

National Grange Guide to Grassroots Advocacy

For Granges and Grangers





What is the Grange?

OFFICIAL NAME:

National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry

ESTABLISHED: 1867**HEADQUARTERS:**

1616 H St. NW,
Suite 300,
Washington, DC, 20006

MISSION:

Strengthening individuals, families and communities through service, education, nonpartisan grassroots advocacy and agricultural awareness.

MOTTO:

"In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.

STRUCTURE:

The National Grange is a grassroots organization with local chapters, also called Granges, in roughly 1,400 communities and rural areas across the United States. Each local Grange sets their agenda for service, education, and outreach based on the needs of their community.

KEY PRIORITY ISSUES:

- Rural Broadband Expansion
- Farm Bill and Legislation Favorable for Agricultural Producers
- Quality Healthcare & Education

The Grange is a community-driven, nonpartisan organization where people come together to strengthen their local areas through service, learning, leadership, and connection to the land.

The Grange Is Grassroots Advocacy

We give members a voice, from town halls to Capitol Hill. Whether it's protecting farms or expanding rural broadband, Grangers help shape policy and stand up for rural communities.

The Grange Is Community Service

Grangers roll up their sleeves to support neighbors, organizing food drives, youth programs, and community events. We know our towns, and we work hard to make them better.

The Grange Is a Family

As a fraternal, family organization, the Grange offers more than membership; it builds lasting relationships. Through shared values and mutual support, members form strong bonds that strengthen both the organization and the communities we serve.

Join Us

Whether you work in agriculture or you're someone who cares about your local community, there's a place for you in the Grange. Come be part of something meaningful. Learn more: www.nationalgrange.org.

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FOREWORD

CHRISTINE E. HAMP

National Grange President



The National Grange has always stood on a simple but powerful belief: the people closest to a problem are most often the ones best equipped to solve it.

Our founders understood that rural Americans deserved a voice - not only within their own communities, but in the halls where decisions are made. Now, almost 160 years later, that mission has never been more important.

Advocacy is not reserved for elected officials, lobbyists, or policy experts. It belongs to every citizen willing to learn, engage, and speak on behalf of their neighbors. It begins with listening, grows through relationships, and succeeds because ordinary people choose to become involved.

The Grange has always been a grassroots organization. We believe that meaningful change starts around kitchen tables, in Grange halls, at county fairs, school board meetings, and town councils. It grows when local voices unite around a common purpose and reaches its greatest strength when communities speak with clarity, respect, and persistence.

This guide is designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you are contacting your local elected officials for the first time, testifying before a legislative committee, writing a resolution, or simply learning how government works, this guidebook provides practical tools to help you become a more effective advocate. It reflects our long-standing commitment to nonpartisan grassroots advocacy - working with anyone, regardless of political affiliation, who is willing to strengthen rural America and improve the lives of those we serve.

Our communities need thoughtful leaders, engaged citizens, and people willing to move beyond conversation and into action.

Thank you for answering that call.

Together, we can ensure that the voices of rural America continue to be heard - not only today, but for generations to come.



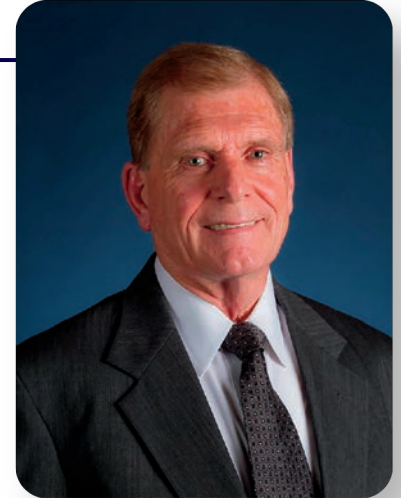
Burton Eller

*Government Affairs Director, National Grange
Executive Director, Grange Advocacy*

The history of the Grange is the history of advocacy. It began with the Grange advocating to bring the country back together around the future for agriculture. It worked. Local Grange chapters sprang up all around the rural landscape. Early Grange advocates took on the railroad barons and the shipping monopolies for agricultural commodities. A bit later, the Grange movement spearheaded the formation of Rural Free Delivery mail service to all rural residents, the cooperative movement that enables farmers to buy and sell in volume to create market leverage, the rural electric cooperatives, and the rural telephone service. The Grange was a leader in the Women's Suffrage Movement, which gave women the right to vote. These feats were all accomplished by Grange member advocacy and the power of a grassroots movement.

Grange members include farmers, ranchers, teachers, tradesmen, truckers, healthcare providers, small business owners, and others invested in rural and small-town America, where they create a sense of community and belonging. They were instrumental in the creation of farmers' markets, lobbied to get high-speed WiFi down the last mile of country road, and are working hard on affordable healthcare access for rural and small-town communities.

Today, the Grange enjoys the reputation as the trusted voice of rural America. We hope this Guide to Grassroots Advocacy will strengthen that reputation as we move forward in building a rural America that works for all who live and work there.



Leroy Watson

Chairman, Grange Advocacy Board of Directors



It is an honor and pleasure to present the National Grange *Grassroots Guide to Advocacy* to our Grange members and grassroots advocates across the United States. Your National Grange and its affiliated partners, such as the Grange Foundation and Grange Advocacy, are a vital force in preserving and expanding American democracy through supporting direct civic participation by Grange members in the political process.

The nonpartisan, issue-driven, collective and deliberative policy development program used by the Grange at all levels through our grassroots resolution process assures that every Grange member's voice is acknowledged and treated with respect. It is through this solid, disciplined foundation that the political influence of the National Grange, and our state and local Grange chapters, has been maintained for 160 years.

By following and utilizing these proven grassroots advocacy techniques, every Grange member can become an effective advocate for the issues affecting their community, their state, and our nation. As Grange members, we have the resolve to address our challenges just as effectively as early Grange members did. With this guide, we also have the tools and techniques that will make our direct civic participation effective and successful.

Understanding Your Government

Understanding the roles of different levels of government helps ensure advocacy efforts reach the right audience. The chart below outlines key responsibilities at each level, recognizing that some issues, such as agricultural policy, span multiple levels of government.

LOCAL

STATE

FEDERAL

City and/or County Level

Roads, Urban
Development,
Public Safety,
Schools

Elected Officials
(Not the Same in
Every Municipality);

- Mayor
- Sheriff
- School Board
- City Council
- Election
Officials

Statewide

Education,
Elections,
Licenses and
Vehicles, Health
Guidelines

Elected Officials:

- Governor
- Attorneys
General
- Legislators
- Treasurer/
Comptroller

Nationwide

National Defense,
International Trade,
Interstate
Regulations, Social
Services (Social
Security and
Medicaid)

Elected Officials:

- President
- Representatives
- Senators

QUICK GUIDE TO ADVOCACY

Be Patient

Change takes time, especially in politics. It may take years to see the impact you are looking for.

Who to contact:

- ***Representatives***
- ***Senators***
- ***Local Leaders***

Ways to make your voice heard:

- ***Email***
- ***Letters***
- ***Phone Calls***
- ***Social Media***

Be Consistent

It is important to be a reputable member of your community and that can only happen through showing up and speaking up whenever is necessary.

Be Passionate

Passion shows in the work you do. Pay attention to issues close to your heart and your community.



From Supporter to Advocate

Grassroots advocacy is how communities shape their future. This guide offers a pathway to effective advocacy, from the conception of an issue to its implementation. This guide is meant to emphasize that advocacy requires no title or experience, only a willingness to speak up.

For nearly 160 years, Grange members have strengthened their communities by turning local challenges into solutions. Whether the issue is agriculture, healthcare, broadband, education, or economic development, every policy victory starts with someone taking the first step.

Elected officials need to hear from the people they represent. Your personal experiences carry weight because they put a face on policies under debate. Good advocacy rests on building strong relationships. A quick email, town hall, or event invitation creates lasting connections beyond a single issue.

Meaningful change depends on teamwork. The greatest successes come when Grange members work together, partner with other groups, and encourage new advocates. Progress can be slow, but every meeting, letter, and conversation builds a stronger voice for rural America.

**Support is a passive verb;
advocate is an active verb.**

Supporting an issue means believing it matters. **Advocating** means taking action by showing up, telling your story, building relationships, and staying engaged.

