

Organizing Existing Endorsers for a Sign-On Letter to Congress

Description

A Sign-On Letter (aka Leaders' Letter or Community Climate Leaders Letter) campaign is one of many ways Chapters can reach out to our existing and high likelihood supporters, calling them to action to support CCL's current legislative strategy.

This training includes instructions and letter templates for Chapters to prepare and get local endorsers to sign a formal group "letter" to their MoCs. The Sign-On Letter asks the MoCs to consider/support strong and equitable Carbon Fee and Dividend legislation as the foundation for comprehensive bipartisan climate action in the 117th Congress.

In This Training

- [1. What is a "Sign-On Letter"?](#)
- [2. Why are Sign-On Letters a good idea now?](#)
- [3. Identify your Prospects and extract contact data from GET](#)
- [4. Compose your Sign-On Letter](#)
- [5. Put your Leader Letter Signature form online](#)
- [6. Contact your prospects, asking them to sign](#)
- [7. Prepare your Letter for presentation to the MoC](#)

What is a "Sign-On Letter"?

The idea of a "Sign-On Letter"-- a custom, private message from local community leaders to their Member of Congress, asking them to take action on climate -- was pioneered by CCL Florida and Jay Butera (then, it was known as a "Leaders' Letter".) The letter's recipient, Representative Carlos Curbelo, became a Republican climate champion. The letter was signed by over 50 local leaders, many of whom subsequently attended a meeting with the Congressman-- a meeting which Curbelo described as a "game changer."

Why are Sign-On Letters a good idea now?

For the rest of this year CCL is focusing on ensuring a "place at the table" for negotiations over climate legislation in the next session of Congress. We must

take advantage of our past grasstops outreach to call upon our existing endorsers and supporters to generate political will for making carbon fee and dividend a high priority in the next Congress.

The CCL “Sign-On Letter” can be a fast and efficient way to engage these grasstops supporters. Here’s why:

1. **It’s easier for them to agree with** -- broad (but critical) principles rather than endorsing specific legislative language.
2. **It’s less risky for them to sign** -- if the signer's support can be private. Signer’s names need not be published; the “letter” can be delivered privately by CCL to the MoC and staff, especially as part of the December Lobby Meetings
3. **It’s convenient to sign.** It uses the same electronic signing mechanism (Google Forms) as the BCL [Declarations](#). You send your influencers a short email summary with an ask and a link to the online letter’s signature form, then follow up with a phone call. No need to carry around a paper for serial wet signatures.
4. **It takes advantage of momentum.** Seeing your earlier signatures, if they are willing to allow others to see, gives confidence to subsequent signers)
5. **It supports “upselling.”** You can ask willing signers to join you in an MoC meeting, or to email other community leaders they know, inviting them to sign.
6. **It supports “side-selling”.** You can fall back on asking them to publish a CCL article in their employee or supply chain newsletter, or hosting a brown bag presentation. See [Encouraging Existing Endorsers To Champion Their Support To Congress](#) for more outreach options, and [Action Options for Business](#): a one page “leave-behind” summary of ways businesses can advocate for national climate policy.

Three Steps Are Required

1. **Identify your prospects:** name and contact info for potential signers.
2. **Create your Leader Letter:**
 - a. Compose the Letter
 - b. Put it in a Google form for collecting signatures

3. **Contact your prospects.** Email and phone them to sell, upsell or sidesell.

Identify your Prospects and extract contact data from GET

Your “prospects” include influencers who have already endorsed EICDA, CF&D, or Climate Action. It may also include influencers with whom you’ve talked but have not formally endorsed. This latter group may now be more willing to sign a Letter due to the increasing climate emergency, and because of the factors listed above (“Why are Sign-On Letters a good idea now?”) These prospects could be listed in your “MyChapter” tab of GET.

Here are the steps for getting a spreadsheet containing your prospects and their contact information, from GET. Note: this should be done by the most computer/web/GET/Google Sheets savvy person on your team. See the Video demonstrating this process

1. Login to CCL Community, Open [GET](#)
2. Select My Chapter Tab
3. Click “Export to CSV, save to your computer (note the location folder/path). It will save a file called “MyEndorsers.csv”.
4. In your Google Drive, create a new folder called “Autumn 2020 Endorser Contact Campaign”, and open it.
5. Create a new Google Sheet called “CA02 Endorsers from GET Oct 7 2020” (using your District Name and Date)
6. Import “MyEndorsers.csv” from wherever on your computer you had saved it.(File> Import > Upload tab> Select File from your device). Accept the default settings and click “Import Data”

