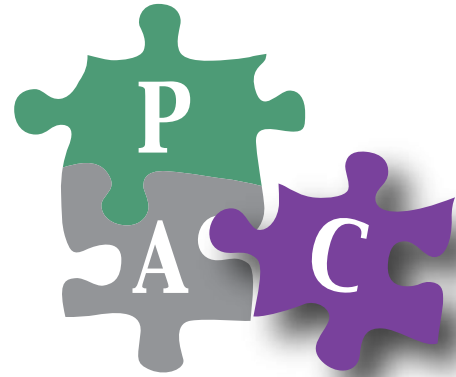


THE PEACEABLE ASSEMBLY CAMPAIGN



A CAMPAIGN TO DEMAND ALTERNATIVES TO U.S. MILITARISM

GUIDE FOR ORGANIZERS

Voices for Creative Nonviolence

Phone: 773-878-3815 pac@vcnv.org
www.peaceableassemblycampaign.org

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GREETINGS

Thank you for your participation in the Peaceable Assembly Campaign (PAC). This “Guide for Organizers” is meant to be one tool for you to use as you, your friends and your colleagues develop a local P.A.C. effort in your home community. We hope this guide will be useful to those who are entirely new to organizing as well as to those who have been organizing for many years.

One key thread common to community organizers is that we all began at the same place, trying to figure out how to improve the world around us but not quite knowing whether we had the skills or the experience to be an effective organizer.

The other common thread is that we are all potential community organizers. Most of us already engage in organizing though it is not necessarily recognized as such.

Are you involved in a car pool to provide transportation for children or share childcare responsibilities with neighbors? If so, you know how to coordinate schedules, driving routes, etc.

Are you a coach or advisor in an after school program? If so, then you know how to build personal relationships with the children, how to encourage others to improve their skills and how to promote community engagement.

Do you participate in a local Parent Teacher Association? Then you know how to coordinate and participate in bake sales, engagement with the school board, etc.

In essence, everyone is an organizer and everyone is able to participate in actively building the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.

What follows are examples of techniques and strategies that might prove useful in promoting the campaign in your local community.

As always, please contact us with any questions you might have. Our email address is pac@vcnv.org and our phone number is 773-878-3815.

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GETTING STARTED

Three key documents form the foundation for the Peaceable Assembly Campaign. The Foundational Document lays out the rationale for the campaign and lists the legislative goals. The Nonviolence Guidelines lays out the commitment to nonviolence that is adopted for the campaign. The Petition is an optional document which can be used for outreach and for showing your Representative and Senators the number of constituents who agree with the objectives of the campaign.

Make sure you have read thoroughly through the PAC foundational document and that you agree with the proposal and the campaign's non-violence guidelines. You will also want to familiarize yourself with the three phases of the campaign.

Sign up to participate in the campaign at <http://vcnv.org/pac/registration> and make sure to mark "yes" in the field that reads "please contact me about being a local campaign coordinator."

If you do not use email or have Internet access, give us a call at 773.878.3815 and let us know you are interested in becoming a local campaign coordinator.

Affinity Groups

Throughout this document (and other campaign documents) we use the term "affinity group" when referring to local Peaceable Assembly Campaign efforts. An affinity group in this context might be several friends, co-workers or neighbors who decide to gather together in support of the PAC proposal and arrange a visit with their Congressional Representative to discuss the issues. An affinity group, might also be a well-established city-wide community organization which opts to participate in the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.

Extra-legal Lobbying (a.k.a., civil disobedience/civil resistance)

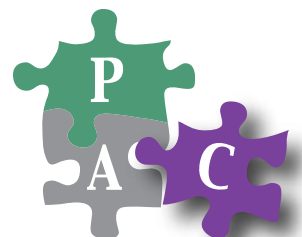
A component of the Peaceable Assembly Campaign is extralegal lobbying—or nonviolent acts of civil disobedience. Some, but not all, local Peaceable Assembly Campaigns will include civil disobedience as

a component of the effort to persuade Representatives and Senators to take some form of action to promote the objectives of the PAC. We are emphasizing extra-legal lobbying during Phase 2 and Phase 3, but groups may decide that matters are urgent enough to consider civil disobedience during Phase 1.