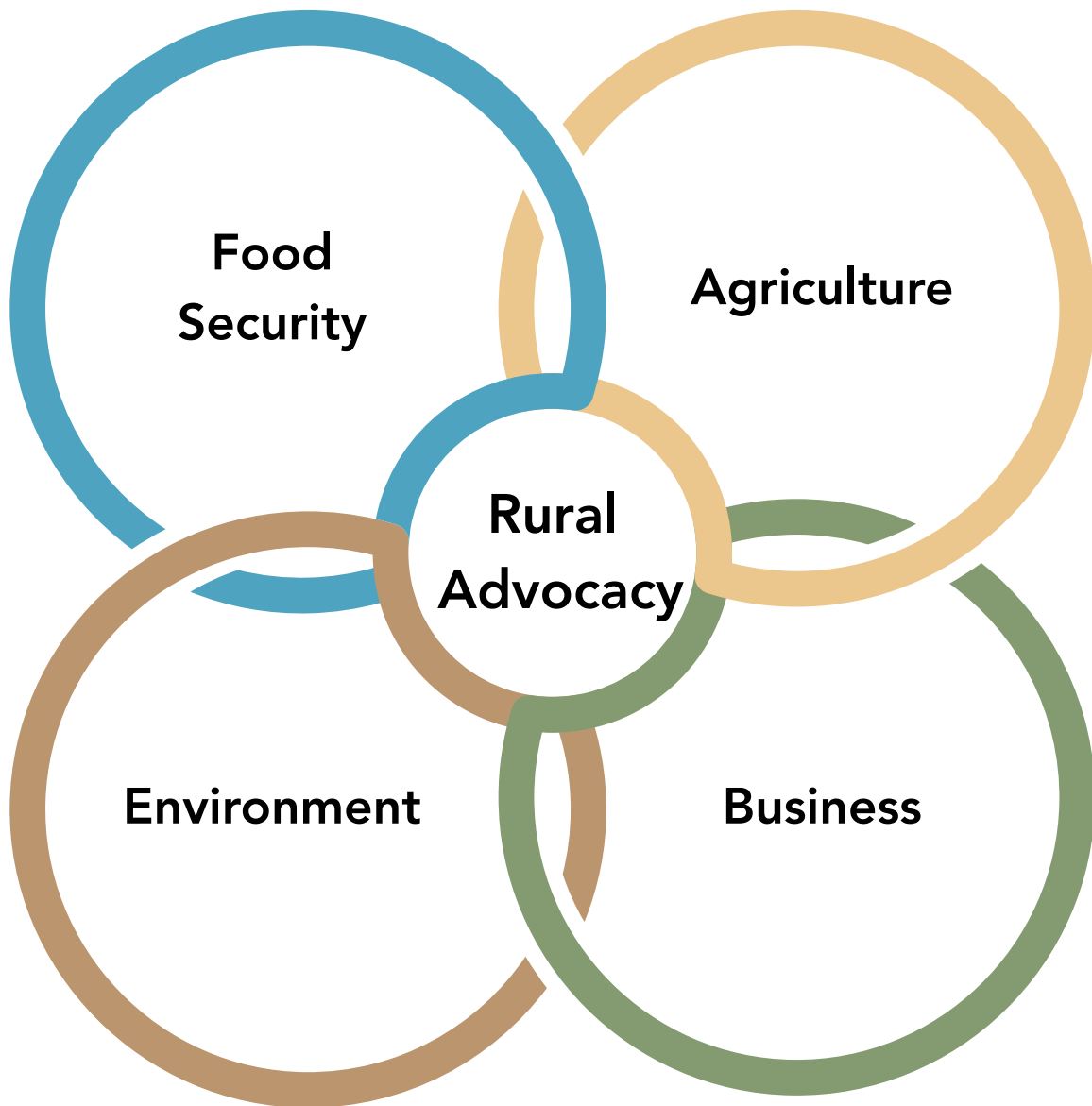
The National Grange has provided the tools. Its members have established the policies. Now the next chapter belongs to you.

Your voice matters. The future of rural America will be shaped not only in legislative chambers, but by citizens who choose to participate.

So ask questions. Build relationships. Tell your story. Stay engaged. Most importantly, don't just support the future of rural America; advocate for it.



Bipartisanship in a Partisan World



Bipartisanship and non-partisanship are essential elements of productive advocacy. Being able to discuss solutions with everyone affected, as well as everyone making decisions, is what allows for more representative legislation to be passed. Political parties are an element of policymaking, but they should not get in the way of work that benefits rural and agricultural America.

Keep in mind the importance of bi/non-partisanship in advocacy, and how it can be helpful in achieving policy goals.

What is Advocacy?

The word “advocacy” embodies a great deal. There is a lot to learn about the world of advocacy, but that does not mean it’s inaccessible; in fact, it is something *everyone* can participate in. There is no one way to be an advocate, and it may look different from person to person or issue to issue. The fundamentals, though, often remain the same. Being an advocate entails being a voice for yourself and others. and speaking up about an issue, whether it is directly relevant to you or not. Advocacy means fighting for change. This guide offers information on political advocacy, but that is not all that advocacy is; It is simply one part of it.

Be the Voice

Political advocacy requires communication with policymakers. This communication can range from school board members to U.S. Senators. Being a local voice is what makes up **grassroots advocacy**. Often, it is lobbyists and influential political figures who communicate with policymakers, especially at the federal level, but their representation of community issues is not the same as someone from that community speaking out.

Grassroots Advocacy

Public policy is complex, and it is vital that people most affected by that policy speak up when it matters.

Understanding how grassroots efforts shape legislation and influence decision-makers is essential for anyone seeking to make a meaningful impact on their community, industry, and country.

Why Your Voice Matters

Advocacy is also important because it helps ensure that public policy reflects the needs and priorities of those it is intended to serve. Legislators and government officials face countless and consistent demands on their attention. Without active engagement from citizens and organizations, important issues can be overlooked. Grassroots advocacy provides communities with a mechanism to elevate concerns, propose solutions, and demonstrate public support for specific policies to those with the ability to create change.



American Advocacy

Advocacy has consistently moved American policy forward. It is easy to understand advocacy in a vacuum, as something left to other people with more power, but that is not truly representative of what advocacy is and should be. Everyone can (and should) be an advocate for the issues important to them. Issues don't have to be advocated for only when they start to impact most of the nation; in fact, "smaller" issues can be where the most change actually occurs.

The work done in small communities can impact the rest of the nation through thoughtful advocacy done by everyday people. Advocacy is not simple; it takes time and involvement. The world is busy, and that can make speaking up seem impossible, but Americans have been advocates for 250 years, through wars and depressions and unlivable working conditions. ***These conditions do not prohibit advocacy - they drive it.***

Being an advocate is not always easy, but it is necessary. Your Grange community is behind you to support the work essential to leaving this world better than you found it, for all generations onward.



Why Advocate?

The reality is, policy affects everyone, and as much as it may feel like the average person can do little to influence policy, that isn't always true. Your impact can be significant, especially at the local and community level. It is so important to have people willing to advocate, because without them, policymakers would only have a vague idea of what is really affecting their constituents.

Policymakers aren't able to have a thorough understanding of every issue facing Americans, which is why lobbyists, staffers, and advocates are essential to keeping them informed about the most pressing issues. Instead of allowing lobbyists and staffers to be the only people in the room, you can be there too.



At a time when many Americans feel disconnected from both one another and their government, advocacy can provide a pathway to greater involvement and stronger communities. Showing up, speaking out, and working together can be a powerful force for positive change.

So, why advocate? Because it's up to you to be the voice for yourself and your community and create the change you want to see in the world.

Figure 1

What Moves Congress?

When farmers, ranchers, and community advocates engage their representatives, these two tools open doors.

Congressional Management Foundation

91%

of congressional staffers cite **district-specific impact data** as highly helpful

79%

of congressional staffers say a **personal constituent story** is influential.



Building Community Through Advocacy

Loneliness in America

The United States is facing a growing loneliness among its citizens. This public health crisis is an important part of our discussion of advocacy, as community is a fundamental part of advocacy. Though advocacy may not be the only solution to the loneliness people are facing in the U.S., it can surely be one way to combat it.

The Role of Advocacy

So, what role can advocacy actually play in combating loneliness?

- Advocates often share common interests and goals. Sharing a common interest can be a great first step to building a relationship.
- Community advocacy is done by people in close proximity. Advocacy is a great way to not only get to know people in your immediate vicinity, but also throughout your state and the country.
- Advocacy can provide a physical space for people to meet! Often referred to as a “third space,” Grange halls, community centers, and libraries can all be places to meet outside of the home (first space) and school/work (second space) for advocacy planning.

Third Spaces

For some communities, finding a location to create a welcoming third space is difficult. Grange halls can be that physical space for many of those communities, and often already are.



Eagle Grange #1, PA

“Studies show that group membership and social networks strongly influence the decision to participate in the political process. Moreover, in a positive cycle, research suggests that greater civic engagement can lead to policies and programs that better reflect the will of a community’s residents, which in turn can promote continued and increased civic engagement.” - Dr. Vivek Murthy, US Surgeon General, "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation," 2023.

Where Members Can Make a Difference



Regulatory comments:

Influence how laws are implemented by providing feedback before regulations become final.

Agency rule making:

Ensure the practical impacts of proposed rules are considered by the agencies that write them.

County comprehensive plans:

Help shape future land use, development, and growth in your community.

Expansion plans (roads businesses, etc.):

Provide input on projects that can affect farmland, businesses, transportation, and local infrastructure.

School board policy:

Advocate for decisions that support agricultural education, local programs, and community priorities.

Public utility commissions:

Share how utility decisions may affect farms, businesses, and rural communities.

USDA listening sessions:

Give producers and stakeholders an opportunity to inform federal agricultural policies and programs.

Public hearings:

Offer firsthand perspectives that help decision-makers understand how proposed actions will affect the people they serve.



