

## **Action alert: Advocating for our planetary home and God's creation**

The number of problems facing our country and world is immense. Environmental issues like ensuring communities have access to clean water and air, protecting wildlife, plants, and the services they provide, and slowing climate change affect all of us. These problems disproportionately impact our most vulnerable populations and is important to advocate for them and for the future of our planet.

Although we may currently feel overwhelmed by societal problems, it is important to not give up hope and keep advocating for causes important to us. Our elected officials have a duty to listen to and represent their constituents, and if they do not hear from us, they will be more likely to ignore this duty or assume we are all happy with how things are going.

Below is a brief guide for contacting your elected representatives.

### **General tips for contacting representatives**

Old fashioned methods of communication are best! It is recommended to either write a physical letters (handwritten if possible) to or call your representatives. Emails or automatic forms from websites are more likely to be ignored or lost.

Here are some tips from the American Civil Liberties Union. These apply to letters as well as phone calls. For phone calls, write a script if you are nervous!

- Be concise – keep your letter to less than a page and focus on one specific issue
- State who you are (give your name, identify yourself as a constituent), what issue you are contacting them about, and what action you want them to take in the first sentence or two of the letter.
- Clearly state your position (for or against) the issue and, if possible, provide 3 clear arguments that support your stance.
- Explain how this issue impacts you personally.
- If you have ever voted for or contributed money to the campaign of this person, let them know!
- If you are writing a letter, ask for a response that explains what they plan to do on this issue.

If you need some help with knowing what to say or write, a template is provided at the end of this short article. You might also find the app called “5 calls” useful in providing a script for phone calls on various issues.

### **Federal issues**

Under the current administration, it is extremely likely that a large number of current environmental protections and regulations will be rolled back. Already, the firing of thousands of workers has negatively impacted operations of the National Parks Service, Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Energy.

To stay informed about current environmental concerns in the U.S. check out the following websites:

- [The Nature Conservancy-Advocacy](#)
- [The National Resources Defense Council](#)

Georgia's U.S. Senators are Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock, and you can find your local House representative using the "5 Calls" app or by visiting your [GA My Voter Page](#).

### State level issues

We live in a state with a wealth of natural resources, and you can help ensure that our state makes decisions that help protect these resources. Because fewer people get involved at the state level, your voice can make a big impact.

Visit the Georgia Conservancy's [advocacy page](#) or [Environment Georgia](#) (scroll down to “what you can do”), to find information about current environmental legislation under consideration and steps for contacting your state representatives.

You can use the following resources to find out who your state representatives are:

- [Find Your Legislator](#)
- [Georgia General Assembly Member Directory](#)

### Example template for calls or short letters:

Here's a simple template you can use for writing or calling your representatives:

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Hi, my name is {name} and I am your constituent from {city} in {county}. I am reaching out regarding {issue or bill number}. I'm urging you [or name of rep] to {action you want them to take or how you want them to vote on the bill}. This will help Americans by {insert arguments}.

This issue is especially important to me because {explain how it impacts you personally}. I am a proud voter and hope you'll take this opportunity to represent the voices of those you serve.

Thank you for your time and consideration. For letters only: Please respond to let me know what action you plan to take on this issue.

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We have a few members of the Kirkwood Sustainability Team who are great at staying up to date with current legislation and sending updates about which bills to call or write our representatives about to the rest of the team. We are happy to forward these advocacy emails to anyone who is interested. To sign up for our Kirkwood environmental advocacy email alert list add your name and email to the following spreadsheet ([Kirkwood Environmental Advocacy Updates](#)) or email Kimmy at [kkellett09@gmail.com](mailto:kkellett09@gmail.com).

By staying informed and actively speaking out, you can help shape policies that protect God's creation and our home for generations to come. Keep calling. Keep writing. Don't lose hope!