

Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida Mission

The Nonprofit Center connects, strengthens and advocates for a strong nonprofit community.



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of Northeast Florida

Connect • Strengthen • Advocate



Essentials Series: Powerful Advocacy

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Meet the Speaker!

Issis Alvarez

(She/Her/Hers)

Program Director

Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida



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Agenda

- Defining advocacy
- The nonprofit sector's duty to advocate
- Developing your advocacy



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Stronger Nonprofits Framework



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The Nonprofit Center connects, strengthens,
and advocates for a strong nonprofit community.

The WHAT

ADVOCACY (identifying, embracing and promoting a cause)

IS NOT NECESSARILY

LOBBYING (attempting to influence specific legislation).



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The LAW

ACCORDING TO THE IRS :

1) No substantial part of a charity's activities includes carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation.

2) Exempt organizations/501(c)(3) (includes charities and churches) may not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.



Election H

“Under the expenditure test, the extent of an organization’s lobbying activity will not jeopardize its tax-exempt status, provided its expenditures, related to such activity, do not normally exceed an amount specified in section 4911. This limit is generally based upon the size of the organization and may not exceed \$1,000,000,..”



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The LAW

Political Activity that is Prohibited:

- Make or solicit contributions to or for candidates or political organizations
- Endorse a candidate or rate the candidates (no matter how objective such rating may be)
- Publish or distribute partisan campaign literature or written statements
- Having your representatives speak out about a candidate
- Using your resources to influence an election



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THE LAW

Activity that is legal:

- Advocating for or against a particular issue as long as that advocacy furthers its mission.
- Candidate Forums
- Regulatory lobbying
- Issue Guides



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NONPROFITS CAN...