WHAT BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH ADVOCACY LOOKS LIKE

Local Level



Local advocacy focuses on issues that directly affect a community's daily life. This may include attending city council or county board meetings, working with school boards, partnering with local businesses, or advocating for infrastructure improvements, workforce development programs, or public safety initiatives. Local advocacy is often more accessible than state and federal advocacy because decision-makers are closer to the communities they serve.

State Level



State advocacy addresses broader policies that impact many communities. Advocates may work with state legislators or state agencies on issues such as education funding, healthcare access, transportation, agriculture, workforce development, or environmental regulations. At this level, policy briefs and coalition-building become especially important because proposed legislation often affects an entire state.

National Level



Federal advocacy involves national policies that shape programs and funding across the country. Advocates engage with members of Congress and federal agencies to address issues such as the Farm Bill, immigration policy, rural healthcare, broadband expansion, conservation programs, and national infrastructure investments. Effective federal advocacy relies on combining local stories with credible data to demonstrate how national policies affect communities on the ground.

Where to Start

Turning Concerns into Actions

For some people, advocacy can seem intimidating, but it doesn't have to be. This playbook will guide you through the most important parts of political advocacy and act as a foundational resource for those new to the advocacy world. Before jumping into emailing senators or showing up to town halls, it is important to understand what issues affect you and your community and how to best address them.

Step 1 - Identify the Issue

**Note: "Issue" does not always refer to a problem, but can be an idea or topic to be discussed.*

The best way to identify issues in your local community is to participate in it. Getting to know your neighbors, reading the local newspaper, and attending local events can all be ways to learn more about the issues that the people around you care about.

Learning about state-level issues can be easy, as long as you have access to a local news station. Local channels are a great way to find out what is happening across your state and region. If you have access to social media, it can also be a great way to see what is happening. Facebook often has regional groups where you can find out information, and other social media sites have accounts that focus on specific issues within your state.

Some good questions to ask about what affects your community are: *What industries drive the local economy? What concerns are residents discussing? Which issues are affecting businesses, families, schools, or local governments?*

Step 2 - Get to Know Your Political Region

Voting is an integral part of advocacy, so it is important to understand what that looks like for yourself.

Local - The breakdown of local political districts and municipalities can vary heavily. Some places have county mayors, city mayors, and elected judges; others do not. Most states and municipalities should have information on which offices are elected and which areas vote for those positions.

Terms to Search:

"Town name elections"

"County name election map"

"Region name elected officials"





State - Every state should have information available online about districts and policymakers. Some states even have apps that let you see who your officials are, check registration status, and access other pertinent information. It can be helpful to look at a district map to see what areas a policymaker represents to better understand who your co-constituents are.

Other than Nebraska, all U.S. states have a bicameral (two-chamber) legislature, similar to that of the federal legislature (U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate). State races are a great time to participate in town hall or speaking events in which those running meet with their constituents.

Federal - Federal districts are for the House of Representatives. The House of Representatives has elections every two years, including one in-between presidential election years. These are important elections to pay attention to because they influence what policies get signed into law by the president. Districts do not apply to the Senate, as the entire state is represented by two Senators and their elections are held every six years.

Step 3 - Create a Policy/Issue Outline

It can be incredibly helpful to have a structured outline of the policies and issues that are important to your cause; This can be written in a few different ways, with some ways being more formal than others. The idea is to create something that is accessible to you, your community, and the policymakers you are trying to reach. It can include things like:

Policy/Issue Name:

Typically a condensed version of the issue at hand.

Define the Issue

Articulate the problem clearly.

Identify the Importance

Describe the impact on individuals, businesses, organizations, or communities that the issue has.

Back it up With Numbers

Use data, research, and real-world examples to demonstrate the scope of the issue.

Next Steps

Provide a specific recommendation or policy solution that is achievable. ♦



One Ask: Make It Easy to Say Yes

When people care deeply about an issue, it's tempting to ask for every solution at one time. In advocacy, though, more asks don't create more action; they create confusion.

The most effective advocates focus on one clear ask in every conversation, email, social media post, or meeting. Your audience is more likely to listen to your goal if it is clear and precise.

Why “One Ask” Works

A single request:

- Gives your audience a clear next step.
- Increases the likelihood they'll take action.
- Makes your message easier to remember.
- Helps you measure whether your communication was successful.
- Think of your advocacy as a road sign, not a map. Point people toward one destination at a time.

Examples of Strong “One Asks”

- Vote YES (or NO) on H.R. XXXX
- Cosponsor S.B. XXX
- Visit our Grange and learn about local agriculture.
- Oppose this amendment.

Each example tells the audience exactly what action to take; nothing more, nothing less.

The One Ask Test

Before sending your message, ask yourself:

If someone only remembered one thing from this communication, would they know exactly what I want them to do?

If the answer is no, simplify.

Quick Tip:

Include your **“One Ask”** in your email subject line.

If your **One Ask** is simple enough to fit in a subject line, then it is simple enough to send!



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

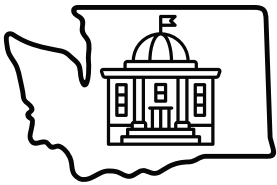
Local Level



Local officials are often the most accessible. Attend public meetings, community events, or schedule a meeting through their local office.

Your Ask: Focus on issues they can directly influence, such as local infrastructure, economic development, public safety, zoning, schools, or community services.

State Level



State legislators divide their time between the state capitol and their home districts. District office meetings, especially outside of the legislative session, often provide more time for meaningful conversations.

Your Ask: Discuss statewide issues like education, healthcare, agriculture, workforce development, transportation, or state funding priorities.

National Level



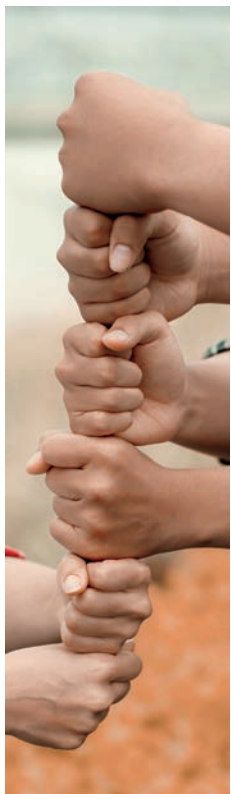
Members of Congress spend time both in Washington, D.C., and in their home districts during district work periods. If meeting with the elected official isn't possible, meeting with their legislative staff can be just as valuable.

Your Ask: Focus on federal legislation, agency regulations, national funding programs, or issues that require congressional action.

The Importance of Building Coalitions

When people think of advocacy, they often picture one organization or one passionate individual fighting for change. In reality, successful policy victories are rarely achieved alone. They are built through coalitions, groups of organizations, businesses, producers, community leaders, and citizens working toward a shared goal.

Built on Common Ground



Many groups have the same, - or similar - goals, just different ways of approaching it. Having organizations, companies, or a coordinated group of people agree on a specific issue can show how important that issue and whatever the solution is.

When advocating for rural America, collaboration is especially important because many communities face similar challenges: aging populations, workforce shortages, limited healthcare access, declining infrastructure, lack of investment, broadband gaps, and economic uncertainty.

No single organization has the resources or expertise to solve every problem. Successful coalitions are built on trust and common goals, not complete agreement. While partners may have different priorities, they recognize that lasting progress comes from working together on shared interests. Clear communication and mutual respect help coalitions remain effective even when perspectives differ.



Winning Together

Coalitions also create opportunities that organizations often cannot achieve on their own. Together, they can coordinate meetings with lawmakers, mobilize grassroots support, share research, and amplify their message to a broader audience. Each partner brings unique strengths, making the coalition more influential than any single organization.

Most importantly, coalitions demonstrate that rural America is interconnected. A strong agricultural economy supports local businesses, creates jobs, strengthens food security, and sustains communities nationwide. When advocates speak with one voice, they show policymakers that investing in rural America benefits the entire country.

The most effective advocates don't simply ask for change; they build the partnerships needed to achieve it.

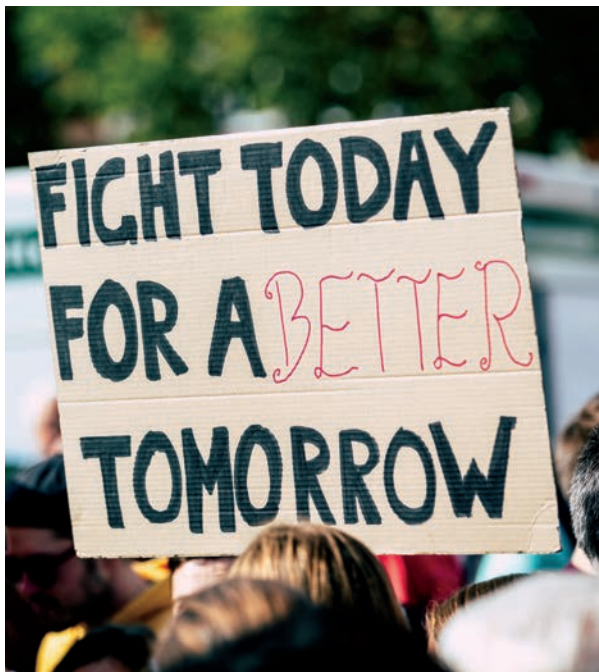




Thinking Beyond Agriculture

Granges can build partnerships around many local issues, including:

- Rural Broadband Expansion
- Road and Bridge Improvements
- Data Centers and Infrastructure
- School and Youth Programs
- Food Insecurity
- Community Health Initiatives
- Conservation Projects
- Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Resources for Senior Citizens



Building a Coalition: Example

Goal/Challenge: The local volunteer fire company needs updated equipment and additional funding to continue serving the community safely.

