

**PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY - DRAFT APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF
DIRECTORS FSCPL (DATE 2025)**

P&P reviewed and approved 03/07/2025

Emerging policies, regulations or legislation may impact the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries' ("Friends") mission. On these occasions, the Friends may consider an advocacy role by following the procedures as outlined below.

We will consider taking an organizational stand if **all** of the conditions below are met.

- a) The issue is directly germane to the Friends mission as outlined on our website and mission statement in our Policy & Procedures Manual.
- b) The Friends organization has credibility on this issue because it is within our area of expertise and knowledge as an organization.
- c) The decision on the issue will have broad support of our stakeholders, partners, or constituents –Santa Cruz Public Libraries, library patrons, donors and others .
- d) The proposed action on the issue will most likely make a difference on the issue.

Whether the criteria above are met will be determined by the Advocacy Committee which includes the Board President and in consultation with the Executive Director.

If a positive determination is made, the Advocacy committee will forward the request to the Policy and Procedures committee to check for any conflict with any other existing Friends policies.

To maintain a record that is easily accessible on any position the Friends are taking, the Advocacy Committee shall write up a brief statement as to the position and have it recorded either by the Advocacy Committee, Policy and Procedures Committee or the Executive Director in a separate Google subfolder called "Public Positions" under Key Board Documents located in the Friends Board Google folder.

Once it is determined that an organizational stand should be taken, and the position on the issue is agreed upon, the Executive Director or Board President will lead any external, public announcements, unless another Board Member is authorized in writing by the Advocacy Committee and the Board President.

Depending on the specific issue, there are different levels of response that might be taken. The Advocacy Committee along with the Board President and in consultation with the Executive Director will decide on the level of response for the specific issue. Each of these requires different actions, noted below:

Specific issues include:

- 1. Supporting or opposing an issue by being listed with another organization.
- 2. Sending a letter advocating the Friends position to decision-makers.
- 3. Public advocacy – such as widely distributing letters or statements.
- 4. Direct engagement with stakeholders.

1. Procedure for supporting or opposing an issue by being listed with another organization:

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- a) Advocacy Committee or a subset of the Advocacy Committee ("Advocacy") conducts a review, refines the issue and then develops an initial response.
- b) Advocacy formulates a recommendation to be presented to the Executive Committee.
- c) The Executive Committee along with the Executive Director reviews the recommendation and the Executive Committee approves the recommendation. The recommendation then goes to the Board for final approval.
- d) If time is of the essence, the Executive Committee may issue final approval. The approval is then ratified by the Board at the next Board meeting.

2. Procedure for sending a letter advocating the Friends position to decision-makers.

- a) After the Advocacy Committee has reviewed the issue and if appropriate consulted with stakeholders or other community members, the Committee drafts a letter.
- b) The letter is reviewed and refined by the Executive Committee, if approved the letter goes to the Board at the next Board meeting for approval and for feedback on any limitations or modifications.
- c) If time is of the essence, the Executive Committee may issue final approval. The approval is then ratified by the Board at the next Board meeting.
- d) This letter will be recorded in the "Public Positions" subfolder.

3. Procedure for public advocacy (such as widely distributing letters or statements).

- a) After the Advocacy Committee has reviewed the issue and if appropriate consulted with stakeholders or other community members, the Committee drafts a recommendation to the Board with the proposed Friends position on the issue and drafts a statement or letter for Board approval at the Board of Director meeting.
- b) This statement or letter will be recorded in the "Public Positions" subfolder.

4. Procedure for direct engagement with stakeholders requesting leadership and financial support.

- a) The Advocacy Committee will brief the Board of the issue.
- b) The Board will provide approval to move forward or not.
- c) Expert and/or Legal Counsel may be consulted either before or after b) depending on the issue to define involvement limitations.
- d) Information provided in c) if obtained will be communicated to the Board before final approval.

The Friends will comply with federal tax laws for 501(c)(3) organizations, remaining non-partisan and acting only on mission related issues.

**ATTACHED BELOW IS THE DRAFT AS FOUND IN THE ADVOCACY
COMMITTEE OLDER FOR REFERENCE**

Advocacy Policy

Emerging policies, regulations, or legislation may impact the Friends of the Santa Cruz Public Libraries' mission. The Friends may take an advocacy role if the following conditions are met:

- Is the issue relevant to our mission?
- Do we have credibility on this issue?
- Will our decision have broad support from donors/constituents?
- Can our action make a difference?

The Executive Director or Board President will lead communication, unless another individual is authorized. Once the position is adopted, it can be communicated through established channels.

Levels of Response:

1. **Level 1:** Supporting or opposing an issue by being listed with other organizations.
 - o **Procedure:** Authorization goes through the Advocacy Committee first, then the Board. Consult with the director and relevant experts. The Board President and Executive Director seek approval from the Executive Committee. Emergency committees may be established ad hoc if needed.
0. **Level 2:** Sending a letter advocating a position to decision-makers.
 - o **Procedure:** After consultation, seek approval from the Executive Committee and the Board. The Board decides on any limitations.
0. **Level 3:** Public advocacy, such as widely distributed letters or statements.
 - o **Procedure:** After consultation, seek Board approval for the position and wording of the statement.
0. **Level 4:** Lobbying or direct engagement with stakeholders, including leadership and financial support.
 - o **Procedure:** A briefing on the issue will be provided, followed by Board approval and expert/legal counsel consultation to define involvement limits.

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