

Instruction Guide:

How to Develop and Submit an Effective Call to Action (C2A)

What makes a good Call to Action?

That's a good question, and one we try to answer every day. We see a lot of ideas and appeals all over social media. One could spend all day long every day making calls and sending messages, but will it make a difference? The best Calls to Action are those that are well planned, and fully researched. It seems inspiration is all around us. Sometimes, it's in a friend's Facebook post, but it might be an article you read or a conversation you have that motivates you to want to act. We want to capture your spark and share it with others. At the same time, we have a responsibility to circulate only truthful information, and we certainly want to respect everyone's limited time by sharing the most compelling and effective actions.

Don't pass up local issues and elections:

Federal issues might be the ones you see in your Facebook feed or on the nightly news, but local issues make a difference in our everyday lives, and as a blue state, we can show leadership through action.

In the words of Michael Moore, "Show the rest of America what it looks like when Trump isn't in charge! Blue States and Blue Cities must do an end-run around Trump and create the America we want to live in...Blue States can show the rest of country how much better life can be. Important historical note: Before Roe v. Wade made abortion legal, California and New York passed their own state laws to make it legal. This greatly helped pave the way for CHOICE being the new normal — and the enactment of Row v. Wade."

The best way to start is to ask yourself a few key questions:

- What is the real purpose of this action? What are we trying to achieve?
- Is it timely? Is it relevant to what is happening now?
- Is it accurate? Can it be fully verified?
- Is it effective? Am I contacting the right people to effect results? Are the results achievable?
- Is it a priority? Is it a good use of people's time?
- Is it clear? Is it concise and meaningful?
- What can I add to this action to make it more compelling, understandable, impactful, and easy to accomplish for a large group of people?

Together We Will Craft Great Calls to Action!

TWWSFBAY has developed an online form for our members to submit Calls to Action. The process is currently under development, and we need your feedback and participation to make it successful. The essential elements of a well-crafted Call to Action are included in our various form fields.

TWWSFBAY C2A Online Form: <http://twwsfbay.org/action.html>

To provide feedback or if you have any questions about the process, please contact:
c2a@twwsfbay.org

Please be aware that not all Calls to Action submitted are selected for our TWWSFBAY Daily Call to Action, and all submitted items are subject to edit by the Admin Team. If your C2A is selected, our Admin Team will include a properly sized graphic to accompany the post and format the text.

- **NAME: Your Name (First & Last)**
- **EMAIL: Your Email (A copy of your submission will be emailed to the address provided)**

We remain a safe-space community.

We only include your first name in any attribution for our C2As, even in the secret Facebook group. Your email address is used for confirmation and if we have a question. If you have any additional concerns, please use the COMMENTS field to let us know.

- **SOURCE: Please provide your source for this C2A. If necessary, you can include additional information about your source in the VERIFICATION field.**

We need to know... even if it's your Great Aunt Edna.

The easiest way to share a source is a direct link. However, be aware that if you obtained the information from a secret Facebook group, a direct link won't work. If you have multiple sources, please include them in the VERIFICATION field. We try to credit the source if we use copyrighted material.

- **VERIFICATION: Please briefly explain how you verified this C2A. Include any relevant links.**

ALWAYS VERIFY. Inspect What You Expect.

NO FAKE NEWS! Many of the calls to action that are circulating on Facebook contain misinformation — from incorrect phone numbers to the given contact person not having anything to do with the issue at hand. “Copy and Paste” is the new chain letter. These should be disregarded. There has been some speculation and confirmation that many of these are started by trolls as a means of distraction. For every call to action from TWW SF BAY AREA, we want our members to feel confident that it has been researched and verified.

VERIFY ALL CLAIMS! If you see a C2A that includes something like, “The Dept of XYZ is asking for comments on ABC,” the best way to verify is simply to call and ask if it is true. If you cannot

verify that the body is actually soliciting this specific contact (or other such assertion), you may not include that claim in your C2A.

DO YOUR RESEARCH! Try to find at least 2 different RELIABLE sources of information to confirm the answers to those key questions listed above. Even trustworthy organizations make mistakes, and many of the “action services” that have recently popped up are run by volunteers just like us. We can all help each other by taking the time to make sure we are sharing only the best. Very few effective actions must be taken within a 24 hour period of time, so if it is breaking news, it is best to wait until situations fully develop and information is available.

TWW USA offers a great list of reliable websites: <http://twwusa.org/resources/websites/>

5 Calls: Our partners at 5Calls.org have developed a fantastic tool for easy implementation of calls to action. Our Admin Team works with 5 Calls team members on a regular basis and will share these C2A's when appropriate. We strongly recommend you follow their site and install the 5 Calls app on your mobile devices. It is not necessary to submit 5 Calls actions to TWWSFBAY.

