

Advocacy Policy

Policy Name	Advocacy Policy
Policy Category	Mission
Policy Number	2006-004
Policy Origination and Review Dates	April 2006; December 2017; July 2019; June, 2025
Requirements	Not required to comply with federal or state statutes
Review Cycle	5 years or earlier if needed
Legal Review Required	No

A. General Policy Statement

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 Strategic Plan. WEF's Advocacy efforts will:

- 1) Provide timely and appropriate advocacy on legislative and regulatory issues.
- 2) Focus on providing the scientific and technical foundation in the water industry upon which sound legislation and sensible rule making can be established.
- 3) 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.

B. Roles and Responsibilities Related to Advocacy Activities

- 1) The **Board of Trustees (BOT)** is the governing body of WEF and holds legal authority and fiduciary responsibilities on behalf of WEF and its membership. In connection, the Board is responsible for approving position statements; for leadership of position statement development and management efforts directly, or through a group so designated by the Board; and for providing general direction for WEF advocacy efforts.
- 2) The **Government Affairs Community (GAC)** advises the BOT on public policy matters, supports the development of position statements, helps determine and advance legislative and regulatory priorities in accordance with the WEF mission, and develops information in support of broad involvement by WEF members, subject matter communities, and Member Associations in public policy activities.

- 3) The **House of Delegates and the Community Leadership Council** provide 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.

C. Supporting Documents

- 1) **Position Statements** are BOT-approved statements that provide direction for WEF advocacy efforts on specific issues of importance to WEF and its members. Position statements are developed through a BOT process that includes: a) issuance of BOT charges to define the purpose, scope, direction, and strategic plan connection for statements and to identify associated statement development teams; b) draft and vetting steps to create concise 1-2 page statements that adhere to BOT templates and guidelines; c) review and approval of draft statements by a majority vote of the BOT; and d) communication of approved statements to appropriate audiences using distribution channels. Approved Position Statements have a five-year life cycle from the BOT approval date. WEF Position Statements not re-affirmed or modified within 5 years of BOT approval will automatically expire and be removed from the WEF website.
- 2) **Written Testimony or Regulatory Comments:** WEF may submit written testimony or regulatory comments to elected or appointed government officials or staff of government agencies (*sometimes jointly with other organizations*). This may include comments on pending regulatory proposals and proposed legislation. WEF testimony, letters, and comments are developed with input from member subject matter experts, are consistent with existing position statements, and include a factual and concise explanation of the issue(s) as well as WEF's consensus views and recommendations. As an educational association, WEF's testimony and comments must be consistent with all relevant federal tax and statutory limitations on direct advocacy and political support restrictions.

D. 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 communities, must be Members in Good Standing and adhere to WEF's Member Code of Conduct and all applicable WEF policies.
- 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.

E. 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 the 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), or the appropriate Member Association has specifically requested WEF's support on the issue or action.
- 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.