



Advocacy Strategies to Advance Policy Change

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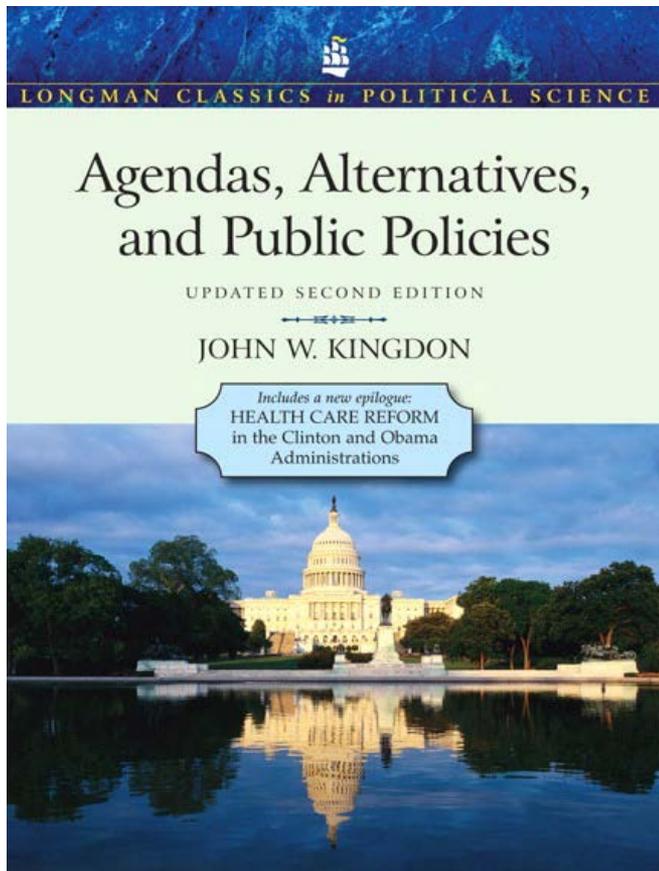
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Overview

- How Does Policy Change?
- The multiple streams approach (Kingdon)
- Applying multiple streams approach to comprehensive housing policy framework
- Additional Strategies
- Strategy Exercise

Theories of Policy Change

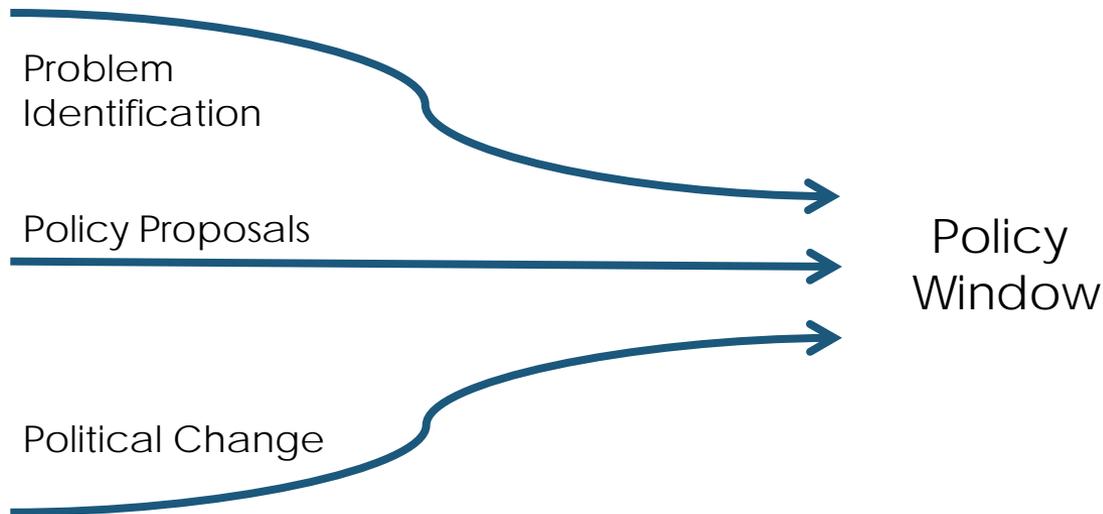


Multiple Theories of Change

- Institutional Analysis & Development Framework
- Garbage Can Model
- Multiple Streams (MS)
- Advocacy Coalition Framework(ACF)
- Policy Diffusion
- Punctuated-Equilibrium
- Social Construction & Policy Design