- Local affinity groups will choose the particular objective(s) to be achieved via the use of civil disobedience. For example, one local affinity group may choose to focus its concrete objective as seeking a commitment from the Representative or Senator to vote against any additional funding for the war in Afghanistan while another affinity group might focus upon a commitment to vote against any additional funding for Israel's military so long as that country continues the occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

- The Peaceable Assembly Campaign will be developing additional materials regarding nonviolent civil disobedience and the legal risks entailed as this campaign progresses. As mentioned, we anticipate that civil disobedience in local offices will be concentrated in the latter months of the campaign.

- In 2007, Voices for Creative Nonviolence coordinated the nationwide Occupation Project effort. In this effort, people occupied the offices of Representatives and Senators who did not commit to vote against funding for the Iraq war. Over 400 arrests occurred in the offices of over 40 Representatives and Senators over a 3 month period of time. 18 of those in whose offices arrests took place eventually voted against additional war funding in May of 2007.



PHASE 1

Developing a Campaign & Local Lobbying September 1 through January 10

Our goal is to help build affinity groups across the country that will visit their Representative and Senators to create a People's Lobby to seek alternatives to US militarism. This includes an end to the wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan and to U.S. support for Israel's continued occupation of the Palestinian Territories. During Phase 1, the PAC foundational document will be a tool for outreach and education, providing "talking points" for meetings with elected officials. If your group elects to use the petition, it can also be used for this purpose.

Note: The document and petition are not the most important component of this campaign; people are the foundation of this campaign. Our goal is to bring well-informed, articulate and outspoken individuals into affinity groups that will personally hold elected officials accountable for pursuing militarism; we will also suggest alternative ways in which society can be organized.

Developing your campaign

1) Identify the Senators and Representative who will be the focus of your campaign.

- The website "Contacting the Congress" (www.visit.com/juan/congress) is a valuable resource. You can identify your Representative at this site. It also provides contact information, addresses, names of key staff members, phone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses for each Representative and Senator.
- Your affinity group may be trying to influence more than one Representative. This is especially true in an urban area that is divided into several Congressional Districts. In this case, you'll want to decide whether your affinity group will focus solely upon the Representative who represents the Congressional District in which you live or whether you know people who live in the surrounding Congressional Districts whom you would hope to involve in the PAC effort.
- If possible, you should find out when and where

your Representative and Senators conduct regular "constituent services" meetings. This is perhaps especially important in non-urban Congressional Districts since the size of the District could make it difficult, if not impossible, to travel to the Representative's main office for a meeting. For example, David Obey represents most of the northern third of Wisconsin with offices in Superior and Wausau—a good three-hour drive from many parts of the district. But his staff holds regular "listening sessions" and "constituent services" meetings around the district, a good opportunity to meet with his staff to relay your concerns and to him.

- Find out which staff member on your Representative's and Senators' staff is assigned to international relations. This is often the key person to try to talk with about matters such as those addressed in the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.
- Determine whether your Representative or Senators is a member of either the Armed Services Committee or the Appropriations Committee. These are the two key committees that set military funding levels. It will be helpful to be in contact with these individuals sooner, rather than later, in your efforts to shape military spending.

2) Hold a PAC house meeting

A house meeting can be a powerful tool for building an affinity group and strengthening the momentum of local campaigns.

- Begin small and don't overwhelm yourself. Invite friends, relatives, neighbors, colleagues and other like-minded people over to your home for coffee or a meal. This as an opportunity to discuss the PAC's foundational document. Begin to talk about how you're going to expand the number of people working on the PAC in your local community. A key component of organizing is to always try to expand numbers of people involved. Imagine concentric circles. Encourage people to talk about the campaign with their friends, who might then talk with their friends about hosting more house gatherings as part of the campaign. You'll also want to talk a bit about

PHASE 1

the tasks involved in the campaign and who is going to do what. Before the gathering is over, be sure to agree upon a “next time” and location for a follow-up gathering.

