



Citizens' Climate Lobby

Dialing Congress Campaign

What is this project?

Some CCL chapters have successfully used an ongoing daily system that ensures their member(s) of Congress receive a small number of phone calls every day from different constituents. If you'd like to move your member of Congress on an issue via a steady drumbeat of daily calls, then you may want to launch a Dialing Congress campaign in your chapter or district or state.

Why it is important?

We are sometimes told by members of Congress and their aides that, "We don't hear much from constituents about climate change, and nothing is more powerful in getting our attention that written letters and phone calls." This way, MOC's are hearing from their constituents every day about climate change.

*A key goal is to hear someone in your congressional office say, "we seem to be receiving a lot of calls asking my boss to enact climate legislation." And then use this opening to meet with the member of Congress.

What are the benefits?

At least two times per year, CCL has a Call Congress day on which every member of Congress receives a surge of calls from CCL volunteers. With the Dialing Congress Caller project, members of Congress also receive both a steady stream of support from constituents punctuated by the occasional flood of calls on our national call-in days. These phone calls also give volunteer constituents the opportunity to inform their MOC's of climate related topics, or educate them on the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act.

How does it work?

Your chapter's Dialing Congress Campaign will sign up and support volunteers to regularly call their Members of Congress, with enough volunteers participating so that every week day

is covered by 3-5 volunteers. Any group of CCL volunteers can set up a steady long-term drumbeat of phone calls to a member of Congress using the following four steps:

1. Create and promote an online signup sheet/form where volunteers can enroll to become a member of the calling team. Each person commits to calling once a month on a regular schedule, such as every first Monday.
2. Create a calling schedule that describes, (1) who will call on what days, (2) the phone numbers to call and the script, and (3) a simple way to report that they have called.
3. Implement a reminder and follow up system to make sure volunteers remember when to call, as well have the information needed to make the calls.
4. Create a way for team members to report that they made their calls and ensure that members who don't make their calls receive a friendly one-on-one reminder or check-in.

Where to begin:

Registering for the “Dialing Congress Campaign”:

- Create a Google Form for volunteers to register and specify details regarding the project.
 - You might copy this example:
<https://goo.gl/forms/hMMYj9P2Jh8UYzZt2>

Reporting calls for the “Dialing Congress Campaign”:

- Create *another* Google Form for volunteers to log the call(s) that they have made.
- Include a link to the form within the Reminder/Follow-Up email
 - You might copy this example:
<https://goo.gl/forms/U5wldSwwQqbX9h6A2>

How to set up a Google Form:

Step 1: Set up a new form

1. Go to forms.google.com.
2. Click Blank  .
3. A new form will open.

Step 2: Edit and format a form

You can add, edit, or format text, images, or videos in a form.

- [Edit your form](#)
 - Include information such as: Name, Email, District, Week options for each month, Day of the week, Time, Congresspeople, etc.
- [Choose where to save form responses](#)
 - You can save the responses in a Google Spreadsheet so that you can keep track of everyone who has registered for you project.
 - Responses will automatically populate to the spreadsheet when volunteers submit the form.
 - This is to help you stay organized, as well as create your calling schedules for each week.

Step 3: Send your form for people to fill out

When you are ready, you can [send your form to others](#) and collect their responses.

***Note:** We recommend that you create **two** separate Google Forms (as well as two response spreadsheets): One for volunteers to register for the project and one for volunteers to log when they have made their call(s).

Advice and tips for administrators/organizers

- Keep your emails to participants as short as possible, and put the most important information at the top using bullet points.
- Remind your group leaders to regularly ask for new volunteers. Sending a report to group leaders on how many calls were made each month or quarter can help motivate more participation.
- Having a partner or small committee to share the work can keep you going too!
- In your advice or script for your callers, stay focused on climate. Don't bring in other issues, not even as an appreciation, because it will muddy the focus of the call.

