

Spring Advocacy Action Guide

Advocacy is about building a relationship with your members of Congress and their staff as well as mobilizing your community around important issues. Spring is the time to grow! Build on your fall actions to engage your community and continue to cultivate relationships with your members of Congress and their staff.

As a CRS Club, you are expected to take one (or more!) of the following actions to help your community use the information they learned in the fall and engage your CRS Club in the advocacy process!

Use the **CRS Club Action Calendar** on crs.org/CRSclubs to help focus your actions. Plan opportunities to mobilize your community by pairing your actions with one of the key dates highlighted on the calendar.

Don't forget to report your actions on your **CRS Club End-of-Year Report** to ensure that CRS can record and celebrate your outstanding efforts!

Campus-Wide Actions

Take at least one of these actions to fulfill your Club advocacy expectation for the spring.

PLAN A VISIT TO A CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE

There is nothing more impactful than in-person meetings with your members of Congress.¹ Whether in Washington, DC, or back home in the local office, your meetings help develop relationships and can shape policy. This may require permission forms and transportation. Start planning with your CRS Club Advisor early.

HOST A TOWN HALL OR SITE-VISIT

Invite a member of Congress or their staff to join you on your campus to talk to your student body. Plan at least 7 weeks in advance as congressional schedules fill up fast. Make sure that your Club members are ready with information about the Impact Issues and specific, respectful questions for the member of Congress or staffer. Reach out to your local CRS staff member for help with logistics and planning.

SEND A SIGNED LETTER OR PETITION FROM YOUR SCHOOL

Invite everyone on your campus to sign a letter of concern to your member of Congress regarding an Impact Issue, then include a cover letter from the school. Make sure to secure the approval of your school before taking this action. Pair this action with a tabling event.

PUBLIC WITNESS

Build on your fall expression of public witness by inviting members of local media to cover a meeting at the flagpole or a prayerful walk to demonstrate your community's support for one of the Impact Issues. Be sure to secure necessary permits or school approval as part of your plans.

Member/Club Actions

Take these actions throughout the fall to build your advocacy skills and confidence.

WRITE TO YOUR SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Emails and letters on an issue can influence your members of Congress, but it's best to make them personal. Make sure to share who you are and why you care about the issue in your emails and letters—it will make your message 10 times more effective.¹

ATTEND AN EVENT

Members of Congress regularly host town hall meetings and other gatherings in their districts or states to hear from constituents like you! Attending an event is a great opportunity to ask questions about your issues and get to know congressional staff.

USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Whether it's Twitter or Facebook, the social media platforms you use can be powerful tools to contact the U.S. Congress. Research shows that just 30 posts or comments from constituents on an issue will help get the attention of congressional offices.

¹ Fitch, Bradford, Kathy Goldschmidt, and Nicole Folk Cooper. "Citizen-Centric Advocacy: The Untapped Power of Constituent Engagement." congressfoundation.org. Congressional Management Foundation, 2017. congressfoundation.org.