Who Could Join the Coalition?

Volunteer Fire Company

- Provides firsthand knowledge of equipment and staffing needs.

Local Grange

- Mobilizes community members and connects with agricultural families.

Local Businesses

- Emphasize how emergency services protect employees, customers, and local commerce.

Farmers, Ranchers, & Agricultural Organizations

- Explain the importance of rapid emergency response for farms, equipment, and livestock.

Schools & Community Organizations

- Show how reliable emergency services benefit students and families.

One Shared Ask

Ask your local government to increase funding for the volunteer fire company and invest in updated equipment.

Instead of each organization making separate requests, the coalition presents one unified message supported by many voices.

How to Contact Elected Officials

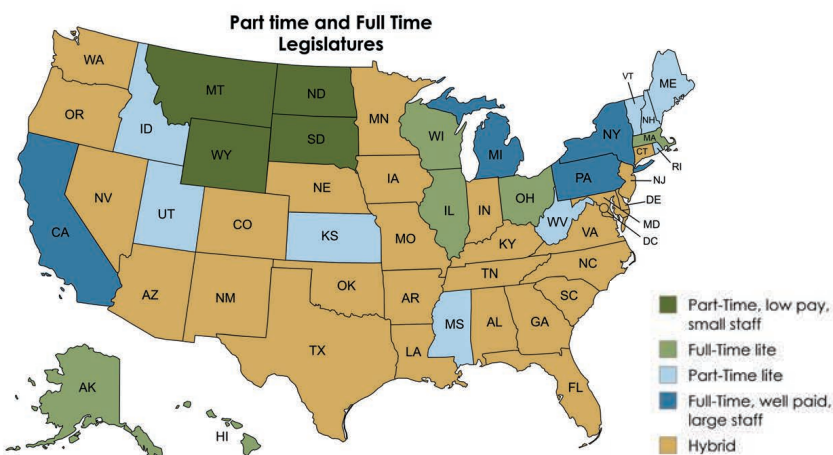
One of the most important steps to political advocacy is your first contact with your elected official(s). Communication is the foundation of advocacy, but it is not always clear-cut. There are ways to make reaching out easy and productive. It's important to remember that elected officials work for their constituents, so communicating with them is not only good, but should be expected.

Who to Connect With

Local (Town Council, County Board, School Board): These officials are your neighbors. You can often catch them at local meetings, community events, or by a direct phone call to their office.

State (State Representatives and State Senators): These elected officials split time between their district and the state capital. Some legislators will be easier to contact, especially in states with full-time legislatures. Some states only have part-time legislatures with small staffs, so communication may look different or take longer than in other states. For information about your state, check the map below.

Figure 2



“Full- and Part-Time Legislatures” National conference of state legislatures: July 2021

National/Federal (U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives): These legislators have large portfolios that cover a multitude of topics. When you consider travel, this means they can be harder to reach directly. They have both Washington, D.C. offices, as well as district offices. You are still able to talk to both legislators and staffers in district offices. This is typically the most convenient option, especially for those that are not able to travel to Washington, D.C. easily. A cold email or cold phone call is always a great first option.

Finding Contact Information

For the most part, policymakers will have phone numbers and/or emails available on their websites. Some policy makers will only have a phone number and a form to fill out for email. For legislators at the federal level, many will ask to confirm that you are in their district before letting you access the form. This is to ensure that the appropriate constituents are reaching out, and communication will typically follow in a traditional email format.



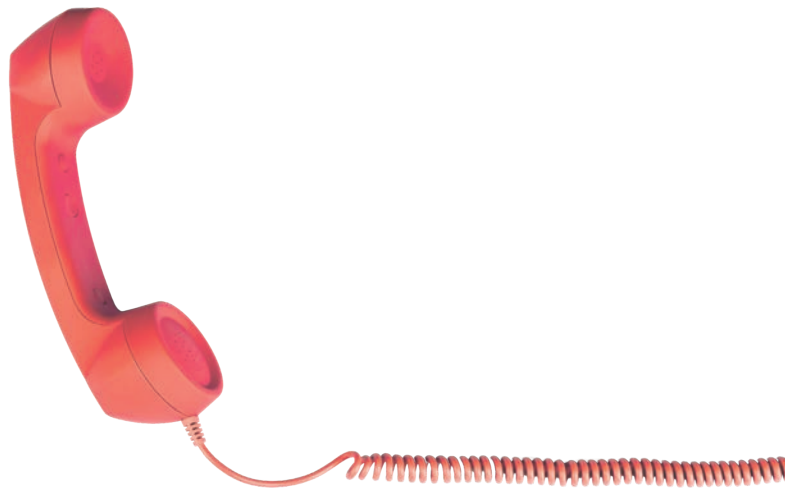
Take Action Now

Ready to send your message? Refer to pg. 23 and 24, or scan the QR code to access our various correspondence templates.



Calling Your Representatives

Script: Hello, my name is [Your Name], and I live in [City or ZIP Code].
I'm calling as a constituent of [Representative/Senator/Official Name] to [support/oppose] [issue or bill].
I ask [title, name of official] to [specific request ("One Ask")].
Thank you for taking my call and for your service.



Tips for a successful call

- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Be polite and respectful, even if you disagree with the official's position.
- Ask for the official's current stance if you want more information.
- Thank the staff member for their time before ending the call.
- Keep it to about 30–60 seconds.
- Be polite and respectful, even if you strongly disagree.
- State your name and ZIP code so staff know you are a constituent.
- Focus on one clear ask: support, oppose, vote yes/no, or take action.
- If asked for details, briefly explain why the issue matters to you personally or locally.

E-mailing Your Representatives

Subject: Addressing the Needs of Our Community Regarding [Insert Issue]

Dear [Their Title] [Last Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am a resident and constituent of [Your State/County/City]. I am writing to you today to urge your immediate attention and action on an issue that deeply impacts our rural community: [briefly state the main issue or problem].

As a rural community, we often face unique challenges, particularly regarding [mention 1-2 specific challenges related to the issue]. Specifically, [insert a brief personal story or local example of how this issue affects you, your family, or your neighbors].

To address this critical need, I ask that you [support/reject/sign onto] [insert the specific action you want them to take]. This action is vital because it will allow our community to [insert positive outcome].

Thank you for your time, your dedication to our community, and your consideration of this urgent matter. I look forward to hearing your position on this issue and learning what steps you plan to take to support rural residents.

Sincerely,

[Your Name] [Your Street Address] [Your City, State, Zip Code] [Your Phone Number] [Your Email Address]

Taking a Meeting

Meeting in person with a staffer or policymaker is always a great opportunity. Meetings, whether in-person or via a web platform, allow for clearer communication between you and the other party. If you have built an advocacy community around a particular issue, meetings are a good time to send someone who is personable and a good communicator, who will effectively represent your issue. More than anything, though, it is important that the person representing the issue is knowledgeable. Whether it is you or another person, in the meeting, they need to be able to at least answer basic questions about the issue. It is vital to go in with possible solutions for the issue. This ensures that the meeting is goal-oriented, instead of problem-oriented.

A meeting does not need to be held with only one representative of your issue. It is always smart to bring multiple people if that would be beneficial for the meeting. Communication is key, which is where the policy outline (p. 16) comes in. Make sure everyone involved has a clear idea of what the issue is and what solutions you are looking for before setting up the meeting; that way, everyone is on the same page.



Issues You May Face

Being an advocate is not easy. If it were, everyone would be one! There are some issues you may come across in the process of speaking up, and there are ways to prepare in case any of these issues come up.

Communication

People of influence can be hard to get in contact with. It's important to keep in mind, as mentioned previously, that you may be in contact with staff more than with an elected official. One great thing about local advocacy is the fact that you have easy access to those people of influence.

Be consistent in communication, but don't badger. If you see your mayor grocery shopping, that may be a good time to say hello, but not so much to go in depth about your issue.



Timing

Timing can become an issue unexpectedly, but that doesn't mean you can't be aware of some pitfalls to avoid. Obviously, if a major scandal is overshadowing state legislation a day before a meeting with your legislator, there isn't a whole lot you can do, but if you know that a major election is coming up or that a certain bill is being discussed in committee, maybe give it some time to cool down before taking a meeting or sending an email.

You want to strike while the iron is hot, so make sure you are timely, and even though things take time in politics and advocacy, you can still be prudent about when you bring an issue forward.

Visibility

Especially in higher levels of government, it can be hard to stand out among the crowd. Everyone is looking to have their voice heard, so be willing to build relationships with the other people vying for a chance to speak. There may be a group of people dedicated to advocating for a similar issue as you, but with an opposite approach. It doesn't hurt to get to know those people and build connections. It can also be a great chance to continue to build relationships with people in lower positions of influence.

