-In. Monitor legislator activities for insights into their interests and actions, then communicate with them directly.

APRIL

ACTIVITY:

In-District Meetings & Local Events

ACTION:

Attend or host a local event for legislators who will be in the state and district. Now is a great time to make plans to attend. Remember to engage the policymaker before, during and after the event via their social media profile(s) and in-person at the event.

MAY

ACTIVITY:

Advocate Recruitment

ACTION:

Thank your existing group of advocates and tell them about any success story. Keep them active and ask them to join your social media efforts. Plan to recruit new members through a key contact program.

JUNE

ACTIVITY:

Media Outreach

ACTION:

Write a letter to the editor, an editorial, a blog entry for a local publication or a social media post. Find a way to share your ag story. Urge readers to contact their representatives and ask for their support on policy/legislation. Bring awareness on policy issues to contractors in your area.



JULY

ACTIVITY:

Member Recruitment & Local Events

ACTION:

Tie-in local events (builders shows for example) to a SPFA Advocacy Network membership drive! Let others know what SPFA achieves through advocacy, in the local community and how you have benefited from SPFA's leadership development programs.

Membership is personal. It is not a subscription. It is not a transaction. It is a relationship. Tell your story of membership to encourage others to join!

AUGUST

ACTIVITY:

Town Halls, Coffees with Congress & Candidate Events

ACTION:

In campaign years, many candidates and elected officials host town hall meetings and other community events. Attend an event and talk about SPFA's priority issues. Be sure to invite your friends. Elected officials and candidates are looking for endorsements and support from important organizations like SPFA.

SEPTEMBER

ACTIVITY:

Telephone Outreach

ACTION:

September is one the most productive months for Congress, so be sure to call your elected officials and share SPFA's positions on our key issues.

OCTOBER

ACTIVITY:

Policy Development

ACTION:

The key of SPFA Advocacy activities is the grassroots policy development process. Assist SPFA in developing policies.

NOVEMBER

ACTIVITY:

Social Media Outreach

ACTION:

Comment on a news article critical to our industry or each day share posts within your network. Find a way to share story about your operation. Urge readers to contact their representatives and ask for their support on policy/legislation. Bring awareness on policy issues to other contractors in your area.

Not on social media? Now is the time to sign-up for Facebook or Twitter. Follow or Friend SPFA, news outlets, celebrities and others.

DECEMBER

ACTIVITY:

Thank Your Legislators

ACTION:

Send emails to your legislators thanking them for the hard work they have done for you during the past year.

