



Attitudes for the Religious Education of Congress

A General Guide to Help Participants Maximize Integrity and Improve Effectiveness

Respect every legislator and every person

It does NOT matter who a person is or what he or she has done in the past. Give the person a break and let him (or her) start over. Be not a respecter of persons, but rather speak truth as best you can see it. In the end your attitude may make more of an impression than the words you speak.

Do not be intimidated by any position or title

Truth is still truth, and every person still has to put his (or her) pants on one leg at a time. Relax and enjoy yourself, but also represent our issue by calling upon the highest level of religious rationale that you can bring to the cause.

Pray for help whenever you hit what seems like an obstacle

Pray for every legislator and every official before and after every visit. More often gets done by prayer than a lot of talking. As we build spiritual force, it will attract others to the campaign and this will eventually give us the moral and the numerical force to take this issue to binding legislation that addresses climate change. We also want to end all commercial logging on public lands. Invite those who cannot come to pray for your effectiveness and the success of the forest campaign.

We are not necessarily politically correct

Be more concerned about speaking to someone's heart than to his or her head. This means being as honest and straight-forward as you can. This visit may be the only time this legislator will have heard a religious message on the environment. If this person doesn't hear you, he or she may never hear it!

Don't get puffed up or too fancy

The more you think that you are doing a good job, the more you are "cruising for a bruising." Rather be a servant and just do your job. In the end humility speaks louder than ostentation and fancy presentations. Washington has seen big egos come and go like the seasons for well over two hundred years. To make an impact, reach into your faith and represent that. Then you may have eloquence and strength, but it is not your own.

Reflect the highest understanding you have of your faith

Be yourself. Fulfill the requirements of your faith, but don't push your religious views on others, including other climate campaign members. Don't put on false attitudes. Be simple and straight forward. Integrity requires that you be you, and not anyone else. This will allow you to manifest your full potential of eloquence, strength and effectiveness.

Remember you are not working for yourself or even for climate change

You represent a cutting edge of Christianity or Judaism or Native American religion in a modern missionary effort in a coarsening culture. We have been called by God to care for His creation, to have dominion, and to steward the land. A right attitude to the earth does not include destruction nor any use which makes it less serviceable for the greatest number of people or for future generations. Bluntly, “climate change represents massive social sin.” It is a “crime against humanity.” This means that as you go into these visits with legislators, you do not represent yourself or even our coalition. You represent a movement to be obedient to God in our treatment of the land. As we are successful, then the land will again flourish and all people together will benefit, not just a few.

Don't go out of your way to pick arguments or fights

First, it doesn't do any good. Second, you only harden a person in their anti-justice and anti-forest position. Third, you are wasting your time and energy. And fourth, don't call critics by names that are not nice. These approaches do not work.

Let everyone know that saving creation is the right thing to do

There is no morality or ethics in disrupting the world's climate or destroying the forests, or leveling the mountains. That is clear to every unbiased person. Therefore, let a quiet spirit of confidence permeate your work. It will touch others, spread and cultivate an aura of momentum that will move the campaign forward. Legislators will feel this and those who have embraced wrong positions will shift their attitudes and positions. The key is to reach the point of victory while there are still some forests or mountaintops left standing for the public.

Invite everyone to join the bandwagon to address climate change

We are involved with this advocacy for the earth to help build healthy rural economies and to preserve the public's land from commercial interests who would cut the trees, ruin the mountains and run off with profits while leaving local people with a devastated area which holds them in poverty for decades.

Pace Yourself. Don't get overloaded and burn out

Do as much as you can do, but don't take on so much that you burn out and poop out. Better to make five or six good visits and do them right than twice that number in a harried and hurried manner.

Hang loose and enjoy yourself

You will be more effective if you are not up-tight about being correct or worried about something. Just be a servant of God who will experience some interesting adventures. Have a good time and don't forget to take some pictures for your friends and the folks back home.