

## **ORGANIZE A LETTER WRITING EVENT**

Getting together with members of your faith community to write letters to your representatives is both an effective as well as fun way to influence legislation. However, careful forethought and planning must go into such an event. Here are some steps to consider:

1. Identify 2-3 people to coordinate the event.
2. Communicate your intentions with the leadership (church council, vestry, pastor, etc.) of your faith community.
3. Publicize the event within your faith community's membership three to four weeks in advance, including such details as date and time.
4. Decide what you are going to write on.
  - a. Consult with FAN about possible issues.
    - i. Possible issue(s) will depend on the time of year that you hold your event.
  - b. Select an issue or issues- two is the maximum.
5. Prepare (in consultation with FAN):
  - a. A draft/sample letter (no more than one page).
  - b. A background sheet (one page) on the selected issue(s).
6. Find a good place at your faith community to hold the event. Choose a visible place, preferably with a wireless internet connection available.
  - a. Prepare the necessary materials:
    - i. blank paper
    - ii. copies of the sample letter and the background sheet
    - iii. addresses/contact information of the representatives to whom you are writing
    - iv. envelopes and stamps
    - v. writing utensils
    - vi. laptops

7. Other considerations:

- a. How can you engage the youth of your faith community in the event?
- b. For Christian faith communities- can you bring the completed letters up to the altar during a worship service as an “offering” of letters?

8. Follow-up after the event.

- a. Find out if anyone received a response from the elected official.
- b. If a response was received, publish an excerpt of the response in your faith community’s weekly e-mail alert/bulletin/newsletter.
- c. As a result of this event, take a collective look at the responses received by your elected officials. Decide what (if any) further course of action to take next.