As previously discussed, Social Workers have a professional responsibility to influence legislation and policies related to the clients that we serve.

With that said, many of us have numerous demands in our job which limit the time we are able to spend on policy changes; client loads, productivity requirements, funding acquisition, program monitoring and evaluation, responding to funders/stakeholders/oversight bodies/etc. These demands on our time limit our ability to research proposed bills, formulate a persuasive statement to influence policy, and engage with as well as develop relationships with our key legislatures resulting in the barrier of access to key decision makers.

The challenges for the profession are valid and real but with these challenges come opportunities. The opportunities to influence and teach the next generation of Social Workers to not continue living with them but instead to envision where and how we want the profession to be and then to begin taking steps toward that goal. This section of the training will provide you with tips on how to lower both sides of the drawbridge so that you and your student have the ability to influence policy.