



Advocacy 101

There are many ways to be an effective advocate for climate policy, energy efficiency, and renewable energy. Work your way up the Iowa IPL “Ladder of Engagement” to develop your skills and take concrete actions as a climate advocate.

1. Learn the basics about climate change and its impacts.
2. Share what you’ve learned with others in your faith community.
3. Form a “Green Team” in your congregation for education and action.
4. Send an email to your Member of Congress, telling them why you care about climate change as a person of faith.
5. Write a Letter to the Editor about the issue of climate change.
6. Generate an Op-Ed in your local newspaper on the issue of climate change.
7. Write a letter to your Member of Congress about climate change impacts.
8. Call your Member of Congress, or speak to their staff member who works with climate and energy policy.
9. Ask a question at your Member of Congress’ town hall meeting, or at a candidate appearance.
10. Meet face to face with your Member of Congress.

Letters to the editor, which are read by the general public as well as by elected officials, candidates for office, and their staff members, can be an effective way of moving public opinion on a subject. When constructing your letter, remember that it is best if you can write in response to an article or letter which was recently published. Be sure to reference the article in your letter. In addition, most newspapers will not publish a letter which is longer than 250 words, so be concise. Be sure to check the guidelines for your local paper, and include your contact information so they can confirm with you. If your letter is published, send a copy of the letter to your Members of Congress for even greater impact.

Following is a sample Letter to the Editor. This can be adapted for your use in your local setting.

Sample Letter to the Editor

In Iowa we have seen first-hand the devastating impacts of climate disasters, including flooding, severe storms, and drought throughout our state. We have also seen the images of climate disasters in other parts of our world. From the displacement of millions of people due to flooding, storms, and rising sea levels, to the spread of disease and the loss of species, the evidence of climate change continues to grow.

As a person of faith, I am called to care for Earth and all of its inhabitants. This includes taking steps to lower my impact by reducing my household’s energy consumption. But without comprehensive national climate and energy policies, I am afraid that my contribution is like a drop of water in the ocean. I call on our Members of Congress to put aside their differences and work toward policies which will prevent future climate disasters, and mitigate the effects of those which we cannot prevent, for the good of Earth and all living things.

Name

City, State