

HOST A HOUSE PARTY



One of the most effective ways to resist regressive policies and win legislative battles is to organize local communities to take coordinated action. You don't have to have a lot of time to be an activist making a difference. Check out a few options we've come up with to help you get started:

Strategy huddle with friends. Round up friends and neighbors for an informal conversation on issues important to your community. Finding a space where folks from your community can come together to identify shared goals and brainstorm ways your group can act locally to make a difference is an important first step in coordinated and sustainable organizing!

Since your huddle group can serve as a mobilizing resource for future actions, be sure to keep contact info of attendees. Follow up with ways they can continue to take action. In the future, your huddle can reunite to attend town halls, protests and rallies, or to put on your own event!

In your outreach, don't be afraid to cast a wide net. Chances are there are a lot of great community organizations already doing good work. Consider reaching out to these groups to join the conversation or host an informative talk and Q&A with your attendees.

Phone banking and letter writing sessions. If your group wants to start taking action right away, use your house party as an opportunity to call and write to legislators. These are light lifts for a host, but can be an impactful way to tell legislators community members' stories.

Remember, your citizen lobbying doesn't need to be limited to federally elected officials. Let your city council members or mayor's office know you're paying attention too.

Keep track of your legislators by signing up for their Google Alerts and any pending legislation; then be prepared to call your elected officials out if they aren't standing up for constituent interests.

PHONE BANKING CHECKLIST

- **Find the phone numbers for your local elected officials.** You can usually find your local officials' office phone numbers on their websites.
- **Decide on a single issue or question to raise per call.** If you are calling after normal work hours be prepared to leave a voicemail. Keep your message simple and include what stance or action you are urging your elected leader to make.
- **Draft a sample call script.** Come up with a brief call script your attendees can use to easily articulate how they feel about an issue or upcoming piece of legislation and include your ask. You can check out our sample dialogue below for inspiration and to get an idea of what you'll face on the other end of the line.

SAMPLE CALL DIALOGUE

Staffer: *Mayor Hancock's office, how can I help you?*

Caller: *Hi there, I'm a constituent of Mayor Hancock's. I'm calling regarding the immigration raids. Can I please speak with the staffer who handles immigration issues?*

Staffer: *I'd be happy to take down your message. Can I ask for your name, address and your comments?*

Caller: *Absolutely. I'm calling to ask what actions the mayor taking on the unlawful ICE immigration raids taking place in our town. Our town is built on the hard work of our immigrant communities and I want to know what Mayor Hancock will do to protect them from Trump's deportation force.*

Staffer: *I appreciate you sharing your concerns. I will absolutely pass on your message to the appropriate staff member.*

Caller: *I want to reiterate that I hired Mayor Hancock with my vote and I fully expect her to stand up for us. Can you tell me what the mayor's stance is on this issue? If the mayor has not taken a position, I find that unacceptable and will be notifying my friends, family and local media that Mayor Hancock does not think it is her job to represent her constituents.*

LETTER WRITING CHECKLIST

- **Have a stack of paper, postcards, and pens ready.** Let your attendees write about issues that matter to them or focus your efforts on a single issue that is facing your community.
- **Sign, seal, deliver!** Share postage stamp buying and mailing responsibilities amongst attendees. Your legislators' mailbox addresses are also listed on their website.

Host a community meeting with your local lawmakers and support candidates in local races. If your strategy huddle has been meeting regularly and producing good turnout and ideas, consider inviting your state senator, mayor, or city council member to your next strategy meeting. Local elected leaders are always looking for ways to get facetime with constituents in a forum where they can hear from you and share their ideas for improving policies. Call-up your legislator's office and put in a request with their scheduler to get your elected at your next event.

If you don't necessarily have legislative allies, consider supporting candidates in local races that are good on progressive policies. The groundwork for 2018 races is starting now, so find your nearest swing district, get your huddle group together, and volunteer to knock on doors or make phone calls for a few hours each month.

Start a Generation Progress Chapter. Lastly, if your huddle group wants to keep the momentum going by establishing a Generation Progress chapter on your campus or in your community, please reach out to us at hello@genprogress.org to get you started with some more formal guidance and training for resisting the Trump agenda in 2017 and beyond.