If your congressperson has a staffer you see every time you go in to speak, get to know them! Find out their name and converse with them. Building connections is how stuff gets done, so if you are feeling drowned out in all the noise, start by slowing down and finding commonalities with those around you.



Keeping the Momentum Alive

Staying in contact with your elected official(s) after the first time you reach out not only ensures that you continue to build a relationship with them, but it also allows everyone involved to stay updated on information related to the issue at hand.

What to Include in a Follow-Up

Follow-up emails should always go to the person you met with, including staffers (such as a Legislative Correspondent or Policy Advisor). Follow-up emails provide an opportunity to cleanly summarize the key points discussed, restate your official position, and

provide a digital copy of the policy brief. If a tough question was raised during the meeting, the follow-up email is the perfect vehicle to provide the appropriate answers. Follow-ups also explicitly outline expected next steps, which ensures accountability on both sides.

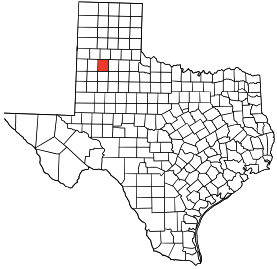
State and local Granges have a unique opportunity to be a reliable source for policymakers, and that is emphasized through consistent and clear communication about policy issues. As a grassroots organization, the Grange ensures that it truly represents the issues affecting rural Americans, as shown through participation in local policy. By being reliable, organized, and courteous after a meeting, a local Grange can position itself as a credible, go-to resource for community insights, turning a one-time conversation into a lasting relationship.

24 to 48 Hours	The Thank-You & Summary	Send a concise email thanking the office for their time. Attach the digital policy brief, summarize the conversation, and answer any immediate questions raised.
1 to 2 Weeks	The Deliverable Check-In	If additional data, local stories, or Grange input was promised, it should be sent now. If the lawmaker promised to investigate an issue, a polite inquiry is appropriate.
3 to 4 Weeks	The Progress Update	Check the legislative calendar. If a vote or committee hearing is approaching, send a brief reminder of the community's stance and ask where the lawmaker currently stands.
Post-Decision	The Relationship Anchor	Once a policy decision is made, send a final note. Thank them if they supported the cause. If they did not, express gratitude for their consideration and a desire to work together in the future.



WHAT THE FOLLOW-UP LOOKS LIKE

Local Level



At the local level, follow-up is personal. Send a thank-you email to the official or staff member you met with, summarize the discussion, and attach supporting materials. If your issue comes up at future public meetings, keep attending and stay engaged. Local officials appreciate advocates who remain involved and offer practical solutions rather than just raising concerns.

State Level



State legislators rely on staff to research issues and track constituent concerns. Send your follow-up directly to the staffer who attended your meeting. Thank them for their time, restate your policy recommendation, and provide any requested information. As legislation moves forward, share relevant community updates that show why the issue remains important.

National Level

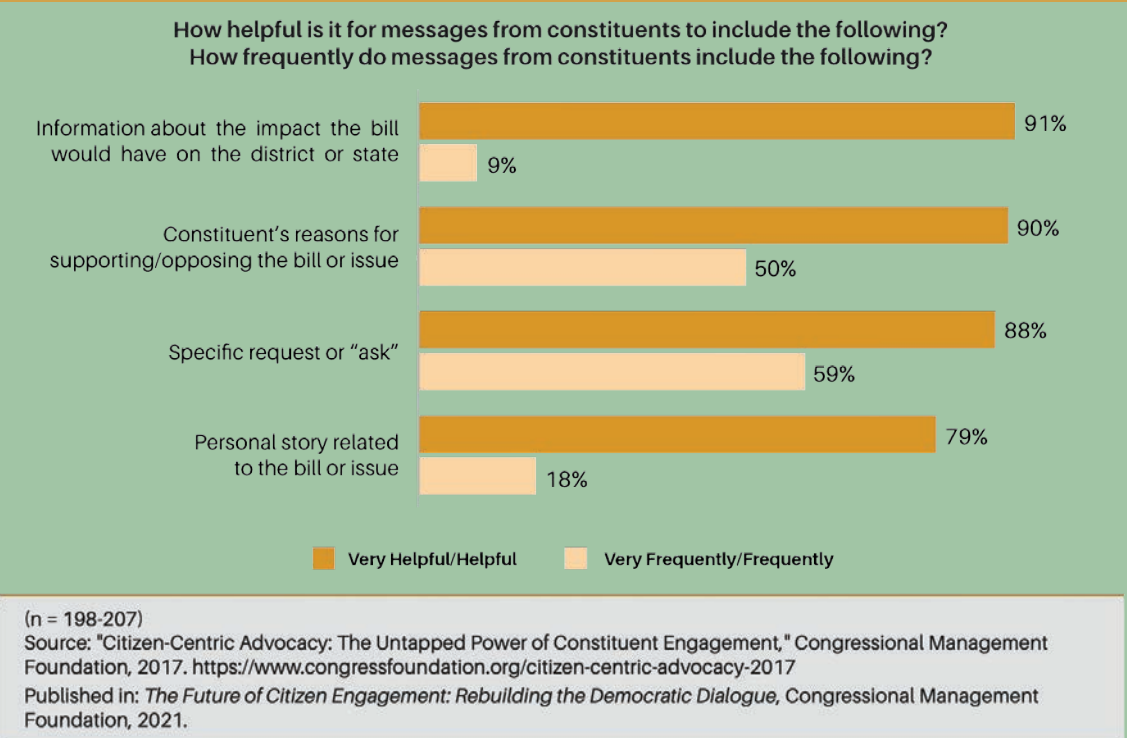


Congressional offices manage thousands of constituent requests, making organized follow-up essential. Email the staffer who participated in your meeting rather than the general inbox. Include your policy brief, answer outstanding questions, and clearly restate your requested action. Send periodic updates as legislation moves forward, using local examples to show how federal policy affects your community.

Frequency vs. Helpfulness of Information in Constituent Advocacy

Figure 3: Frequency versus Helpfulness of Specific Information in Constituent Advocacy

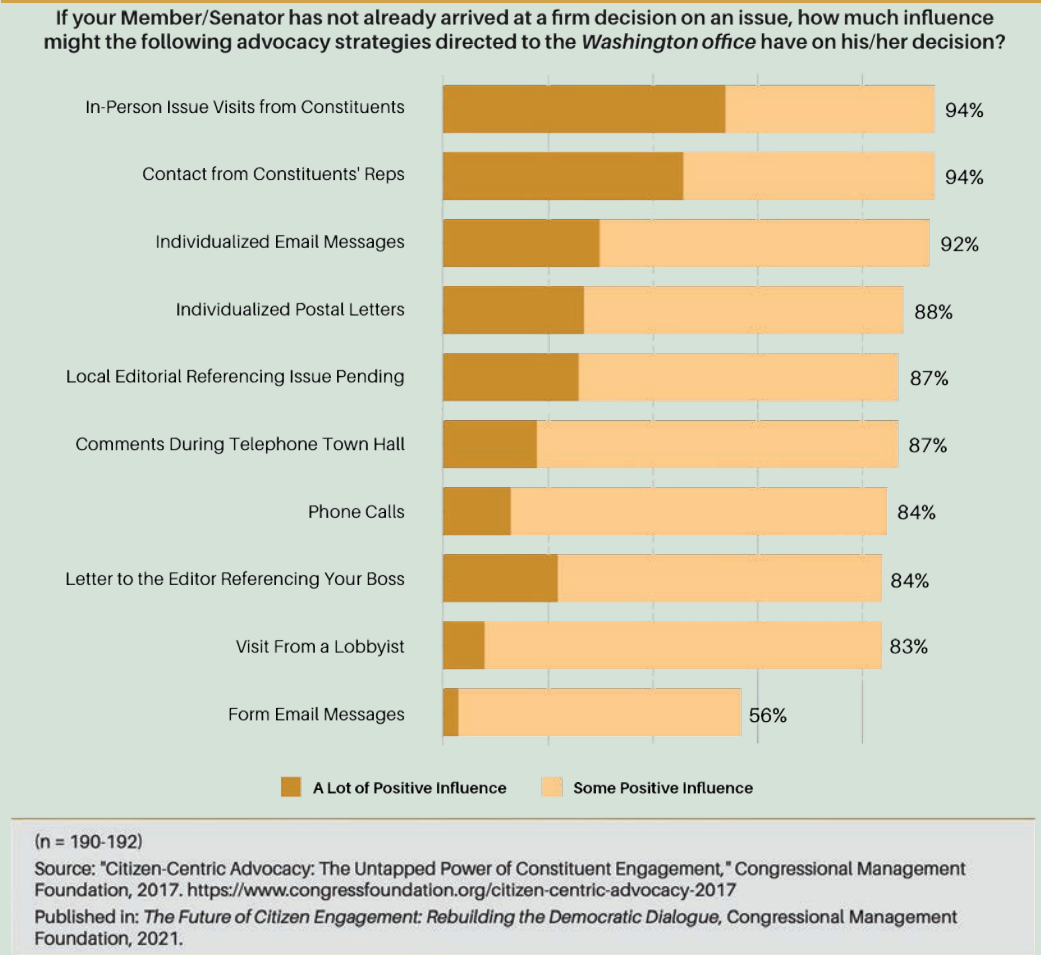
What lawmakers value most isn't the volume of messages they receive, it's the quality. Personalized communication that explains how an issue affects local communities is consistently rated as the most helpful form of constituent advocacy.



