



**Knights of
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Florida
State Council



Robert W. Rasch

State Advocate





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Political Activity Vs Issue Advocacy

2023 Mid-Year Meeting



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WHAT IS POLITICAL ACTIVITY? PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY VS ISSUE ADVOCACY

The Order DOES NOT Engage in Partisan Political Activity

Activity that promotes the election or defeat of a candidate for public office.

Activity that promotes the election or defeat of a political party.

Examples

1. Governor Smith is bad for Virginia and must be defeated.
2. Senator Jones is pro-life and should be elected!
3. The Conservative Party of Canada must be defeated in the next election.



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WHAT IS POLITICAL ACTIVITY? PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY VS ISSUE ADVOCACY

The Order DOES ENGAGE in Issue Advocacy

Activity that promotes the enactment or defeat of a policy proposal or of legislation

Examples

1. I am pro-life and I encourage everyone to VOTE NO on Ohio Issue 1 because it would expand abortion in the Buckeye State.
2. Assisted suicide fails to recognize human dignity and should be rejected by all Canadians!
3. I am writing today as a pro-life American and in favor of H.R. 7, the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act.
4. Organized involvement in national, state, provincial, and local marches for life (because they advocate a position on an issue).



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WHEN TO GET INVOLVED?

- The Knights of Columbus is not an advocacy organization. However, we are an organization that is sometimes called to be advocates for our most deeply held beliefs.
- Issues are typically identified by the Supreme Council most notably those of international or national-level concern. State and provincial-level issues are also identified by Supreme.



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WHEN TO GET INVOLVED?

- Not hearing from us on local matters does not mean there is not an important issue. If you see something, say something.
- If you, or a contact, identify an issue in your jurisdiction, check if the State Catholic Conference has a position (or other appropriate Church-affiliated entity). What activity have they taken?



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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Volunteer

- Most notable example is a state march for life.
- Catholic Conference may request volunteers for
parish engagement
- State Councils can share appropriate volunteer
opportunities for members and their families.



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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Share Information/Requests for Action

- Great opportunity for your monthly newsletter or a special e-mail blast
- Letter from your bishop, or state conference of bishops, on an important matter.
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RECAP OF ACTIONS TO TAKE

- A matter of public policy is identified for potential engagement.
- Consult how the State Catholic Conference, Church-aligned entity, and allied organization(s), have addressed the matter. Has the Supreme Council previously taken a position on a similar issue?
- Consider how the State Council might engage-dollars, volunteers, sharing information, sending out information.
- Contact the Supreme Advocate's Office and/or the Public Policy Office to discuss the matter and next steps.



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GENERAL GUIDANCE

- Engage as a concerned citizen of your state or locality. Speak for yourself, not the Knights or as a Knight. Most powerful role is as a constituent.
- Of course, in their private capacities, Members are certainly free to engage in issue advocacy on matters which the Order does not take a position or provide for any recommended action.
- If a Member engages in partisan political activity, or in issue advocacy not endorsed by or within the scope of the Order's mission, Members **MAY NOT WEAR** the emblem of the Order.



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MARCH FOR LIFE GUIDANCE

- Given the grave evil of abortion and its designation as a "preeminent issue" of social concern by the Church's leadership, the Order has supported marches for life for over half a century in countries where we are active.
- State and local councils, in addition to individual members, are encouraged to support local, state, provincial, and national marches for life as peaceful participants and volunteers.



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MARCH FOR LIFE GUIDANCE

- Fraternal leaders should make use of official communication channels to help promote these marches.
- Council banners, KofC signage, and KofC apparel should be carried and worn proudly during march for life events.
- We do not provide security, but assisting marchers as volunteer marshals has long been a service provided by state and local councils.



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