



CLEAN: Citizen Legislative Early Action Network
presents

Making Your Voice Heard

INFLUENCING YOUR STATE AND
FEDERAL LEGISLATORS

EXPANDING CLEAN'S AGENDA:

In order to have maximum effect at the State level we need to have more members from more districts. We do this by:

- ★ reaching out to advocates like us in other counties and districts via networking and town halls, increasing the overall number of engaged constituents.

In turn, we encourage those advocates to contact THEIR Reps and Senators — creating a ripple effect!



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MEETING WITH STATE LEGISLATORS AND CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS:

- ★ You pay their salary — they work for you!
- ★ Cultivate a good rapport with the staff — they can be helpful.
- ★ Generally, public officials appreciate constituent visits.



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DOs & DON'Ts when meeting with legislators or staff — state or federal:

DO:

- ★ Introduce yourself.
- ★ Stick to your subject.
- ★ Be on time (but you may have to wait).
- ★ Write a summary of the meeting afterward for follow up.
- ★ Thank legislators/staffers (especially if they listened)



DOs & DON'Ts:

Even if your topic is greatly concerning —

- ★ Don't be angry.
- ★ Don't threaten.
- ★ Don't be afraid to be assertive — follow up on the answers you do get (keep track).



PITFALLS:

- ★ Official or staffer doesn't show up
- ★ Constant interruptions
- ★ Official or congressional staffer tries to take control of the meeting so you don't get to your point



THE TEN TOP STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL VISIT WITH A LEGISLATOR OR STAFFER:

- ★ **ONE:** Practice beforehand.
- ★ **TWO:** Develop at most 3 talking points.
- ★ **THREE:** Go with a group of other advocates — define your arguments and who should give them.



TEN TOP STEPS (continued):

- ★ **FOUR:** Come early — especially when attending hearings on bills (the room number often gets changed).
- ★ **FIVE:** Humanize, localize, personalize the issues — what is the impact *on people*?
- ★ **SIX:** Listen to the legislator or staffer.
- ★ **SEVEN:** Match your points to the concerns of the legislator.



TEN TOP STEPS (continued):

- ★ **EIGHT:** If asked a question and you are not sure of the answer, say so, and get back to them.
- ★ **NINE:** Close the deal — make sure you tell the legislator or staffer what you want them to do (Example: Vote NO or YES on a bill.
- ★ **TEN:** *Most important* — **BE YOURSELF** — talk about what you know, what you care about and why. If you have a personal story, tell it.



TESTIFYING BEFORE A COMMITTEE:

- ★ As you enter a committee hearing, you will see sheets to sign in to testify. Identify yourself as a person speaking for or against a bill (there may be multiple sign-up sheets for bills out on the table. *Be sure to remember the bill number you are testifying for.*)



TESTIFYING (continued):

- ★ When your name is called (Chair usually goes back and forth between pro and con), you sit up front WITH the legislator who has submitted the bill.
- ★ They will greet you (usually) whether you are for or against their bill.
- ★ You get 3 minutes to speak. Get close to the mike, speak slowly and clearly. Green, yellow and red lights indicate time.



TESTIFYING (continued):

- ★ If you need to leave the room, give your name to the Sergeant At Arms. That way, if you are called, he can say that you will be back and want to testify.



TESTIFYING STRATEGIES:

Interest groups often bring two or 3 testifiers up at once and each one gets the 3 minutes — that way they extend their time.

THERE ARE SEVERAL THINGS YOU CAN DO:

- ★ You can ask that like-minded citizens in the audience raise their hands after your testimony
- ★ You can send a friendly legislator your testimony in advance so they can ask you questions and extend your time.



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TESTIFYING STRATEGIES

(continued):

- ★ You can also ask the Sgt. At Arms to give copies of your testimony to legislators on the committee.
- ★ The more controversial the bill is, the longer the wait will be for testimony. (Think gun safety legislation) Bring snacks and water.



IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TESTIFY,
there are other ways to influence a
Legislator:

- ★ Personal emails — NOT group blasts.
The more the better.
- ★ Phone calls and messages. All the legislators
have voice mail for their phones.
- ★ Use the same approach for these as for
face-to-face meetings.
- ★ Scheduled appointments with a legislator.