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
1	CA02 Endorsers from GET Oct 7 2020					Action Autumn 2020						
2	Name	Primary Contact Name	Primary Contact Title	Primary Contact Email	Phone	Delegate	Status	Notes	Endorser Type	Website	Cultivation !	En
3	John Crowley	John Crowley	CEO, Aqus Community F	john@aqus.com	7073476692	Bruce	Drafting email	Ask to sign email to other endorsers	Individual	https://aqus.com	Signed	En
4	Petaluma Argus Courier	Matt Brown	Editor	matt.brown@arguscourier.com		Mary	Drafting email	Ask to sign email to other endorsers	Editorial	https://www.petaluma360.com	Signed	En
5	Petaluma, CA	Dave King	Councilmember	davekingpcc@gmail.com		Bruce	Drafting email	Ask to sign email to other endorsers	Municipal		Signed	En
6	Point Blue Conservation Science	Ellie Cohen	President and CEO	pointblue@pointblue.org	(707) 781-2555	Barbara			Organizational	https://www.pointblue.org/	No Contact	En
7	The Added Edge	Leslie Sheridan	President	leslie@theadedge.com	7079951034				Organizational	www.TheAddedEdge.com	Signed	En
8	EcoRing	Rick Coates	Executive Director	rcates@sonic.net	7076326070				Organizational	ecoring.org	Signed	En
9	Forest Unlimited	Larry Hanson	Board President	larryhanson@comcast.net	7078877433				Organizational	www.forestunlimited.org	Signed	En
10	Aqus Community Foundation	John Crowley	COO	john@aqus.com	7073476692				Organizational	www.aqus.com	Signed	En
11	BikePartners	Geoffrey Smith	Owner	info@bikepartners.net	7075950386				Organizational	http://www.bikepartners.net	Signed	En
12	Sonoma Clean Power	Geof Syphers	CEO	gsyphers@hotmail.com	7079783463				Organizational	http://sonomacleanpower.org	Signed	En
13	Center for Climate Protection	Ann Hancock	Executive Director	ann@climateprotection.org	4152981224				Organizational	http://climateprotection.org	Signed	En

7. Format like this
 - a. Freeze first row and column

- b. Drag critical info Primary Contact Name, Title, Email, & Phone) to right of Column A "Name"
8. Add 3 columns to the right of Phone, For Delegate, Status, and Notes (shown above in green)
9. Select from Cell A2 to the cell in the lower rightmost corner, then turn on filtering. This will allow you to sort and filter the list.

Once you have a spreadsheet of your prospects, you might want to organize them in the sheet like this [\[link to Template\]](#).

Additions to this list: For elected bodies that have already endorsed, list individual members you would ask to sign. For those who haven't, ask your existing or most likely champion.

Compose your Sign-On Letter

This letter has two constituencies: signers must be willing to sign it, and it must speak effectively to the MoC. Participation by the CCL Liaison for the MoC is essential.

Simplicity is critical. This is not like a BCL Declaration or a City/County Resolution, with a long list of Whereas. The content has to be convincing to both the signers and the MoC.

Customize it. If your MoC has already co-sponsored the EICDA, you can address why a bipartisan CF&D should be the starting place for the Democrats' climate legislation. If they are still shy on climate, emphasize the other benefits of CF&D.

This example was written for liberal California MoCs. In this case both Congressmen and both Senators are strong climate supporters. If you would like some editing support, contact BCL (info@businessclimateleaders.org, or carolynfrench@ucsb.edu)

Dear Congress Members xx and xx, Senators xx and xx:

As business and community leaders in your districts and the State of California, we admire and applaud your work on climate and energy, on stewarding and restoring our precious natural resources. The deadly and economically crippling impact of COVID-19 and climate change underscores the urgent need for immediate bold climate action at all levels.

If our fires, floods, superstorms and the sustained voices of the world's climate scientists aren't convincing enough, consider the September 9, 2020 [report](#) from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Pointing to the "extreme weather events (which) continue to sweep the nation", it concludes: "Climate change poses a major risk to the stability of the U.S. financial system and to its ability to sustain the American economy." [include Business Roundtable [news?](#)]

We eagerly anticipate a breakthrough on Federal climate legislation next year. The breadth and depth of the climate crisis requires a comprehensive approach, including measures [outlined](#) by the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis (HSC) and the [Drawdown](#) Project. Of these, we want to call your attention to putting a price on carbon.