Kingdon's Agenda-Setting Theory

Policy Stream Convergence



Three Streams and a Window = Policy Change

- The *problem stream* includes the issues that policymakers and citizens want addressed.
- The *politics stream* consists of state and local political environment, which can include public opinion and the partisan control of state legislature.
- The *policy stream* consists of ideas and solutions, developed by experts and policy specialists, waiting to be implemented.
- Policy changes when a **“window” of opportunity** opens and a policy entrepreneur merges the three streams by applying an idea from the policy stream to an issues in the problem stream at a time when the problem/solution coupling is acceptable within the political stream.

How does a problem take hold?

- ▣ Indicators: Assesses magnitude of problem and changes to problem (studies, research, budget consideration, political pressure).
- ▣ Interpretation: Data don't speak for themselves – it is the interpretation of the data that matters in policy making and agenda setting
- ▣ Events: A crisis (OPEB) or disaster (Upper Big Branch)
- ▣ Budget constraints can promote inexpensive policy alternatives like regulations.
- ▣ How a problem is “categorized” (Is health care a “right” or about “prevention”?)
- ▣ Condition vs. Problem: Conditions become problems when we come to believe we should take policy action.

How does a policy take hold?

- ▣ Advocates willing to invest resources – time, energy, reputation, and sometimes money – in the hope of future return.
- ▣ Powerful Ideas: Ideas can be “sticky” and have a bandwagon effect.
- ▣ Softening Up: Pushing ideas in forums and to media, introducing a bill – “greasing the skids.”
- ▣ Survivability: Technically feasible, meets budgetary constraints, and part of “mainstream thinking.”
- ▣ Need awareness of problem and agreement on solutions or proposals.

How does politics impact policy change?

- ▣ National and State Mood: A large number of people are thinking along the same lines.
- ▣ Organized Political Force: Got to have muscle and a “constituency.”
- ▣ Elections: Turnover of key people can cause some issues never to rise and others to be prominent.
- ▣ Jurisdiction: Claims to “turf” between agencies and the legislature.
- ▣ Bargaining and Coalition Building

Policy Windows

- “The separate streams come together at critical times. A problem is recognized, a solution is developed and available in the policy community, a political change makes it the right time for policy change, and potential restraints are not severe.”
- Window can be predictable (Budget Process) or unpredictable (Upper Big Branch).
- When indicators don't bring attention to a problem, a “focusing event” or “crisis” can get the attention of decision makers.
- Windows open because of a change in the political stream (elections) or national mood (deficit reduction).
- Coupling: Attaching a solution to a problem or multiple problems (green jobs: climate change and high unemployment).

