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## **Educate, Organize, and Advocate- A Call to Action**

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Social workers across the country are grappling with pressing questions: *What can I do? How do I uphold the values of our profession when policies threaten the very communities I serve, my own family, and even myself?* These are not easy questions, but they are vital ones.

This moment is an opportunity—**a call to action**—not only to use the knowledge and skills we have gained but to reconceptualize what social work is and how it can meet the needs of a changing, and often hostile, social and political landscape.

Social workers can take several actions rooted in hope to shape our future:

1. **Reaffirm Our Values:** Social work is rooted in [principles of social justice, service, and the dignity and worth of every person](#). When policies undermine these values, it is our ethical duty to take a stand. Become unapologetically vocal about injustices and advocate fiercely for those who are most impacted. Use your expertise and contribute to the work of the Center for Innovation in Social Work & Health at Boston University School of Social Work, which launched the [beyond2025](#) Action Hub, to meet the urgency of this moment.
2. **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Social workers are uniquely positioned to connect the dots between individual struggles and systemic issues. Attend and participate in [the National Association of Social Workers- New York State & New York City](#) Continuing Education Programming, adapted to speak to the current climate with relevant, practical steps where necessary. Educating the public about the impacts of certain policies can build broader support for opposition efforts. Stay informed on the work of nonprofits and public health groups who have filed legal challenges against federal aid freezes, highlighting potential harm to community programs.

3. **Legal Action:** Collaborate with legal organizations committed to protecting the rights of marginalized communities. For instance, [Quaker groups](#) recently sued to prevent immigration agents from conducting enforcement actions in houses of worship, arguing that such actions infringe upon religious freedoms. Consider dedicating your time to support other houses of worship in doing the same- or at least, spread the word that this is an option!
4. **Public Protests and Demonstrations:** Peaceful protests, such as the People's March held on January 18, 2025, in Washington, D.C., allowed citizens to voice their opposition to specific policies to protect progress, resist harmful policies, and fight for justice and equality. Participating in organizing or providing support in peaceful demonstrations is also action and a way for social workers to get involved.
5. **Advocacy and Lobbying:** Advocacy is not optional; it is essential to our work. Engaging with elected officials through calls, letters, and meetings can influence policy decisions. Collective efforts by community groups can amplify their concerns and push for legislative changes. Join NASW-NYS & NYC for its [Capitol Action Day](#) on February 11, 2025, in Albany at the Capitol. Meet your legislators, learn how to engage and build community with them and other social workers within the field.
6. **Professional Solidarity:** Join forces with professional associations, such as the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), to present a unified stance against policies that harm the communities we serve. NASW cannot do this alone, we need all social workers to join us as we implement strategies to protect communities across the country. Action can also include joining NASW-NYS/NYC committees and special interest groups that are providing space for next steps.
7. **Community Support Initiatives:** Establish and/or contribute to local support networks that can help those affected by federal policies. For example, the Navajo Nation has advised its members to carry state-issued identification to prevent wrongful detention during immigration raids.

As we navigate these uncertain times, we must remember that social work is not just about responding to crises, it is about preventing harm, dismantling injustice, and building a more equitable future.

Let this communication be a powerful reminder that our efforts must be continuous and intentional. We must believe in the possibility of radical transformation, and we must work toward it relentlessly. This is a defining moment for our profession.

Let's turn our collective frustration and fear into meaningful action and demonstrate what it truly means to uphold the core mission of social work.

**Now is the time to lead. Now is the time to act. Let's rise to the occasion.**