LEGALLY

ETHICALLY

EFFECTIVELY

ADVANCE THEIR MISSION

THROUGH

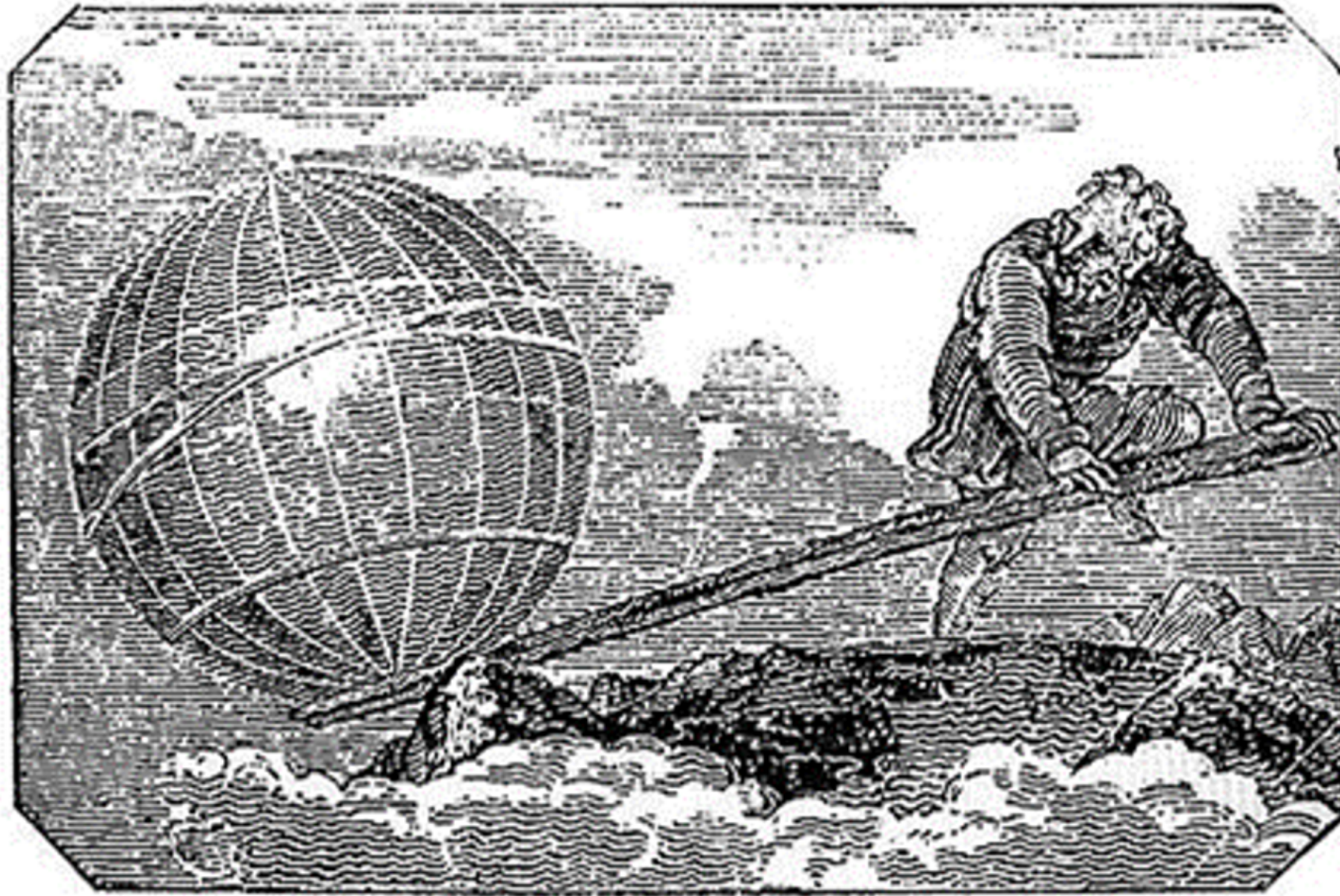
ADVOCACY and LOBBY



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The WHY



" Give me a lever long enough and I alone can move the world."