Which Advocacy Tactics Make the Biggest Difference?

Figure 4: Influence of Advocacy Strategies to Washington Office on Undecided Member

Not all advocacy efforts have the same impact. In-person meetings, personalized emails, and phone calls consistently rank among the most effective ways to influence policy, proving that authentic engagement makes a lasting difference.



Cultivating the Minds of Elected Officials

Elected officials are responsible for making decisions on a wide range of issues, so for those who are not as well-versed in a specific policy world, constituent voices can be extra important. Legislators aren't able to make informed decisions for their constituents without the voices and help of those constituents.

Fostering Long-Term Relationships

Every interaction is an opportunity to educate. Whether through a farm tour, a district office meeting, a community event, or a simple conversation, advocates can provide valuable insight into how public policy affects farmers, ranchers, families, businesses, and local economies. Sharing personal stories alongside facts and data helps connect policy to real people, making complex issues more meaningful and memorable.

Cultivating relationships with elected officials takes time.

Effective advocates don't wait until a bill is introduced or a crisis arises; they maintain regular communication, offer themselves as trusted resources, and foster respectful, ongoing dialogue.

These consistent connections build credibility and trust, creating a foundation for productive conversations when important decisions are made.

Investing in the Future of Agriculture

Just as crops require care, patience, and attention to thrive, strong relationships with policymakers grow through consistent engagement. By investing time in educating elected officials today, advocates help cultivate informed leaders who are better prepared to make decisions that strengthen agriculture, rural communities, and the industries that support them for generations to come.



THE GRANGE RESOLUTION PROCESS

How One Grange Idea Becomes National Action

From kitchen tables to official Grange policy, resolutions turn a good idea into lasting change.

A resolution has one job: **inform, educate, and persuade**. Done well, it holds up for decades. Grange policy on the books today dates back 75 years or more, and it still matters, because the ideals behind it hold true over time. Every resolution should do two things: name the problem clearly and propose a real solution.

Resolutions start small. A member brings a concern to their Community Grange for discussion. If others agree it deserves a wider hearing, the Grange votes to adopt or reject the idea for inclusion in State or National policy.

From there, the resolution format takes over, a simple two-part structure that's stood the test of time: the why and the what.

THE ANATOMY OF A RESOLUTION Two Parts. One Purpose.

WHEREAS (*The Why*) The "Whereas" statements explain the issue. Each one should make a single point — one fact, one idea, one supporting argument. Together, they build the case for why this matters.

RESOLVED (*The What*) The "Resolved" statements are the action. Each uses strong, active language to propose a specific solution, direction, or recognition and each stands as its own sentence. A reader shouldn't need to flip back to the "Whereas" section to understand what's being proposed.

The Resolution Process

1. Write the resolution: Structure it in **WHEREAS** and **RESOLVED** form and bring it to your Grange.
2. Discuss and vote to move it forward: Local members decide if it's ready for a bigger stage.
3. Send adopted resolution to State Grange.
4. Committee review: State and National meetings review resolutions in committees first.
5. Delegate vote: The full body votes to adopt, amend, or reject.
6. It becomes policy: Adopted resolutions guide advocacy going forward.

Helpful Hint:

Writing about pending legislation? Keep the "Resolved" broad enough to cover the topic generally — rather than naming a specific bill like "H.R. 1" — so the policy stays useful even after that bill is gone.



Resolution Examples and Templates

TEMPLATE

WHEREAS, this is the part of the resolution that explains the issue or problem; and

WHEREAS, each resolution should address only one issue or problem; and

WHEREAS, each "Whereas" statement should address only one fact, idea, or supporting argument related to the issue or problem; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that this is the part of the resolution that restates the basic issue or problem and proposes a solution, and be it further

RESOLVED, that each "Resolved" statement should address a separate action to be taken or solution proposed; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the "Resolved" statements should stand alone and be clearly understood without referring back to the "Whereas" statements.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

From Committee to Policy to Action

At annual State and National Grange meetings, committees review every resolution and choose one of two paths: recommend adoption (either as written or amended) or recommend rejection. Delegates then vote on the committee's recommendation — and they retain the power to amend the resolution themselves on the floor.

Once adopted, a resolution becomes official Grange policy — guidance that shapes how State and National leaders advocate on the issue.

POLICY IS GRASSROOTS.

Turning policy into action means Grange members telling elected officials, plainly, that "the Grange supports — or opposes — this." It takes active, engaged members: writing resolutions, and then advocating for them.

SEEN IN ACTION

Example: Farm Bill of 2018

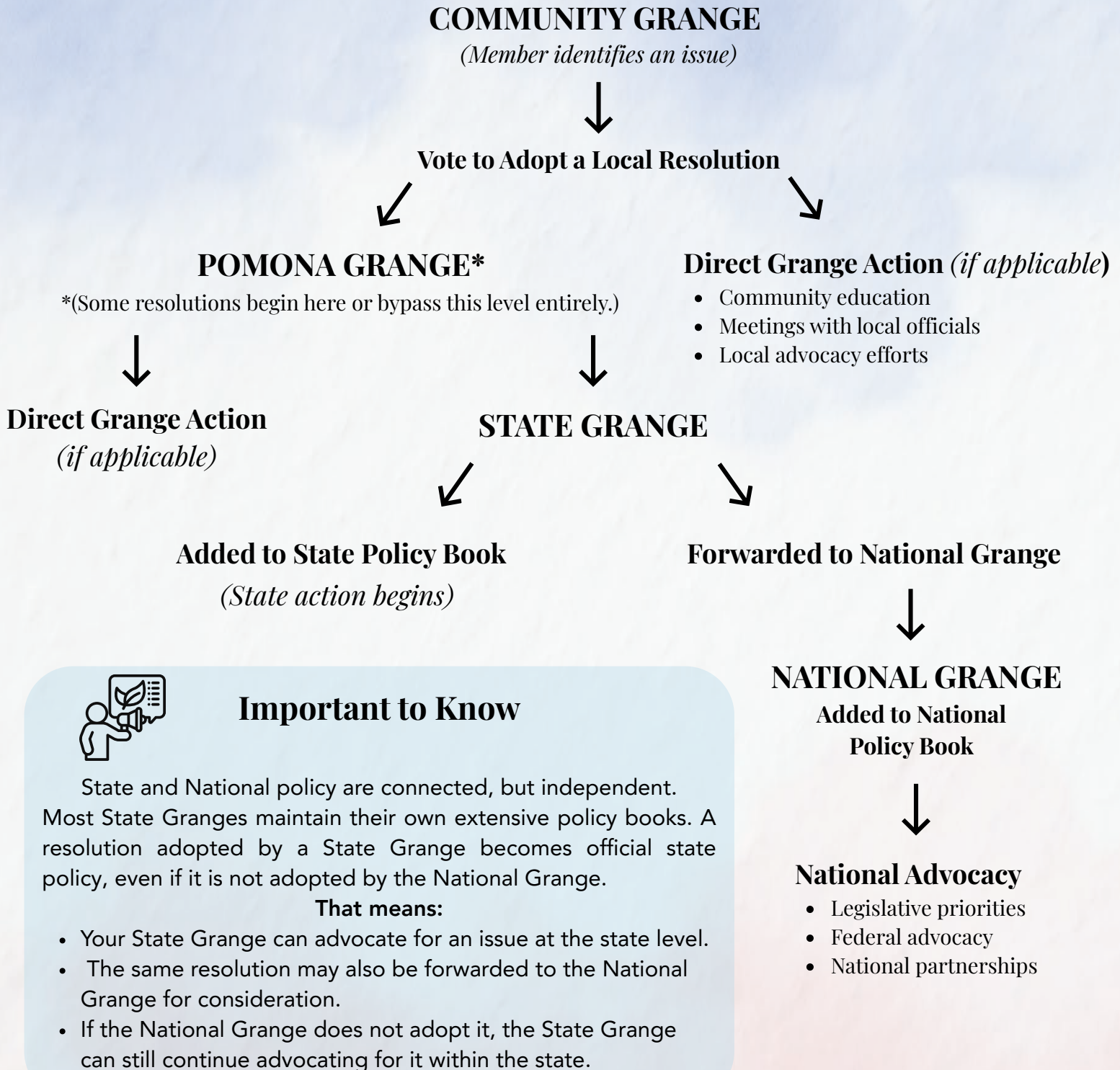
- WHEREAS the Farm Bill has traditionally supported prices only in a certain number of popular crops and commodities; and
- WHEREAS the Farm Bill is moving away from direct support programs to a more generic insurance-based program to cover losses for farmers of all crops and commodities; and
- WHEREAS current price insurance programs are not adequately serving all agriculture sectors, crops, commodities, production methods, geographical concerns, target markets, etc.; therefore, be it
- RESOLVED that the National Grange supports passage of a Farm Bill in 2018, which provides price insurance protection for farmers that takes into account the diversity in crops, commodities, production methods, target markets, and regional situations present across the spectrum of the agricultural industry.

