

Nonprofit Advocacy and West Texas

Jason Sabo

Frontera Strategy



Who is this joker?

Jason Sabo

- Nonprofit Nerd
- 25+ years at the Texas Capitol
- Part-Time West Texan



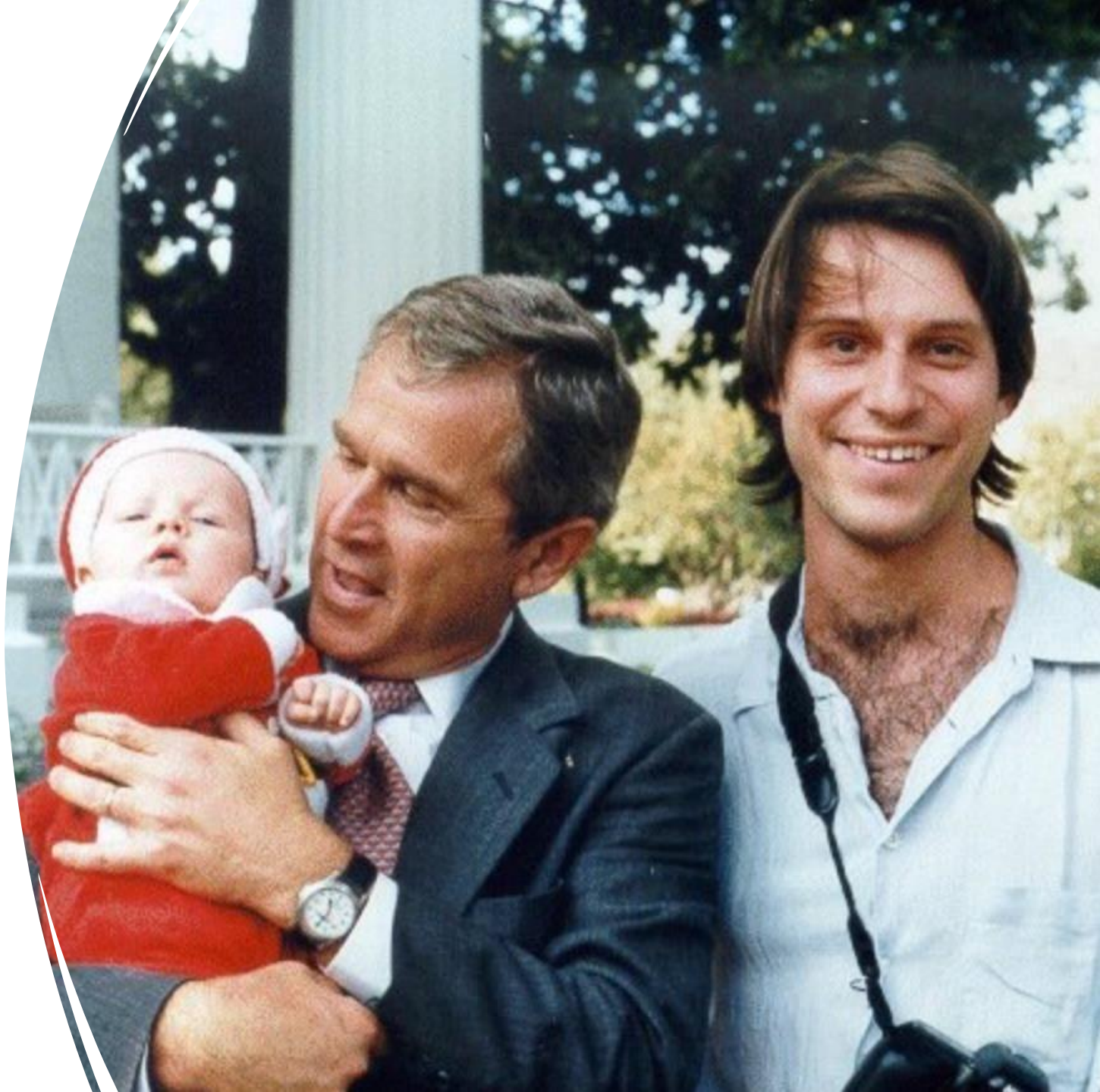
Overview

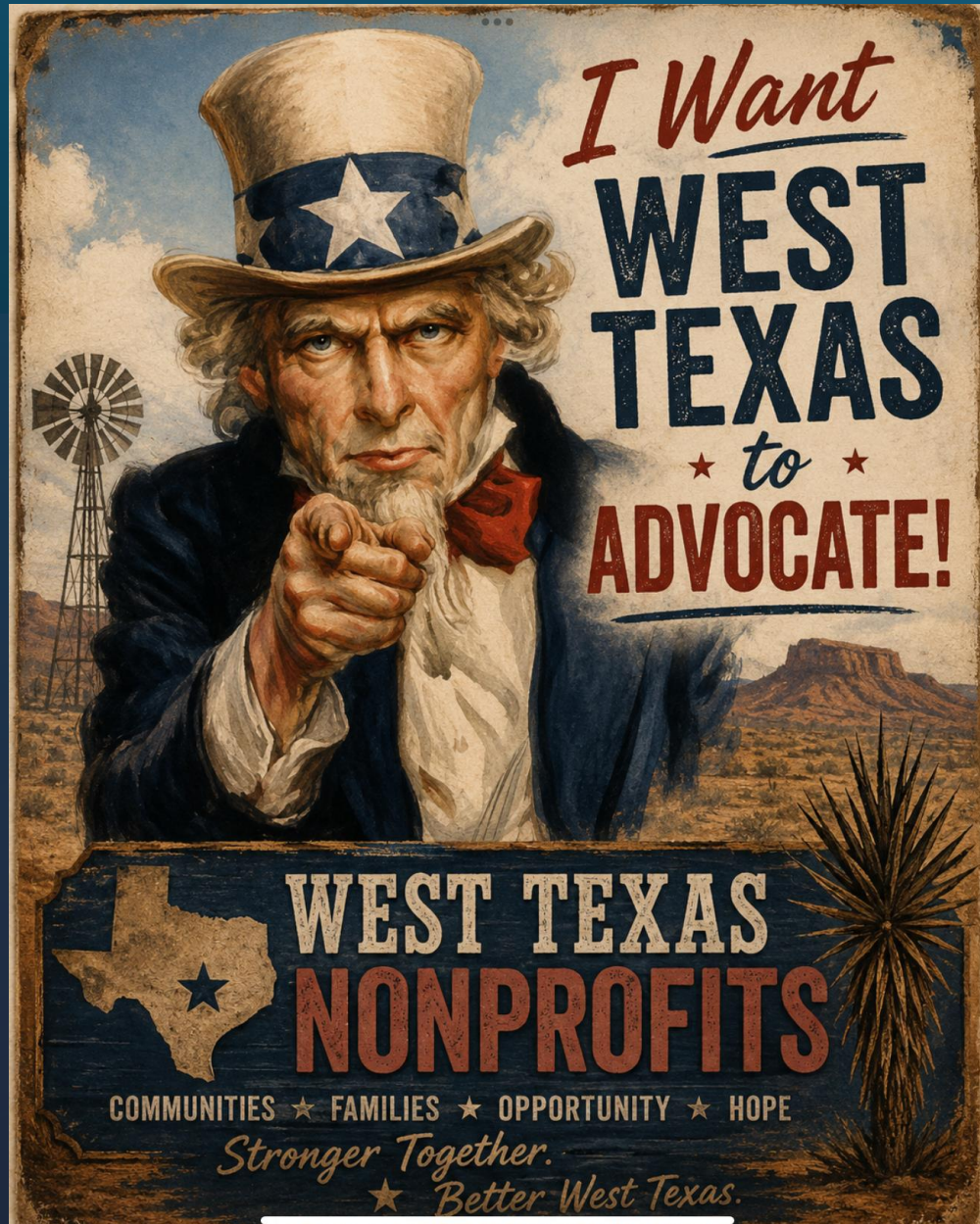
- What is advocacy?
- Why should nonprofits and foundations engage in advocacy?
- How can you be successful?

**You CAN engage.
Don't be a West Texas
wallflower.**



Advocacy Has Changed





I Want
**WEST
TEXAS**
★ *to* ★
ADVOCATE!



**WEST TEXAS
NONPROFITS**

COMMUNITIES ★ FAMILIES ★ OPPORTUNITY ★ HOPE

Stronger Together.