We need your help and feedback: Help us continue to build a resource list of credible and reliable sources for information. When you find a great website that provides accurate information, let us know! You can submit a post to the TWWSFBAY group using **#RESOURCE** and share with everyone. In addition, you can send links and information to c2a@twwsfbay.org.

- **TITLE: A brief catchy phrase that will attract attention. This field is optional. Our Admin Team can provide an appropriate title.**
- **HEADING: One sentence or less that briefly describes your action.**

First Impressions Matter

We don't want to see clickbait, but we do want the action to get noticed. The more compelling the first bits of text are, the more likely people are to take action! Our Admin Team can help edit these items to make them workable and appropriate. Have a little fun with it, and give it a try! At minimum, a heading is required.

- **INTRODUCTION: Include a couple of sentences explaining why this action is necessary and important. If urgent, be sure to include any dates or deadlines.**

Be Clear and Concise

Essentials about why this action is relevant, important and timely. Use the BACKGROUND section later to go into more detail and provide additional context.

- **ACTION – DESCRIPTION: Describe the action in detail... Specifically, what do you want people to do about this?**
- **ACTION – CONTACTS: Please be sure to include full names, locations of representatives, phone numbers for local at D.C. offices (when applicable), and an email address or links to find additional specific contact information.**

What action do you want us to take? Who will we contact and why them?

Be sure to clearly explain what kind of action you want people to take. It is often good to provide more than one kind of action to allow for different effort and time commitments. Although you will provide specific contact info later, you'll want to explain WHY you have chosen this person or entity as the target of your action.

What kind of contact is best?

In general, the more personal, the better. A postcard is better than not engaging at all, a letter is better than a postcard, an email is better than a letter, and a phone call is better than an email.

At this time, we recommend postcards, letters, or emails for messages of appreciation to our representatives. This allows them to see and track your response, but leaves phone lines open (and staff available) for the most urgent issues at hand.

It is important to understand who is in charge of what.

When researching your call to action, please consider WHO will have the most impact and WHAT entities or governmental institutions are responsible for the kind of result you want.

For example, it is not helpful to contact your U.S. representative about cabinet appointments since those are handled by the Senate. At the same time, while it is important for your senator to hear your views, you will have more influence over your House representative on some issues. Each state has two senators who represent the entire state, but your representative only represents around 700,000. Also, they are re-elected every two years, whereas senators have six-year terms. This means that your representative is always under pressure to listen to constituents or be voted out.

For legislative proposals, bills are sequentially numbered based on the body in which they are introduced. So generally, "S.xxx" refers to "Senate" and "H.R.xxx" refers to "House of Representatives".

Understand which committee will consider the appointment or legislation. If another organization is soliciting information or participation, you should know exactly what they intend to do with the responses they collect.

- **ACTION – SCRIPT OR TALKING POINTS:**

Scripts help make our members more comfortable in activism.

We provide scripts or talking points in our Calls to Action because so many of our members are new to activism, and we want EVERYONE to participate at whatever level feels comfortable to them. Even so, we also want to encourage people to add their own experiences and thoughts to their messages. It is best if sample scripts are short and to the point. If the topic is complex, offering multiple talking points to choose from is very helpful. We try not to overwhelm our new activists with too much information, but provide people enough to feel confident making calls.

Members of Congress will often cite volume of letters, calls, emails, phone calls, and visitors to their colleagues. They also use personal constituent stories to illustrate the effect of a policy or law on people. Personal anecdotes are very useful.

- **BACKGROUND:** Briefly explain the history of the topic and reason for the action, include links to pertinent articles, provide suggestions on how to learn more.

More context helps engage activists over time.

While we don't want to overwhelm people with too much information, many of our members are new to activism, so they may lack a contextual understanding of why your C2A is so important. Sometimes, all it takes is a link to a great article, but be sure to add a bit of context. Remember to keep your points clear and concise. It is always best to refer people to other resources if they want to really dig in to gain a deeper understanding of the issue.

- **CONCLUSION:** Credits, inspirational phrase or invitation to learn & do more. This field is optional. Our Admin Team can provide an appropriate conclusion.

When our members stay engaged, we've done our job.

We always want to invite people to LEARN more and to DO more. A short inspirational quote or personal note of gratitude/camaraderie to your fellow activists is perfectly appropriate. You've done your part, so if you want a little help here, our Admin Team is happy to add the conclusion.

Help us to continually improve our Calls to Action

The process is currently under development, and we need your feedback and participation to make it successful. To provide feedback or if you have any questions about the Call to Action process, please contact: c2a@twwsfbay.org

Please remember that not all Calls to Action submitted are selected for our TWWSFBAY Daily Call to Action, and all submitted items are subject to edit by the Admin Team. We ask you to understand that this community exists through the work of our dedicated volunteers and members. In a large Facebook group of this size, it is a cumbersome task to review and approve every request and submission, but we are dedicated to the work.

If your C2A is selected, our Admin Team will include a properly sized graphic to accompany the post and format the text.