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OTHER WAYS TO INFLUENCE A LEGISLATOR:

TIP — If speaking to a legislator who is not in your district, mention any expertise or personal experience you have regarding the subject of the bill. They may be more inclined to listen.

★ Reach out to others who are constituents in other districts by visiting Town Halls. (This is part of our 2017 strategy.)



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OTHER WAYS TO INFLUENCE A LEGISLATOR (continued):

- ★ Contact the Chair of the Committee regarding a bill and ask others (constituents) to do so as well.



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INCORPORATING “INDIVISIBLE” INTO CLEAN:

Congressional staffers have made public *The Indivisible Guide* to help “We the People...” resist the egregious policies of the 2017 Congress and President-elect. We have work to do at the local, state, and federal level and the following tips from *The Indivisible Guide* will help us in that effort. (The entire guide has been sent to CLEAN members.)



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CONSIDERATIONS TO MAKE AS A CLEAN MEMBER:

- ★ Decide which issues and areas you care about most.
- ★ Decide where you want to put most attention toward — Local, State, or Federal (the conference calls will deal mostly with State and Federal bills and issues, but remember, local issues, like fracking, for example, will come up in relation to State bills).



INDIVISIBLE GUIDELINES FOR INFLUENCING MoCs:

When it comes to constituent interactions, **Members of Congress** care about things that make them look good, responsive, and hardworking to the people of their district. In practice, that means that they care about some things very much, and other things very little.

In reality, they want to be re-elected.

This is true of all elected officials —
from City Council to President.



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WHAT GETS MoCs' ATTENTION?:

- ★ Verified Constituents
- ★ Advocacy that requires effort — personal emails, calls, and showing up in person, especially in the district, state Capitol and city council meetings
- ★ Local press and editorials
- ★ *Groups* of constituents
- ★ Concrete asks — Vote for/against a bill, making a public statement etc.



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WHAT MoCs' DON'T WANT:

Some MoCs will go to great lengths to avoid bad outcomes — even as far as changing their positions or public statements.

CONCRETE EXAMPLES —

- ★ Constituent posts letter on social media saying they didn't get their questions answered
- ★ Constituent posts that MOC is unresponsive and untrustworthy



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WHAT MoCs' DON'T WANT (continued):

- ★ Local newspapers report on angry constituents “sitting in” or visiting official offices with complaints.
- ★ Office phones are deluged with calls objecting to bills or other legislation.
- ★ Groups of constituents stage an event outside a MoCs' district office and invite press to hear how a bill will hurt them and their families personally.



FOUR ADVOCACY TACTICS THAT WORK:

1. Town halls. MoCs regularly hold public in-district events to show that they are listening to constituents. Make them listen to you, and report out when they don't.

2. Non-town hall events. MoCs love cutting ribbons and kissing babies back home. Don't let them get photo-ops without questions about racism, authoritarianism, and corruption.



FOUR ADVOCACY TACTICS THAT WORK (continued):

3. District office sit-ins/meetings. Every MoC has one or several district offices. Go there. Demand a meeting with the MoC. Report to the world if they refuse to listen.

4. Coordinated calls. Calls are a light lift but can have an impact. Organize your local group to barrage your MoCs at an opportune moment about and on a specific issue.



WHY SHOULD YOU BE A CLEAN MEMBER?:

- ★ Regular contact with like-minded people
- ★ Contact information for Local, and State Public Officials as well as MOCs — including facebook, phone numbers, email addresses, and district and DC office addresses in one easily accessible place
- ★ Early access to accurate information through Conference Calls
- ★ Build Hope and fight Depression



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*“Every moment is an organizing opportunity,
every person a potential activist, every minute
a chance to change the world.”*

— DELORES HUERTA



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“So enjoy the holidays, including Star Wars. Then come back after New Year’s and find a place for yourself, at whatever level, wherever you are, in the struggle for democracy. This is the fight of our lives and how it ends is up to us.”

— BILL MOYERS, DEC. 22, 2015



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