- Make sure to extend the invitation to a diverse range of people and organizations. The PAC hopes to connect the movement against militarism with local efforts for economic, environmental and racial justice.

- Circulate copies of the foundational document and discuss the proposal. If you are using the petition as a method for organizing, make multiple copies of the PAC petition and collect signatures from those in attendance for each of the senators and representatives in your area.

Note on using the PAC petition: There is one petition for Senators and one for Representatives. Make sure to make copies of both. The name of each Senator or Representative should be written in on the petition. If you do not plan to visit all of the elected officials in your area, any additional signatures/petitions can be passed on to another organizer in your region. Copies should be made of the petitions for organizational purposes before you leave them in a Representative’s or Senator’s office.

- Identify which individuals and groups are willing to form a PAC affinity group. Affinity groups may participate in outreach/canvassing (see section below on outreach/canvassing) and will work towards a visit with an elected official.

- Use a sign-in sheet and keep a record of those who attend the house meeting. Encourage participants to register at the Peaceable Assembly Campaign website.

- Let us know the results of your PAC house meeting. Call the campaign office at 773.878.3815 or email us at pac@vcnv.org with updates.

3) Outreach and Canvassing

- You should start slow in your outreach efforts as you begin the Peaceable Assembly Campaign. “Starting slow” will help you get your feet wet in the

campaign. “Starting slow” means talking with more friends, neighbors, co-workers and others about the Peaceable Assembly Campaign, its goals and objectives. As you talk with people, be sure to ask them to read the PAC proposal or to sign the Peaceable Assembly Campaign petition. Then ask them to become involved in the campaign by attending a house meeting, by taking copies of the petition to ask others they know to sign the petition, or by writing letters to their Representative and Senators supporting the PAC campaign.

- Members of your affinity group can engage in outreach by circulating the PAC proposal and/or petition in their circles of contact, gaining signatures to be used for office visits. While doing outreach, identify people who may want to join your affinity group or start their own.

- As you become comfortable talking with others about the campaign, consider expanding the campaign to become more public in your community. Public canvassing is one method to expand the circle of those involved in the campaign. It works well to schedule one day a week or every other week when your group can engage in public canvassing. This can be door-to-door, in concert with a vigil or on a street corner. It’s always a good idea to do such canvassing in pairs and, when possible, to have someone more experienced in such outreach paired up with someone newer to such outreach. If you are doing the door-to-door approach, it is important that there be some coordination so that multiple people don’t visit the same homes week after week. Also think about whether you have the financial resources to leave a copy of the PAC flyer at each door if a person is not at home to talk with you. You may opt to use the PAC petition to collect signatures and to identify people who want to participate.

- One very effective means of outreach is the old ironing board method used by INFACT during the very successful boycott of Nestle in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. (Nestle was the subject of the boycott because of its marketing and selling of infant formula in developing countries). INFACT organizers would set up an ironing board on a public sidewalk

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with information on the campaign and a petition for passers-by to sign. It proved to be an effective way to quickly set up, take down and transport materials for the campaign. It also became a good symbol to attract the attention of passers-by who became engaged in conversations with the INFACT organizers.

4) Public Forums at Libraries

- Most public libraries will allow you to rent a room for a meeting, a video screening, a speaker, etc. Voices can suggest any number of documentaries which reflect a slice of life in either Iraq, Afghanistan or Palestine. These documentaries can help begin the conversation about the current wars and occupations. At the conclusion you can ask people to sign the PAC proposal or petition and to become engaged in the Peaceable Assembly Campaign in other ways.