“ Problem Surfing” & Windows

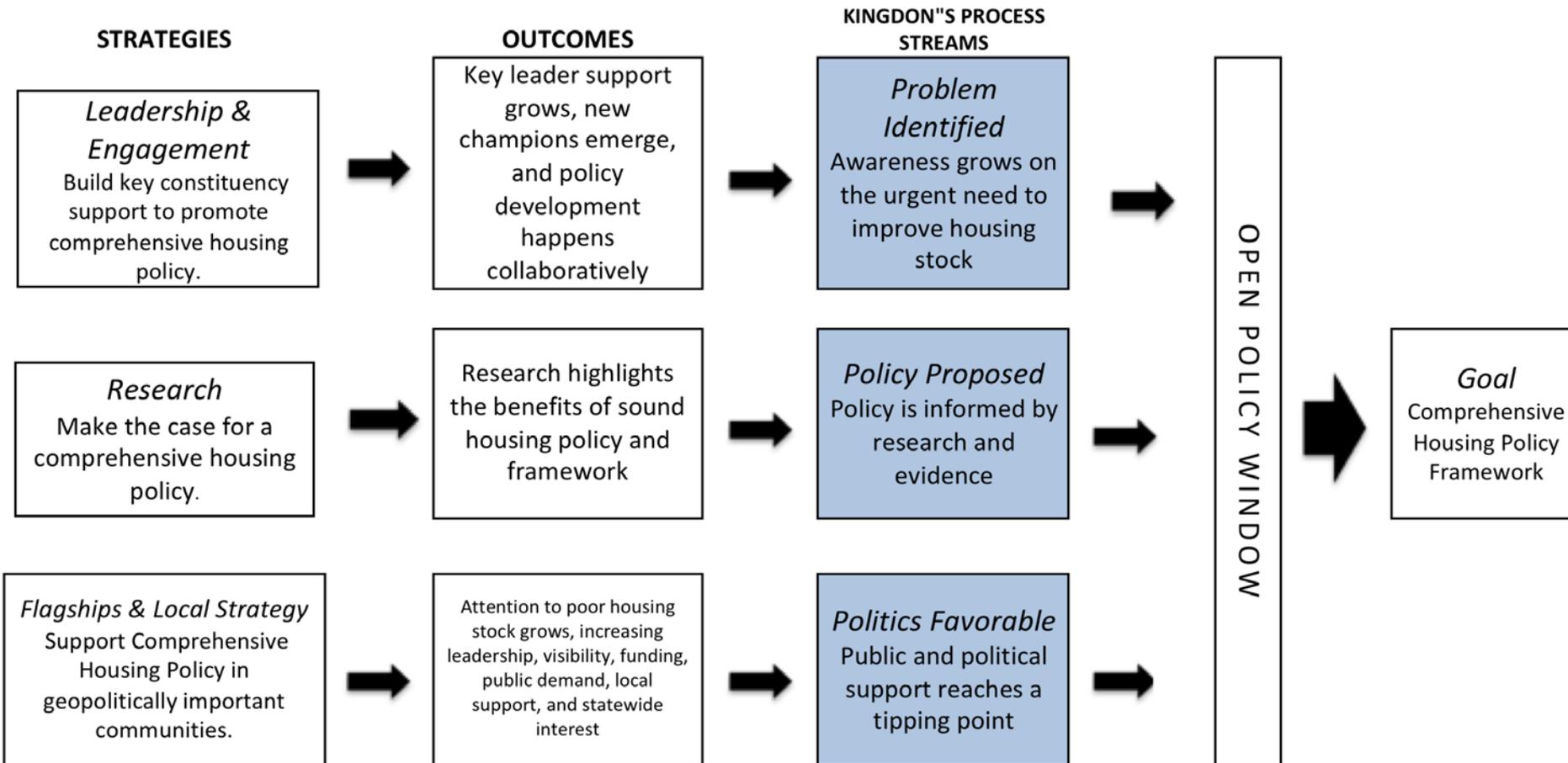


Advocates and experts have ideas for policies, but must wait until the conditions are amenable to their solution.

“People who are trying to advocate change are like surfers waiting for the big wave”

-An analyst for an interest group

Applying Kingdon's theory to Housing Policy Agenda



Getting Housing Policy on the Agenda

- How do we ensure that getting a policy idea – a comprehensive housing policy framework – recognized as a idea “whose time has come” requires that it appear prominently on the policy agenda.
- Are the *problems* that a comprehensive housing policy framework can address recognized and perceived as pressing? What messages are audiences using to talk about the issue?
- How are *proposals* promoting better housing perceived? Are they seen as technically feasible, fiscally viable, and in line with public and policymaker values?
- How are *politics* factoring in? Is support for quality housing perceived as being statewide and with broad constituency support? Who are recognized supporters and opponents of housing policies?
- What is the likelihood that streams will converge to open a *policy window*? Where is housing on the general policy agenda? Where is it on the non-profit advocates’ agenda? What is the likelihood of success and what forces are affecting that likelihood?

