

Advocacy



Sustainability Showcase

September 23, 2018

Advocacy with Elected Officials

E.g., Senators, Representatives, Delegates, County Supervisors

Key goal: Persuade your elected official that you care enough about an issue for it to motivate your voting behavior in the next election.

Takeaway: Just signing a petition or form letter won't do it.



WHAT ELECTED OFFICIALS CARE A LOT ABOUT	WHAT THEY DON'T CARE MUCH ABOUT
Verified constituents from their legislative district (or state for U.S. Senators)	People from outside their legislative district (or state for U.S. Senators)
Advocacy that requires effort — the more effort, the more they care: calls, personal emails, and especially showing up in person in the district	Petitions, form letters, a tweet, or a Facebook comment (unless they generate widespread attention)
Local press and editorials, maybe national press	Wonky DC-based news
An interest group's endorsement	Your thoughtful analysis of a proposed bill
Groups of constituents, locally famous individuals, or big individual campaign contributors	A single constituent
Concrete asks that entail a verifiable action — vote for a bill, make a public statement, etc.	General ideas about the world
A single ask in your communication — letter, email, phone call, office visit, etc.	A laundry list of all the issues you're concerned about

Forms of Advocacy

- Generally ineffective – minimal effort, minimal impact
 - Petitions
 - Social media messaging (Twitter, Facebook, etc.)
- More effective
 - Letters – limit to one issue, be succinct, include specific “ask” (e.g., support or oppose bill identified by name and number)
 - Emails – same – better than letter if action is needed in near future
 - Phone calls – same – particularly good for current hot-button issues

- Most effective – greater effort, greater impact
 - Visits to official's office – bring a group to meet with the elected official or member of his/her staff
 - Attendance at town hall meeting or other public event – bring a group with prepared questions to ask
 - Letters to the editor – keep it short, focused, and interesting; mention elected official you are trying to influence by name
- More detailed guidance available on CCH website, www.cfoch.weebly.com
 - Click on Areas of Interest > Advocacy > Advocacy 101

Advocacy with Family and Friends

- Talk with family members, friends, and others about issues of concern to you
 - Help educate them and encourage them to get involved in addressing the issues
- Use in-person conversations, phone calls, emails, and social media messaging to
 - provide relevant information
 - point them to reliable sources
 - invite them to meetings or educational events
 - ask them to join you in advocacy efforts

Advocacy with Corporations

- Letters, emails, and letters to the editor can work with corporations too, particularly as part of a coordinated campaign involving many others
 - Corporations are sensitive to how they're viewed by their customers and shareholders
- Other tools available for influencing corporations:
 - public awareness campaigns to change customers' purchasing decisions
 - boycotts and divestment campaigns
 - bringing corporate behavior to the attention of regulatory agencies and lawmakers

Advocacy with the Church

- Forms of advocacy could include
 - Letters or emails to the USCCB or one's own bishop or pastor
 - Meetings with them or their staffs
 - Letters to the editor of Catholic publications
- Can join with others who are working both within the Church and in the public sphere to advance policies consistent with Catholic Social Teaching, e.g.,
 - Catholic Climate Covenant
 - Franciscan Action Network

Advocacy Resources and Networks



UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF
CATHOLIC BISHOPS

<http://usccb.org>

Current issue: support for Clean Power Plan or suitable replacement



Catholic Climate Covenantsm
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org>

Current issue: Catholic Climate Declaration/Catholics Are Still In campaign in support of Paris climate agreement



The Global Catholic
Climate Movement

<https://catholicclimatemovement.global>

Current issue: Fossil fuels divestment by Catholic institutions



<https://vacatholic.org>

2018 General Assembly Advocacy

Bill	Description	Senate Committee	House Committee	VCC Position	Outcome
HB 1974	Requires legislative approval for state implementation plan to regulate carbon dioxide emissions.	Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources	Commerce and Labor	OPPOSE	Left in conference committee.
HB 2018	Requires Governor to seek state membership in carbon trading program, devoting revenues to shoreline resiliency fund.	N/A	Commerce and Labor Energy Subcommittee	SUPPORT	Defeated in subcommittee.
SB 1471; SB 1496	Requires Governor to seek state membership in carbon trading program, devoting revenues to shoreline resiliency fund.	Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources	N/A	SUPPORT	Defeated in committee.
SB 917	Relaxes regulations for farmers wishing to participate in net-metering with public utilities.	Commerce and Labor Renewable Energy Subcommittee	N/A	SUPPORT	Incorporated into SB 1394.
SJ 297	Directs JLARC to study coastal flooding adaptation and resiliency efforts.	Rules	N/A	SUPPORT	Defeated in committee.

For more information, contact

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