Supporting your callers

It's normal that some people sign up and don't call. People have many distractions to pull them away from their good intentions. 50% is a good rate, but you are welcome to do better than that! Try these tips to get the most number of people calling:

- Send personal reminders to people who don't report their calls. The more connected they feel to you, the more they won't want to let you down by failing to call.
- Let participants know how many calls were made each month and how it related to your campaign's goals.
- Newer participants often need more encouragement so pay extra attention to them. Once someone has done it 3-4 months in a row they have formed a habit that keeps them going.
- Be sure to share any encouraging news from your members of Congress, such as lobby meetings held or good positions taken or signs of decreased opposition.
- If someone has not reported any calls for 3-4 months, call and ask if they have any suggestions for how to make it work better for them or if they would like to be removed from the campaign.

Outreach Tactics

The hardest part of generating a sustained number of calls is often getting enough people to sign up to make the calls. Sending an email to your chapter's roster is a great start, but what do you do after that? Below is a list of ideas you could try to get more constituents to sign up to call their member of Congress.

- Call CCL volunteers who live in that district and ask them to sign up to call
- Ask the chapter members to invite their friends to sign up to call. You could make a friendly competition for who could get the most people they know to sign up.
- Attend a local community event like a neighborhood association meeting, make an announcement about what you are doing, and pass a [paper sign up sheet](#) around.
- Set up one on one meetings with people who know lots of people in the district, and ask that person to help recruit 5-10 sign ups.
- Go to a public event like a festival or a farmers market with sign up sheets and ask people to sign up to call.

Generally, be creative. Don't limit yourself to the CCL list, try new things, find what works and keep doing that.

Reminder/Follow-up Email Example:



Dear Dialing Congress Campaign Volunteer,

Thank you for being part of our project to have our Senators/Representative hear from constituents every day that climate action is important to us. It's your week to call your Senators, based on the day of the month you chose when you registered for this project. (see the schedule below).

Report your calls here: [\[Insert Google Form link for logging calls\]](#)

Phone numbers to call:

Senator [\[Insert name\]](#): [\[Insert number\]](#) Senator [\[Insert name\]](#): [\[Insert number\]](#)

Suggested ask: [\[Insert here\]](#)

Read on for more details, and thank you--yours calls make a difference!

Call Schedule for the week - If your assigned day doesn't work for you, just call on another day, it's flexible!

- Monday, Feb 4: [\[insert names\]](#)
- Tuesday, Feb 5: [\[insert names\]](#)
- Wednesday, Feb 6: [\[insert names\]](#)
- Thursday, Feb 7: [\[insert names\]](#)
- Friday, Feb 8: [\[insert names\]](#)

Please invite others to join this project! They can [register here](#) [\[Insert Google Form link for registration\]](#) just by clicking on the link.

1. The Plan

Call both Senators, [Insert Congresspersons' name], on the day you are assigned between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm (see 'Call Schedule' above)

It is also ok to call after hours and leave a message.

- Please let us know you know you made your calls by clicking here afterwards: [Call Log Form](#) [Insert Google Form link for logging calls]
- Wait until next month for your next assignment (will not necessarily be at the beginning of the month, will come the weekend before you are assigned)

2. The Call

Since this is a CCL initiative, we ask that our callers use the "CCL Way" in working with our representatives, which is communicating with gratitude and respect. We know that there is a place for protest, but our approach is to build consensus so that our representatives continue to have positive meetings and dialogue with us. And if you are nervous, don't worry! You will not actually speak with either Senator, you will speak with a staffer who just listens and tallies the concerns of each caller. Every call will include three parts:

1. Tell them your name and where you are from.
2. Let them know why you are concerned about climate change (options to choose from if needed are below).
3. [Insert Ask Here].

Recent Climate Events (Choose One) or your own reason for interest * [Insert your own articles/events]

- The world's oceans are heating up faster than predicted; 40% more than was estimated by a UN scientific panel 5 years ago.
- The Uof M's Department of Soil, Water and Climate reported that MN is one of the fastest warming states in the country; we're losing our winters, and could lose our forests.
- Scientists from 13 federal agencies recently published a report (National Climate Assessment) stating that climate change will dramatically hurt our economy.

Thanks so much for making your calls, and remember to come back to this email and log them by clicking on: [Call Log Form](#) [Insert Google Form link for logging calls].

[Insert Name], CCL Volunteer (or title) | [Insert Email]