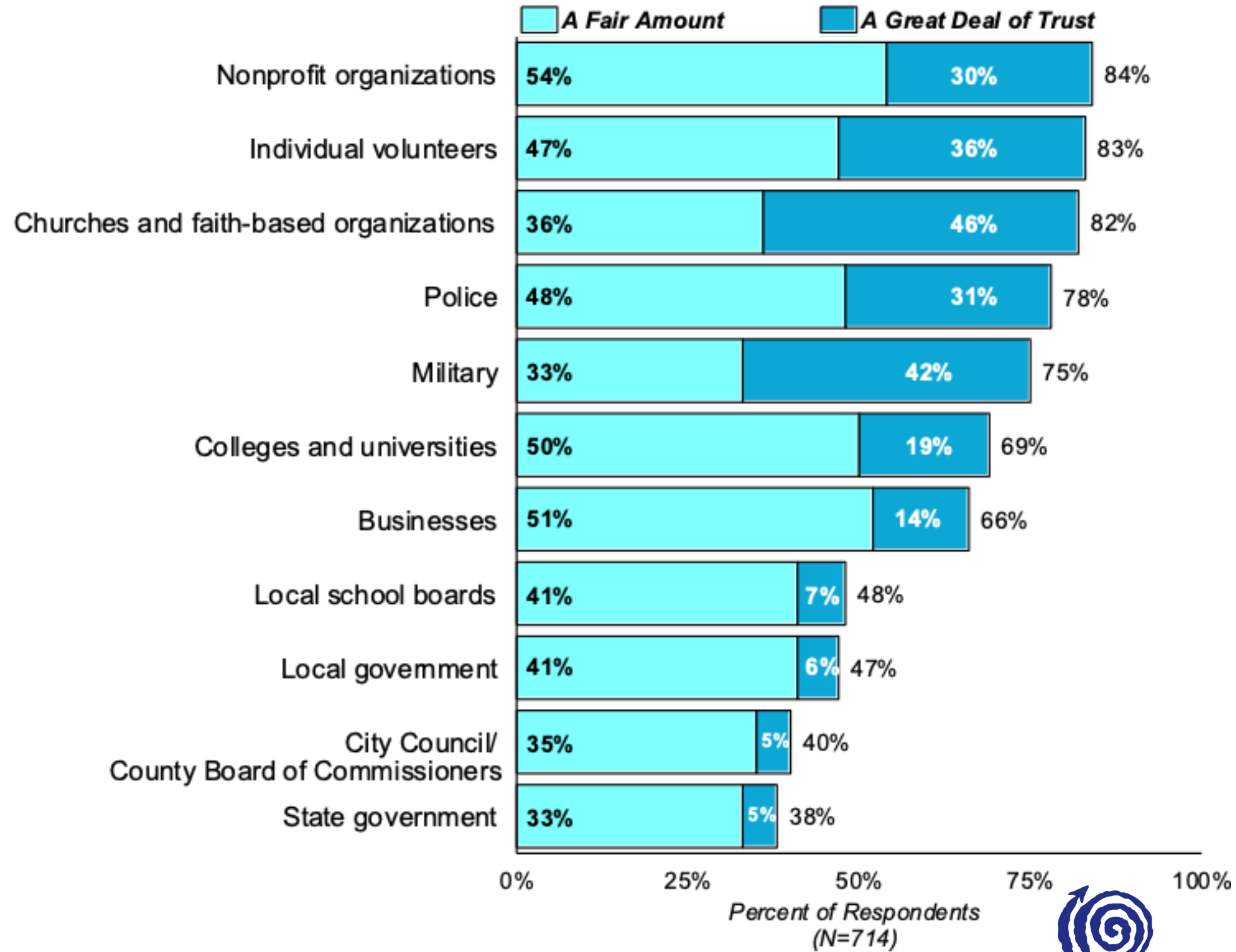


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TRUST:

“To Take Action on Issues”



Expertise and Mission



White Hat

**BOARDS, VOLUNTEERS,
NO PROFIT MOTIVE**

Obedience + Care + Loyalty + Transparency



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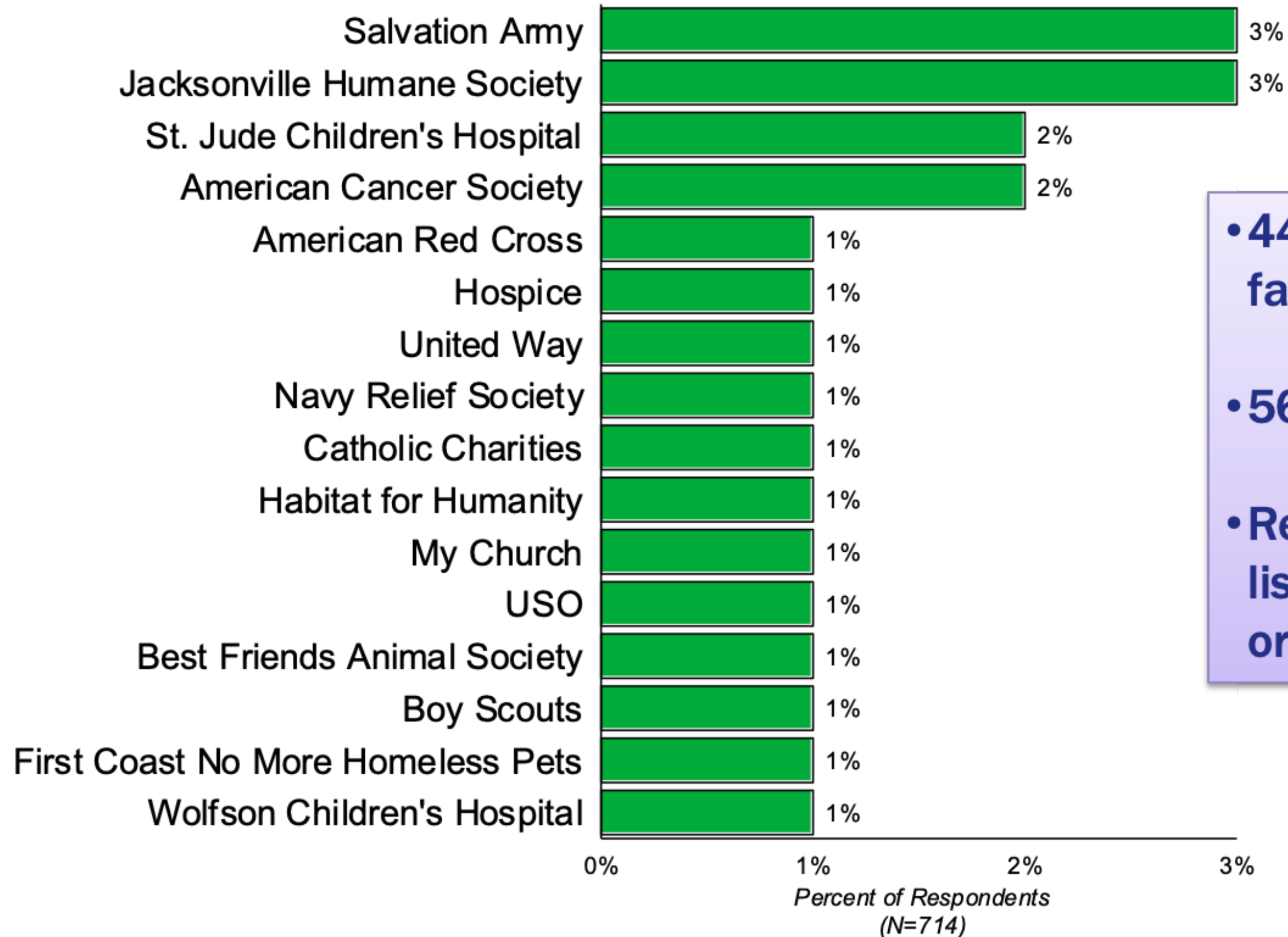
BETTER WORLD!