Source: 2017 National Grange *Journal of Proceedings* AG-117-NY



Get involved. Write your resolution. Bring it to your Grange.

How a Resolution Becomes Grange Policy





Stay Engaged With Your Elected Officials

Keep in contact! Politics is about relationships, so build them with your legislators. Instead of just showing up for one issue when it starts getting attention, make your voice heard consistently.

Request an Appearance

Invite elected officials to:

- County fairs
- Banquets
- Local events

Why it matters:

- Builds relationships
- Shows officials your organization's impact
- Increases visibility

Remember:

- Plan ahead
- Send invitations early

Have Your Flag Flown

Celebrate:

- Veterans
- Graduations
- Milestones
- Memorials

Most congressional offices can help arrange this.



Ask for a Letter

Perfect for:

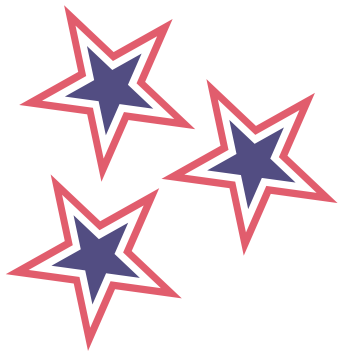
- Youth Accomplishments (Grange, 4-H, FFA, Scouts)
- Business anniversaries
- Retirements
- Community awards

Include:

- Who it's for
- Why they're being recognized
- Date needed
- Mailing address

Pro Tip:

Consistent communication builds stronger relationships than contacting officials only when legislation affects you.



HOSTING EVENTS THAT BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

Advocacy Starts with a Conversation

One of the best ways to educate legislators and candidates is to invite them into your community. Seeing local issues firsthand and hearing directly from constituents creates lasting relationships and leads to more informed decision-making.

Granges have long served as trusted gathering places for civic engagement. Whether you're inviting elected officials, candidates, or community leaders, your role is to facilitate respectful, nonpartisan conversations focused on issues that matter locally.

Town Halls & Listening Sessions

Provide residents with an opportunity to ask questions, share concerns, and discuss local issues with elected officials.

Best for: Community feedback and relationship building

Farm Tours

Show legislators what agriculture looks like beyond statistics. A firsthand visit helps connect policy decisions to real people, businesses, and families.

Best for: Agriculture, land use, conservation, labor, and infrastructure discussions

Policy Update Meetings

Invite legislators to provide updates on current legislation while allowing members to ask questions about how proposed policies affect the community.

Best for: Keeping members informed and engaged

Candidate Forums (Nonpartisan)

Invite all qualified candidates seeking the same office. Ask identical questions, provide equal speaking time, and focus on issues—not endorsements.

Best for: Educating voters before an election

Legislative Breakfasts

Start the day with coffee, breakfast, and a meaningful discussion. These informal gatherings are ideal for brief policy conversations before officials head to work.

Best for: Building ongoing relationships with elected officials



SUCCESS STORIES

The National Grange has proudly represented the interests of farmers, ranchers, and rural America for nearly 160 years and counting. Those interests come from the very people affected most by D.C. policy. Continuously, local and state Granges have been places of influence within communities, providing the foundation of the work done at the national level. 160 years of success is impossible to present in this book, but we do want to highlight some of the work that has been done, and is currently being done, by the most important people in the Grange: You!



In 2024, National Grange leadership met with the Secretary of Agriculture to discuss how the Grange and the USDA can work together to continue building strong communities across rural America.

Pictured L-R: Burton Eller, National Grange Government Affairs Director; Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture (2021-2025); Christine Hamp, National Grange President; and Duane Hamp, National Grange First Gentleman.



Pennsylvania

Co-authored by the Pennsylvania State Grange

When the Trump administration announced its intention to slash funding to SNAP in 2025, it sent shockwaves throughout the agricultural and rural communities of Pennsylvania and beyond. Federal funding for SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and its predecessor, food stamps, has assisted tens of millions of Americans going through challenging times. The proposed cuts to this program would roll back the clock on one of the few things that have improved in the past 50 years.

As the trusted voice of rural communities for more than 150 years, the Pennsylvania State Grange could not sit idly by and watch our friends and neighbors struggle. While SNAP is often framed as a program that just benefits urban communities, in actuality, rural areas have higher rates of SNAP usage per capita. Food insecurity used to be a critical and widespread issue in the United States, but SNAP funding has helped the country fight hunger for decades.

State Grange President Matt Espenshade, with insight from advisors and Grange members, penned a strongly worded opinion article opposing this funding cut. It was sent to various media contacts across the state and landed in many prominent newspapers.

The op-ed also caught the attention of state leadership in Pennsylvania. Soon afterward, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) reached out, expressing its appreciation for the op-ed. While the federal funding might be going away, they understood that the need would remain, and our Commonwealth would be left to cover the difference. This would mean millions of dollars in additional spending that the state government was not prepared to take on.

The State Grange was asked by Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding to organize and host a media event where the Grange, PDA, and other groups could highlight and share the potential negative impacts of this proposed action.

On July 2, 2025, PA Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding joined Pennsylvania State Grange President Matt Espenshade, alongside Rep. Paul Takac, Julie Bancroft, CEO of Feeding Pennsylvania, PA Dept. of Human Services Executive Deputy Secretary Andrew Barnes, Rep. Emily Kinhead and family members of Wasson Farm Market, to bring attention to the potentially harmful impact of proposed federal funding cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The press event was held at Wasson Farm Market, owned by Grange members Ron and Candy Wasson, located in State College. During the press event, each state legislator, state government entity, and impacted group shared the Grange's concern regarding how federal cuts would impact Pennsylvanians.



PA State Grange President Matt Espenshade speaks at the SNAP event, with Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding in the background.





Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding speaks at the PA State Grange's media event regarding SNAP cuts. At left, Victor Grange #159 (PA) member Jennie Wasson; at right, PA State Representative Paul Takac.

Statistics have also shown that for every dollar in SNAP benefits, the economy grows by \$1.54, through job creation, income for food producers, and stronger rural communities.

"Radical SNAP reductions would hurt two million Pennsylvanians struggling to put healthy food on their tables," Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding said. "It would also be a direct blow to the farm families who supply grocers and farm markets, and the families of 12,000 Pennsylvanians who work in grocery industry jobs across the state directly supported by SNAP spending. The Shapiro Administration is doing our part, investing to see that no family goes hungry in Pennsylvania. We are calling on Congress to keep its promises and remember their commitments to Pennsylvania farmers, families, and businesses."

"The proposed funding cuts to SNAP will not just impact our friends and neighbors in need who use these credits to buy fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats, but the impact to Pennsylvania agriculture is equally concerning," stated Matt Espenshade.

With the increasing access to broadband in rural areas, more farm markets and farm side stands are able to accept SNAP credits. This action not only brings the freshest produce possible to those in need but also helps sustain the farms and families that raise it.

"There are close to 50,000 farms in Pennsylvania, and many SNAP recipients shop locally at farmers markets and other agribusinesses. The potential impact these cuts could have on their bottom line, and ultimately our state economy, should have every Pennsylvanian truly concerned," said Espenshade.

In the end, the measure ultimately passed Congress, and states across the country have been faced with meeting the needs of its people. Many local Granges have partnered with local food banks and church food pantries, which have seen a spike in requests for assistance.

"I am pleased to say that the Pennsylvania State Grange, along with our friends and partners in this mission, has helped change the narrative when it comes to programs like SNAP," said Espenshade. "SNAP is no longer characterized as a "handout", but rather a "bridge" to stability. When a family receives SNAP, it pulls the family forward. Funds that the family does have can now be used to keep the lights on, the car running so one can go to work, keep clothes on the back of the kids, and so on.

The sad reality is that hunger can affect anyone at any time. It affects the elderly, our military veterans, young families, widows and widowers, and those who unexpectedly find themselves unemployed. Access to food is an essential part of maintaining strong, healthy communities, and we need to realize that healthy food is medicine for the body and soul.

North Carolina

Establishing Farmer Appreciation Day in North Carolina

In 2023, the North Carolina State Grange successfully pushed legislation through to establish a statewide Farmer Appreciation Day. For the past two years, the North Carolina Grange has hosted a statewide event to celebrate and honor farmers. Three Farmers of the Year as well as three Young Farmers were recognized at the event.

During the 2023 State Convention, the North Carolina Grange passed a resolution to recognize a day honoring farmers. Working with a State Congressman, the Grange was able to rally support for the resolution that was eventually passed in the North Carolina legislature. This established relationship helped enable the North Carolina Grange to initiate Farmer Appreciation Day. The North Carolina Grange President and Legislative Director met with the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee to encourage the crafting of a bill to establish the day in the state.

At the inaugural event, Sonny Perdue, former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, was the keynote speaker. This was possible through the relationship between the NC House Agriculture Chairman and the Former Secretary. Building relationships is such an important part of advocacy, and that is exemplified through the work done by the North Carolina State Grange.