5) Media

- Don't forget to contact the media in your local community. It is often quite a bit easier to obtain media coverage in smaller communities than in larger urban areas. Newspapers and radio stations in smaller communities are often still locally owned and the publishers / editors still tend to be more committed to journalism's purpose as a source of information for the broader community (regardless of her / his own personal political persuasion). Be sure to send out a media release (even a pre-written story) to your local media outlets announcing any events which you might develop as part of the Peaceable Assembly Campaign. If it is your first time preparing a media release and you are unsure what to include, refer to the sample media release in the Resources section of the Organizers Guide as a template.

- If you live in a larger urban area, you may also want to acquire a copy of a "Community Media Guide" or some similar publication that will list specific media contacts for both large and small media outlets. Many non-profits use such publications and may be willing to share their contacts upon request. Your local library may have a copy of the Editor & Publisher Yearbook with contact information. Or you may

simply want to look in your local phone book and call each media outlet to obtain contact information for the news editor, including name, phone number, fax number and email address for sending releases and statements.

- Letters-to-the-editor are another very effective tool for educating the general public about the objectives of the Peaceable Assembly Campaign. Again, smaller locally owned newspapers tend to be more open to printing a broad range of letters-to-editor, so if you live in a smaller community be especially aware of this outlet.

- Make your own media through the Independent Media Network (www.indymedia.org), blogging and local public radio broadcasts.

6) Scheduling the Office Visit with your Representative and Senators

Refer to the document, Congressional Timeline, in the Resources section of this Organizer's Guide as you plan visits with your Representative and Senators. This will help you pick pertinent times to schedule an office visit and focus your conversations with representatives around concrete ways they can take action.

(Note on the PAC's lobbying strategy: Our legislative lobbying efforts will focus on influencing the federal budget for Fiscal Year 2011 (which begins on October 1, 2010 and lasts until September 30, 2011). We anticipate that most affinity groups will probably only be able to organize one to two visits to elected officials' offices during Phase 1 of the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.)

Scheduling an office visit can take quite some time to complete. It is not as simple as picking up the phone, calling the Representative's or Senator's office, and setting up a time to meet. You'll want to give yourself plenty of lead-time to schedule a meeting. Here are some tips on setting up a meeting.

- If you happen to be traveling to Washington, D.C., you should try to set up a meeting at your Representative's or Senator's Capitol Hill office. It is doubtful

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that you would be able to schedule a meeting with the Representative or Senator directly. However, you should be able to schedule a meeting with the key staff advisor in her / his Washington, D.C. office.

- Each office will have its own procedure for scheduling such a meeting. You should call the Washington, D.C. office to ask about the scheduling process. Often times you will be asked to write a letter to formally request a meeting and to fax this letter to the D.C. office. Be sure to follow up with a phone call. It will be helpful if you are able to identify yourself as a representative for an organization in your home Congressional District or State.

Important Note: DO NOT MAIL materials to your Representative or Senators in D.C. because it can take one month or longer for the mail to be screened before being delivered

- To schedule a meeting at your Representative's or Senator's office in your home state, you begin with a phone call to the local office in your Congressional District or State. It's possible that you will be told that you must call Washington, D.C. (especially if you want to schedule a meeting with the Representative or Senator in person or with the key staff advisor from the D.C. office). It's also likely that you will be asked to submit your request in writing and to fax the request to the local office.

- If you wish to meet directly with the Representative or Senator (or their key staff policy advisor), you should focus your attention on the periods when Congress is in recess (as detailed in the Congressional timeline section).

- It will be easier to schedule a meeting with either the local office's Chief of Staff or with one of several staff members assigned to constituent services. It might also be possible (though difficult) to schedule a conference call that includes the key staff policy advisor in the D.C. office while you are at the local office. You should be aware that the local offices are mainly designed for constituent services, such as assisting people with Social Security, Veterans Affairs, Medicare and other issues. Consequently, unless you

are able to talk with the Chief of Staff, more likely than not you'll be meeting with a person who is only able to take notes and relay your concerns to the Representative or Senator.