Additional Strategies

- Find a “champion” legislator who is willing to invest time, energy, and reputation.
- Find someone directly impacted by poor housing policy (personal story) to be a spokesperson.
- Meet with member of the media and generate stories.
- Attach housing policy to other problems (education reform and housing) or policy goals.
- Set up regional meetings, meet with county commissions and mayors, and local EDAs.
- Build a housing policy website, create a taskforce, develop a presence, latch on to national reports that have WV indicators.
- Who will economically benefit from housing policy change?

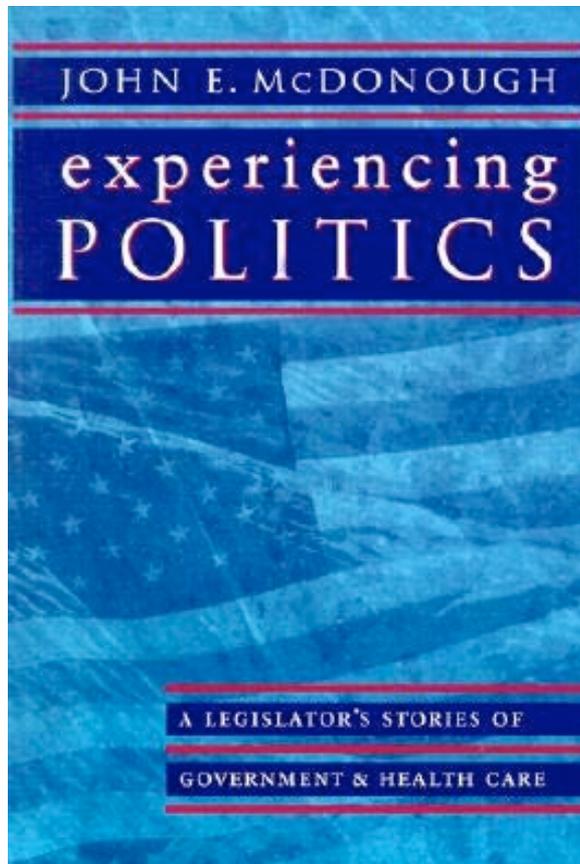
Advocacy Trainings in Morgantown, Huntington & Charleston

- For more information please contact Danielle@wvfree.org or call [\(304\) 342-9188](tel:3043429188)
- **January 23, Weds:** Monongalia Courthouse, 243 High Street , Morgantown WV . 6 - 8 PM
- **February 5, Tues.:** Shawkey Dining Room, 2nd Floor - Marshall University Student Center , Huntington WV . 5 - 7 PM
- **February 6, Weds.:** Covenant House, 600 Shrewsbury Street , Charleston WV . 5:30 - 7:30 PM
- Sponsored by: ACLU WV, Citizen Action Group, Direct Action Welfare Group (DAWG), Fairness WV, Healthy Kids & Families Coalition, NASW WV, Planned Parenthood, WV Coalition Against Domestic Violence, WV Environmental Council, WV Nurses Association, WV Rivers Coalition and WV FREE.

Strategy Activity

- Who are the 1 or 2 possible champions (can be a legislator or other leader) who are best positioned to get you what you want?
- Power Map – Pick One of these Champions
 - What matters most to this person? Who are the people he/she relies on? Who funds them? What are their ambitions?
 - Put yourself in their shoes. What questions will they ask us? What would make them say yes?
 - Can someone schedule a meeting?

QUESTIONS?



Great read on agenda-setting and policy making in Massachusetts.

John E. McDonough: "Experiencing Politics: A Legislator's Stories of Government and Health Care"