Paul Hawken of [Drawdown](#) has [said](#) that effective carbon pricing would accelerate every climate solution described in Drawdown. By analogy, the measures in Drawdown and HSC policies are like crops, and a strong and equitable carbon pricing policy works like fertilizer. It moves underlying market forces to accelerate adoption and effectiveness of those climate-saving "crops", and drives innovation of new crop varieties. A strong carbon price is among the policy levers included in the [EN-ROADS](#) modeling tool. It alone will not "move the needle" to hold warming to 1.5 degrees, but it moves it more than any other single lever on the control panel.

There is no silver bullet policy. We need to pursue the best of the full range of policies outlined by the HSC and Drawdown. For carbon pricing, we favor a strong and equitable carbon fee and dividend (CF&D) law along the lines of the Citizens' Climate Lobby proposal. Strong means the fee starts low and rises fast. Equitable means returning fee revenues to households as monthly per-capita dividends, a net benefit to those who most need and deserve the help. This will give big emissions reduction quickly and at low cost, while contributing to climate justice.

The climate crisis is too big to be solved by one political party working alone. Republican support is essential, and it is growing, especially among younger voters. We think CF&D can be the nucleus for a bipartisan climate majority, and the glue that holds it together for the long haul.

Thank you for your service to our community, our country, and our future.

Put Your Sign-On Letter into an online Google Form

You will need to have someone experienced with Google Forms. Contact BCL for help.

[Here](#) is an example of the above Leader Letter, posted online. Some things to note:

- Don't create the form until you have the FINAL version of the Leader Letter, to avoid having version conflict problems.
- Once the form is online, send the link to several of your team members to test.
- Put the Results Google sheet in a secure Google Drive location, so it is visible only to a few named people in your chapter. BCL will also need to have access.
- Set up the Results Sheet so that it notifies you anytime someone signs

Contact your Prospects and get them to sign

You will email them, and follow up by phone. The phone call will be either to remind them about the email, or to thank them for signing and making an upsell ask. Your email to them should be short and simple. These are people with whom you have already talked, and many/most of them understand CCL and CF&D well enough that only short reminders are necessary. The most important thing is that they identify your email as something they recognize and should at least open and read.

The emails should be sent from an address that they will, best case, recognize favorably, or at least not get flagged as spam or "Promotions", ideally the Delegate responsible for getting the original endorsement. Start with your community champions, maybe the first ones who endorsed. If they sign the Letter, ask them if you can use their name in your email to other local endorsers (e.g. " Dave King asked me to ask you about signing climate letter")

Here is an example email. Customize as needed based on what you know about them, your relationship with them. This one was also written for the same Congressional Districts as the Sign-On Letter above.

Subject: [Dave], time to contact Congress about Carbon Dividends

Dear [Dave]:

I hope you and your loved ones are safe and well during these turbulent times.

Thank you for your continuing support for our climate, and your endorsement of Carbon Fee and Dividend legislation as a critical part of the solution. When we last met, we promised to contact you when help was needed in moving this legislation closer to its goal. That time has come.

We are contacting all our supporters, asking them to sign a letter to Representatives Thompson and Huffman, and Senators Feinstein and Harris. The text of the letter is below. It can be signed electronically [here](#).

The bill we are supporting, the [Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act](#), H.R.763, now has 82 co-sponsors. While it will not be brought up for vote this year, we need to make sure 1) the new Congress considers it an essential element of comprehensive climate legislation expected early next year, and 2) Citizens' Climate Lobby has a seat at the negotiating table. Citizens' Climate Lobby Chapters will be delivering signed letters to our representatives later this year.

Please read the one-page letter; we think it makes a convincing case. We hope you can [sign](#), and encourage your community leader colleagues to do the same. In addition, here is a one-page [list](#) of other ways you can help advocate for Congress to act on climate.

Local CCL Chapter members will present the letter in person to [MoC] when we meet with him/her in December (If you are interested in joining us for this Zoom meeting, let me know). We will otherwise keep your signature and personal/business information in confidence; we will NOT release it to the public in any fashion, including public webpages or social media, without your express written permission.

We're more than happy to talk with you about this, and would be thrilled if you could pass this onto any local community leaders with your recommendation to sign. Spread the good news!

If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me with a Reply / to bruceh@businessclimateleaders.org, or call me at 707-338-7363.

With great appreciation for your commitment to our community.

Bruce

Bruce Hagen & the CCL Santa Rosa Chapter volunteer team

Citizens' Climate Lobby volunteer

Petaluma CA

brucekeyofh@gmail.com

Prepare your Letter for presentation to the MoC

Combine the text of the Leader Letter with the names and titles of the signers in a Word document ([example](#)) to copy and modify), save it as a pdf ([example](#) of finished product) emailed to MoC, shared on screen during Zoom meeting, or printed and presented during in-person meeting.