

## Top Ten Tips for Constituent Postcards

Information presented by Susan Adams at August 21015 Palouse Region Chapter meeting:

- 1. Grab the low hanging fruit.** Table at events where interested constituents are likely to be found: environmental forums, churches, fairs, farmers markets, after environmental talks at retirement communities, Sierra club meetings, your local university, neighborhood meetings. If an environmental film is playing in your local theatre, ask if you can table after. We've even tabled after a children's puppet show on climate change!
- 2. Bribe them with food.** A plate of homemade chocolate chip cookies with a sign reading "Free cookies if you write a postcard to your member of Congress" will draw the crowds like nobody's business.
- 3. Get three.** Don't be shy about asking people to fill out three postcards each. Remind them that they just need to reiterate the same sentence on each card and that the message will be hand delivered to their two Senators and Congressional Representative. If they don't have time, ask them if they are okay with you copying their message and sending it to their two Senators on their behalf. You and some other CCL volunteers can have a postcard writing party later.
- 4. Have them fill it out in front of you.** Folks will often want to take postcards home with promises to write them later. Stress that you will have the postcards hand delivered if they fill them out now. Saves them postage, too!
- 5. Write postcards at every group meeting.** Don't forget to have everyone fill out three postcards every time you have a monthly meeting.
- 6. Take them everywhere you go.** You can tack postcard writing on to other events. Offer folks an opportunity to sign postcards at a soccer match, book group, girl scouts, you name it.
- 7. Make your own event.** If tabling opportunities aren't immediately apparent, try hosting a party to watch an episode of "Years of Living Dangerously" or "Chasing Ice" and then give folks the opportunity to write a quick postcard during the show.
- 8. Have a pitch.** Be prepared with an anecdote for folks who feel hopeless or discouraged. "I'm not political." *"This is nonpartisan!"* "What's the point, they are all jerks." *"Well, actually, thanks to our postcards, Ted Cruz's office contacted US for a meeting!"*
- 9. Don't forget the kids.** If you're tabling someplace where kids might be present, have some blank paper, crayons, and pens on hand. The kids can draw pictures of why saving the planet is important to them, while their parents get some free time to write a quick postcard. Save the drawings and send them along in your packets.
- 10. Make them comfortable.** Some people will be embarrassed because they don't know who represents them. Mention up front that if they fill out a postcard and write their address on it, you can look up their members of Congress for them. Tell them you are not going to capture their information off the card, then let them put their contact information on a CCL sign up sheet if they want to learn more. Have a blank option on hand if they aren't comfortable endorsing our policy but still want to send a message about global warming. Tell them their message is confidential and don't read their cards.