The Power of Letter Writing

Letter writing is an effective tool to communicate with policymakers. North Carolina has used letter writing to show appreciation for Representative Greg Murphy and his presentation on the necessity of maintaining access to life-saving drugs for rural seniors. Jimmy Martin, President of the Brogden Grange #967 in Wayne County, North Carolina, wrote a letter expressing gratitude and confirming the Grange's stance on the topic.

This is a great example of maintaining a relationship with legislators and policymakers. Keeping the Grange's voice consistently heard on topics relevant to the state and community is a great way to make sure the Grange's voice is heard when it matters most.



North Carolina Farmer Appreciation Gala



Washington

Town halls and community events offer valuable opportunities for voters to interact directly with candidates running for office. One strong example took place in Yakima, Washington, where residents had the opportunity to meet seven of the eleven candidates seeking election to Washington's 4th Congressional District.

The candidate forum was organized by Fruitvale Grange #348, Yakima Indivisible, the Yakima chapter of the Washington Youth Alliance, and the League of Women Voters of Yakima County. The event filled the Grange Hall to its maximum capacity, drawing 170 attendees. Following the forum, a reception gave community members the chance to speak one-on-one with the candidates and representatives of the organizations that hosted the event.

This nonpartisan gathering encouraged open discussion about some of the state's most pressing issues, including agriculture, health care, and immigration policy. With Washington experiencing record-low snowpack levels and recurring drought conditions, concerns about irrigation, water rights, and the future of local farms are especially significant. These issues have a major impact on Central Washington, where agriculture plays a vital role in the regional economy.

People deserve to feel heard and properly represented by their elected officials. Forums like this allow voters to hear directly from candidates while also giving candidates an opportunity to better understand the concerns of the people they hope to represent.

Community involvement is an essential part of effective advocacy, and the work taking place in Yakima demonstrates what can be accomplished when organizations work together. By providing a welcoming space for conversation, these groups helped ensure that residents could raise the issues that matter most to their families, farms, businesses, and communities.



Fruitvale Grange #348, WA

The National Grange's Policy Priorities

AGRICULTURE:

The National Grange continues to champion family farms as the foundation of American agriculture. In 2026, priorities include expanding opportunities for beginning farmers, improving farm succession and transfer programs, protecting farmland from urban sprawl and foreign ownership, and strengthening rural economies. We see these key issues prevailing in the coming years as well.

Policy Priorities:

- Protect family farms and preserve working lands.
- Expand agricultural export opportunities while ensuring fair trade practices.
- Strengthen enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act.
- Support dairy pricing reforms and maintain clear dairy labeling standards.
- Expand crop insurance and disaster assistance programs for all producers.
- Increase investment in agricultural research, biotechnology, and precision agriculture.
- Improve rural broadband and farm credit access.
- Streamline seasonal agricultural labor programs.
- Improve market opportunities for agricultural products

Supporting family farms, protecting rural communities, and securing America's future.

CONSERVATION

The Grange believes responsible stewardship means balancing environmental protection with productive land use.

Policy Priorities:

- Promote soil, water, and forest conservation.
- Support disaster preparedness and wildfire mitigation.
- Encourage water conservation and drought resilience.
- Expand adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- Ensure climate-related agricultural policies include economic incentives for producers.
- Reduce food waste and encourage biodegradable materials.

The organization also calls for a strong Farm Bill that maintains robust conservation programs benefiting farmers, hunters, anglers, and rural communities.

TAXATION

Policy Priorities:

- A simpler, fairer federal tax code.
- Accurate depreciation schedules for agricultural assets.
- Maintaining cooperative tax treatment.
- Opposition to a national sales tax or value-added tax.



CITIZENSHIP & GOVERNMENT

Policy Priorities:

- Expand rural broadband and cellular access nationwide.
- Encourage bipartisan cooperation among elected officials.
- Support balanced federal budgets and prevent government shutdowns.
- Protect Social Security and veterans' benefits.
- Maintain federal support for public broadcasting.
- Promote government accountability through program reviews and sunset provisions.
- Defend constitutional rights and religious freedoms.

LABOR, JUDICIARY, & TRANSPORTATION

Policy Priorities:

Labor

- Fair wages and secure retirement benefits.
- Protect public and private pensions.
- Improve agricultural guest worker programs.

Judiciary

- Defend constitutional rights and democracy.
- Support first responders.
- Increase oversight of federal regulations.
- Protect private property rights.
- Strengthen cybersecurity protections.
- Invest in rural small businesses and housing.

Transportation

- Modernize roads, bridges, broadband, and infrastructure.
- Improve roadway safety for all travelers.
- Standardize Commercial Driver's License (CDL) requirements nationwide.
- Increase transparency on fuel taxes.

HEALTHCARE

Policy Priorities:

- Strengthen rural hospitals and healthcare systems.
- Protect Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- Preserve and improve the 340B program.
- Expand telehealth through broadband investment.
- Close the healthcare disparity gaps between urban and rural areas.
- Address rural mental health disparities.
- Support caregivers through policies such as the Credit for Caring Act.
- Improve services and support for veterans.

Access remains the single greatest challenge facing rural healthcare.

EDUCATION

Policy Priorities:

- Fully fund rural schools and teacher development.
- Expand broadband-enabled learning opportunities.
- Increase apprenticeships, career and technical education, and workforce partnerships.
- Support rural colleges, agricultural universities, and scholarship programs.
- Encourage loan forgiveness programs for healthcare professionals and veterinarians serving rural communities.

LOOKING AHEAD

The National Grange will continue advocating for policies that protect farmers and ranchers, preserve natural resources, expand economic opportunity, and strengthen the communities that sustain rural America.

Glossary

- **Grassroots** - change that begins from everyday people-up, instead of coming from the top-down.
- **Cold call/email** - a first contact, often without a previous connection
- **Issue** - the topic or problem to be solved
- **Coalition** - a group of people/companies/organizations with the same goal
- **Partisanship** - decision making that includes division and separation driven by differing political viewpoints
- **Bipartisanship** - decision making driven by inclusion of both sides of the political spectrum through compromise and cooperation
- **Non-partisanship** - decision making that does not include political parties; putting policy over politics
- **Resolution** - the first step in introducing new Grange policy

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(Source of quotations from Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding and State Grange President Matt Espenshade, and of the statistics on Pennsylvania's ~50,000 farms and 12,000 SNAP-supported grocery jobs.)





The ***National Grange Guide to Grassroots Advocacy*** is a publication of the National Grange located at 1616 H St. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20006

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The Grange is a longstanding advocate for rural communities, championing policies, especially in healthcare, that address the unique needs of rural Americans. We promote civic engagement across all age groups and empower our members to lead in shaping policy.

To learn more about Grange or submit questions regarding this report, please visit <https://www.nationalgrange.org/> or contact info@nationalgrange.org.





The Benefits of NATIONAL GRANGE Membership

The National Grange equips members with the resources, connections, and support to build stronger Granges and stronger communities.



LEARN

Educational Resources

Webinars, online courses, publications, and tools to keep members informed and engaged.

Skill-Preservation Programs

Celebrations of folk arts, handicrafts, and homemaking skills to preserve traditional knowledge.

Digital Resources

Templates, graphics, social media tools, and online training to help your Grange thrive.

Historical Preservation

Management of historical documents that trace the Grange history and influence.



GROW

Volunteer & Leader Training

Programs that develop leadership and professional skills for all ages.

Membership Recognition

Professionally created certificates, pins, and awards to celebrate member contributions & achievements.

Local Programming

Support for programs that strengthen families, preserve traditions, and build community.

Partnerships

Collaboration with partner organizations and initiatives that provide tools to strengthen our communities.



CONNECT

A Place to Belong

A nationwide family of members sharing talents, skills, and experiences.

National Convention

An annual engagement opportunity for all members, which includes educational programs, business actions, and more!

Communication & Updates

E-newsletters, social media, and *Good Day!* magazine keep members informed and engaged.

Grange Engage

Online member platform that connects Grangers and provides a digital gathering space and archive for Granges.



SUPPORT

Unified Identity

A cohesive brand voice uniting communities and Granges nationwide.

Standardized Structure

Standardized charters, by-laws, policies, and guidance to help Granges operate effectively.

Website Services

Free websites and email addresses for Granges, plus a "Find a Grange" locator listing to help reach your community.

Trademark Protection

Legal protection for the Grange name, brand, and reputation.



ADVOCATE

Policy & Presence

A full-time nonpartisan lobbyist in Washington, DC, representing Grange policy issues.

Rural Voice

Ensuring the needs of all communities are heard and respected nationwide.

Issue Briefs & Alerts

Timely updates explaining legislation and regulatory changes affecting Grange members & all of rural America.

Coalition Partnerships

National relationships with organizations working together to advance rural priorities.



SERVE

Community Service

Resources and ideas to plan projects that make a difference where you live.

Project Sustenance

Unified framework for community outreach used by Granges and Grange members nationwide.

Volunteer Recognition

Resources and awards celebrating outstanding members and citizens.

Agricultural Literacy

Programs and materials that promote agriculture and educate the next generation.