



# Stay Up To Date on Your State's Political Process

Civic engagement helps ensure the voices of the public are heard. It is a way to hold political leaders accountable and to protect marginalized groups, such as immigrants, by emphasizing issues that are important to the entire community.

One way to become involved in the political process is to stay up to date with your state legislative process. In 2016 alone, 41 states enacted more than 200 laws on a variety of immigration issues including refugee resettlement, immigrant students' access to higher education, as well as driver's licenses for immigrants. Here are a few suggestions to help you get started:

## Where do I find a bill in my state?

- Sign up for an account on your state legislature's website. Every state posts information about proposed legislation on its legislature's website. Some websites allow you to create an account to receive alerts about newly proposed legislation and to track those that are pending.
- CLINIC Advocacy staff tracks immigration legislative news across the country and provides updates on their progress. Sign up for CLINIC's Advocacy Newsletter (available at [cliniclegal.org/email](http://cliniclegal.org/email))
- Google Alert is also a great way to find and track legislative measures in your state as well as on the federal level. You can set up an account with the format: "[YOUR STATE] immigration [BILL NUMBER]"

## What to do when I find the bill?

Read the bill to understand policies lawmakers are proposing and how they affect your community. You can read the entire bill for free on your state legislature's website. Do not be discouraged if the bill is long or

confusing. Contact CLINIC's advocacy attorneys for assistance at: [advocacy@cliniclegal.org](mailto:advocacy@cliniclegal.org)

## What can I do to support or oppose proposed legislation?

It is your right as an individual to contact your political representative and voice your opinion. If you are considering an organizational response, be sure to follow your organization's procedure for legislative advocacy. Either way, you do not have to do this alone. Contact your state Catholic conference of bishops, or Catholic Charities, to find out if they're planning an official response to the bill and ask what you can do to help. Also consider connecting with other local advocates.

## What other steps can I take to be more involved in my state's political process?

- Ask your pastor or congregation's leadership to speak about your faith's social teaching on immigration
- Host a potluck discussion group
- Organize activities to welcome new Americans to the community
- Be a resource for your neighborhood, parish or civic group
- Reach out to local college campuses and encourage young adults to become aware of the political issues that affect their future. Ask them to work toward positive change.

Stay involved! For more help on how to stay up to date with issues that affect your immigrant community, visit: [cliniclegal.org/programs/advocacy/state-and-local](http://cliniclegal.org/programs/advocacy/state-and-local).

Sign up for CLINIC's Advocacy newsletter at [cliniclegal.org/email](http://cliniclegal.org/email).