★ *Better West Texas.*

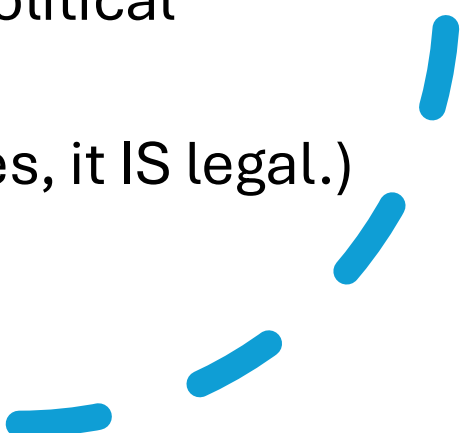


Why advocate?

- Direct service only gets you so far for so many people.
- Challenges confronted by Texas families and communities are only growing. Silence is acceptance.
- Demographic changes are taking political power and public resources away from West Texas on behalf of the suburbs.
- State and federal budget challenges are real and growing.
- Local, state, and federal elected officials rely on nonprofits for assistance and information about the real world.

A large orange circle on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

“Advocacy” Comes in All Shapes and Sizes

- Community Organizing and Mobilizing
 - Community Convening and Town Hall Meetings
 - Research and Policy Analysis
 - Talking to Reporters and Writing Op Eds
 - Working with State Agency Staff and Personnel
 - Collaborating with other Nonprofits on Shared Priorities
 - Meeting with Elected Officials and Political Candidates
 - LOBBYING LOBBYING LOBBYING (Yes, it IS legal.)
- 
- Four blue curved lines of varying lengths and orientations, arranged in a fan-like pattern in the bottom right corner.



SUPPORT
SERVE
ADVOCATE

RURAL
VOICES
COUNT

STRONGER
TOGETHER

COMMUNITIES
MATTER

EQUITY
OPPORTUNITY
HOPE

NONPROFITS
CHANGE
LIVES

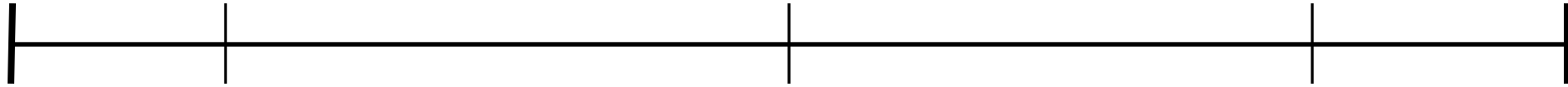
OUR KIDS
OUR FUTURE

WEST
TEXAS

Direct Service and Policy Continuum

DIRECT SERVICE

POLICY ENGAGEMENT



There is **no wrong place** on the continuum.

There is only **your organization's** place.

Find your **friends elsewhere** on the continuum.



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OK, *West Texas Poser*...

HOW Do We Advocate?

Jason's Patented (Not Really)

Five Step Advocacy Process:

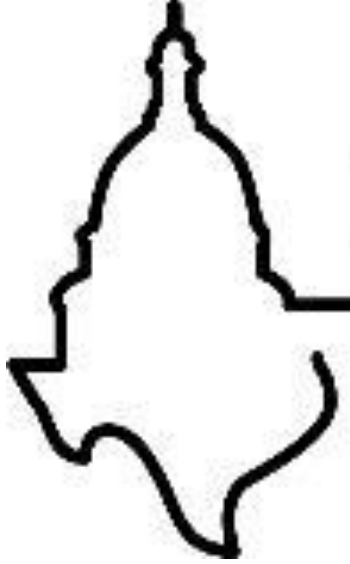
- 1. Focus or Perish - Be specific or you will not be heard.**
- 2. Have the Facts – Do the research to show your idea makes government work better for people.**
- 3. Bring Unexpected Friends – Unusual messengers are most likely to be heard in the corridors of power.**
- 4. Work the Process – Policymaking is a formulaic process that rewards those who engage it and ignores those who don't.**
- 5. Partner with the Public Sector – Laws have to be implemented.**

What **YOU CAN DO** now about **STATE** stuff...

- Reach out to elected officials today. Right now.
- Monitor the **Texas Sunset Commission**
 - Hearings on critical agencies
 - Reports and Recommendations for Reform
- Keep Tabs on **Interim Hearings and Interim Charges**
- Comment on Agencies' "**Legislative Appropriations Requests**"
- **Draft bills** (psstttt... ChatGPT). Ask local legislators to file.
- Be present and visible – even if you never come to Austin.



**Questions,
Concerns, or
Comments?**



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