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Favorite Nonprofit Organizations



- **44% listed a favorite**
- **56% did not**
- **Respondents listed over 140 organizations**

The HOW: Engaging Your Board

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

- Mission, vision, and value definition
- When and how to we speak up?

ASSESSING THE LANDSCAPE

- What are the ecosystems that your organization/work exist in?
- Connection to local, state, and national trends and warning signs

BOARD MEMBERS AS INDIVIDUALS

- Your biggest brand ambassadors
- Nonprofit Center Board member advocacy checklist

PROVIDING RESOURCES

- Fundraising & Budgeting



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Advocacy is a Crucial Board Role

“We need to unleash the power of nonprofit organizations to set priorities in partnership with government, and board leaders are absolutely central to the success of those efforts.”



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**STAND
FOR YOUR
MISSION**

The HOW: Investing Resources

BUDGET

- Create an explicit budget line (understand revenue restrictions)

RESEARCH AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING

- Understand systems that impact the communities you serve & your ability to serve them.

STAFF CAPACITY

- Engage in coalitions and networks
- Balancing advocacy and existing duties



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The HOW: Beneficiary Feedback

Are you leveraging the experiences and voices of those you serve when defining and implementing your advocacy priorities?

Consider...

- Power dynamics can distort or even eliminate naturally occurring feedback loops
- Be more responsive to those you serve and build buy-in
- Learn about what is and is not working about your programs and use that information to drive improvement



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Remember...

- Connecting to networks is integral to staying informed about your ecosystem.
 - Florida Nonprofit Alliance
 - National Council of Nonprofits
 - Mission-based coalitions (homelessness, arts, veterans, etc.)
 - Who do you depend on?
- Developing and executing advocacy is more than one-time checking a box.
- Should be a continuous, strategic investment AND incremental.
- Prepare for the unexpected.



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RESOURCES

1. Board Source “Stand for Your Mission”: <https://boardsource.org/research-critical-issues/stand-mission-advocacy/>
2. Florida Nonprofit Alliance: www.FloridaNonprofits.org
3. National Council of Nonprofits: <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/everyday-advocacy-resources>
4. IRS ELECTION 501 H: <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/taking-the-501h-election>
5. Nonprofit Center Advocacy Resource Center - Coalitions Directory
6. Sample Advocacy/Policy Protocol document: when to engage?



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Your Turn!

- **What are three action items you are taking away from today's session?**
- **If you require more information, what are some sources or networks you can get connected to?**
- **Work on your own advocacy!**



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Thank You!

Issis Alvarez

IAlvarez@Nonprofitctr.org

904-425-8250



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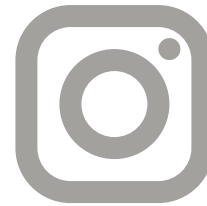
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Thanks for watching!
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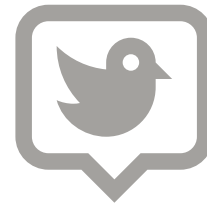
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