- If you live in a Congressional District that covers a large geographical area, it might be difficult (or even not possible) to travel to the local office. Often, Representatives and Senators will schedule "listening sessions" in various parts of the Congressional District or State when they are home on recess. Their staff will also often conduct "listening sessions" in various parts of the District or State, though these staff sessions are normally for constituent services. You should call your Representative's or Senator's local office to determine when and where these sessions will be conducted.

7) Legislative Lobbying Visits

Once your affinity group has scheduled a meeting with your Senator or Representative, you should begin to prepare for your lobbying visit. You may find a number of resources included in this Organizer's Guide and/or on the Voices website (Fact Sheets/ Articles/ Tips for Lobbying) helpful for preparation.

- Upon meeting the staff present at your scheduled meeting, make sure to allow space for each member of your affinity group to introduce her/himself and convey their local organizational affiliations. Reiterate that you have come together to discuss the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.

- Use the PAC foundational document as a talking point to introduce the goals of the campaign. You may want to alternate members of your affinity group to cover each point in the proposal. Do not solely read the proposal, but rather use it to guide the conversation.

- If you have used the petition as a tool, deliver the signed PAC petitions (again, make sure you have your own copies for organizational purposes) and tell the staff that you would like the representative to endorse the proposal. If the Representative or Senator is not willing to endorse, request a written

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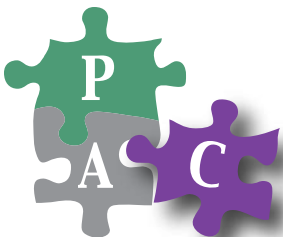
response explaining her/his stance on each point in the proposal and why she/he is or is not willing to endorse.

- Schedule a time with the office staff for a follow up visit to receive verbal and written feedback. An additional document is included in the Resource section of this Organizer's Guide entitled "Questions for Legislators" which can be used to prompt the representative to provide a deeper response and analysis to the PAC proposal.

9. Public Vigils

When possible, we encourage you to organize a regular public vigil at the office of your Representative and Senator. This vigil could be on a weekly, every other week or monthly basis for the duration of the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.

- If you are not able to travel to your Representative's or Senator's office, you may want to hold the vigil at a local post office; a local military recruiter's office; or a busy street intersection.
- The Peaceable Assembly Campaign can supply you with photos from Iraq, Pakistan and Palestine. You'll also be able to obtain lists of those who have been killed in these wars and occupations from the Peaceable Assembly Campaign.



PHASE 2

Days of Nonviolent Resistance at the White House January 19th through February 2nd

We invite and encourage you to join us in Washington, D.C. for two weeks of daily nonviolent civil disobedience / civil resistance at the White House to press for the complete end to the U.S. wars and military presence in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. We will also press for an end to U.S. support for Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories.

1) Rationale

President Obama begins his second year in office on January 19th. It will be the time to hold him and his administration accountable for continued U.S. military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan; to press for a just resolution of the conflict in Israel – Palestine; and to seek the closure of all detention facilities operated by the U.S. in the war formerly known as the global war on terror.

President Obama's first State of the Union address will likely take place during this two-week period. This provides an opportunity to emphasize the shared responsibility of Congress and the President to end the wars and to provide full funding for reconstruction of public infrastructure in Iraq and Afghanistan.

By law, President Obama is required to submit his budget for Fiscal Year 2011 to Congress by February 2 (though Congress could extend the deadline). This budget will almost certainly include additional funds to wage wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan and to continue U.S. military operations in Iraq.

2) Logistics

- The Peaceable Assembly Campaign is reasonably sure that we will be able to provide housing for groups that want to participate. We are working on finding communal spaces such as churches and houses of hospitality, as well as homes of individuals and families who are willing to provide spaces. Contact us at pac@vcnv.org or 773.878.3815 for further details and/or to reserve a space.

