

Advocacy Policy

Policy Name	Advocacy Policy
Policy Category	Mission
Policy Number	2006-004
Policy Origination and Review Dates	April 2006; December 2017; July 2019
Requirements	No legal requirements
Review Cycle	5 years
Legal Review Required	No

A. General Policy Statement

This Advocacy Policy provides direction on WEF's advocacy efforts. Advocacy for purposes of this policy is comprised of WEF's education efforts and support of positions within legislative and regulatory areas consistent with WEF's mission, critical objectives, and core values.

B. Advocacy and the WEF Mission

- 1) The WEF mission is to connect water professionals, enrich the expertise of water professionals, increase the awareness of the impact and value of water, and provide a platform for water sector innovation.
- 2) Timely, appropriate, and nimble advocacy on legislative and regulatory issues is an essential means to achieve WEF's mission.
- 3) Advocacy shall be consistent with WEF's mission, critical objectives, and core values, and should focus on providing the scientific and technical foundation upon which sound legislation and sensible rule making can be established.
- 4) Advocacy activities include education of WEF members and other interested parties on public policy issues related to water quality and water resources, equipping them to play a greater role in water policy discussions.

C. Roles and Responsibilities Related to Advocacy Activities

- 1) The **Board of Trustees (BOT)** is the policy-making body of WEF and is responsible for approving policy and leading the development of position statements and for providing general policy direction for WEF advocacy efforts.

- 2) The **Government Affairs Committee (GAC)** advises the BOT on public policy matters, supports the development of position statements, helps determine legislative and regulatory priorities in accordance with the WEF mission, and develops information in support of broad involvement by WEF members, subject matter committees, and Member Associations in public policy activities.
- 3) The **House of Delegates and the Committee Leadership Council**, when requested by the BOT, provides input on WEF policies and initiatives.
- 4) The **Executive Director** advises the BOT on public policy matters, and is responsible for ensuring that advocacy programs and activities are consistent with the policies adopted by the BOT and with all applicable laws and regulations.

D. Supporting Documents

- 1) Position statements are BOT-approved statements on specific issues of importance to WEF and its members, and provide direction for WEF advocacy. Position statements should be developed in accordance with WEF's Position Statement Development Policy.
- 2) WEF may submit written testimony or letters to elected or appointed government officials or staff of government agencies (sometimes jointly with other organizations). This may include comments on pending regulatory proposals. WEF testimony, letters, and comments are developed with input from member experts, are consistent with existing position statements, and include a factual and concise exposition of the issue(s) as well as WEF's consensus views and recommendations.

E. Individuals Representing WEF

- 1) Individuals invited or appointed by WEF staff or the BOT to represent WEF at hearings or public meetings, or as members of government advisory committees, are expected to do so pursuant to the WEF Volunteer Handbook.
- 2) The GAC and staff will assist individuals representing WEF by making them aware of relevant positions, and identifying member experts who can provide additional advice and information.
- 3) WEF recognizes that in some cases, representatives are expected to answer questions from legislators, or contribute to the deliberations of government advisory committees, based upon their own professional or technical expertise beyond what is addressed in WEF adopted positions. In such cases those individuals should state that they are speaking based on their personal expertise and experience rather than representing an approved WEF position.

F. Limitations on Advocacy Activities

- 1) All WEF advocacy activities will comply with IRS 501(c) (3) requirements and other applicable laws and/or regulations.

- 2) WEF will not endorse candidates for elective office or engage in any other partisan political activity.
- 3) WEF will not take a position regarding the appointment of officials of executive branch or regulatory agencies.
- 4) WEF will not endorse specific technical processes, equipment, or local projects.
- 5) WEF will not take a position on state actions, unless it is determined that the action has the potential to establish a national precedent or have regional impact, and WEF has advised/consulted with the appropriate Member Association (s).
- 6) WEF will not intervene or otherwise take a position on matters under litigation, including *Amicus Curiae* briefs, unless there is a significant technical issue in question and the BOT votes to approve that WEF involvement is appropriate.

G. Implementation

- 1) This policy replaces all previously adopted policies governing WEF legislative or regulatory activities.
- 2) The Executive Director will distribute this policy to the House of Delegates, GAC, Committee Leadership Council, and other relevant groups.