- We are suggesting that each group that comes participate in one day of civil disobedience/ civil resistance at the White House. This means that you will need to plan to be away from home for three to four days at a minimum; one day for travel, one day for resistance activities, and one to two days for legal proceedings and return travel. Typically, people who have been arrested for civil resistance at the White House have been held overnight, given a ticket/fine (sometimes community service has been offered in lieu of a fine) and released sometime the following morning or afternoon. At times the release has been delayed until an appearance before a judge. While these patterns are fairly predictable, they are only a guideline and the authorities could change their approach at any time. As mentioned earlier, the Peaceable Assembly Campaign is working on putting together a document outlining the potential risks and legal consequences for actions undertaken as a part of this campaign. Contact us with any further questions or concerns you may have.

- The Peaceable Assembly Campaign is not able to cover transportation costs to and from Washington, DC or once you arrive in DC. Look for environmentally and economically sustainable modes of travel. If there are several affinity groups coming from your area, consider carpooling or renting/sharing a van to share costs and make the most efficient use of available space in vehicles.

3) Local Days of Resistance

If you are not able to travel to DC during the Days of Non-Violent Resistance, consider taking your local campaign into Phase 2 in one of the following ways:

- Organize an act of civil resistance at your elected officials office. This may be a sit-in demanding some form of action that promotes the goals of the PAC, it may be a more dramatic die-in while reading the names of those who have been killed in the conflicts or you may decide on a different and more creative form of action to take.

- Hold a vigil. We especially encourage local vigils during the period of January 19 through February 2

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when the national presence is being held outside the White House. We'll be able to publicize the fact that vigils are happening nationwide during this time period, which will increase the chances of media coverage nationally, regionally and locally.

- Come together with other affinity groups in your region and hold a rally, march or walk at points of local significance. This may be a rally in front of your congressperson's office or federal building. Or you may want to take on something more symbolic—such as marching and/or walking between an army recruitment center to a local school that is suffering from lack of resources in the attempt to highlight the money that is being misused on defense spending.
- Be creative and announce your events to the media and the public.

Voices for Creative Nonviolence

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PHASE 3

Local Legislative Lobbying + Civil Disobedience February through July 2010

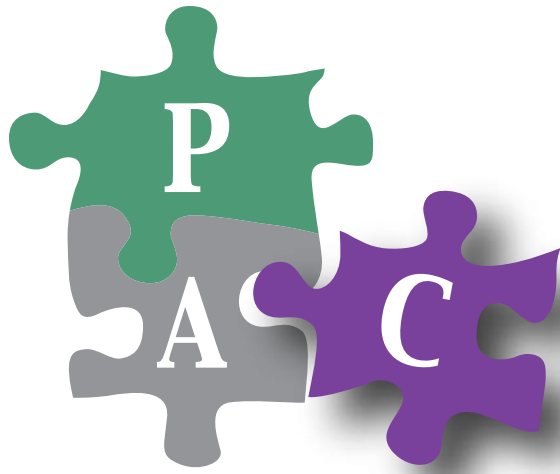
Congress will begin work on the budget for Fiscal Year 2011 (which begins on October 1, 2010). The first step will be the budget resolution, which sets broad legislative parameters for the budget. The second step will be crafting and passage of the various Authorization bills, which are policy statements of Congress that create the authority to appropriate funds for specific purposes (though funds are not actually appropriated at this time). The third step will be the crafting and passage of the actual appropriations bills in which Congress appropriates monies for specific purposes and states how the funds can be expended by the various agencies.

The months from February through July will be an essential time to do legislative work in our home Congressional districts and states. As the appropriations bills begin to work their ways through Congress, the Peaceable Assembly Campaign will engage in both legal and extralegal (nonviolent civil disobedience/civil resistance) lobbying efforts to obtain commitments from Representatives and Senators that they sponsor legislation that supports the PAC's goals.

- By this point, you will have laid a solid foundation for Phase 3 of your campaign. You will have visited the offices of your representatives, developed relationships, and shown commitment and dedication to your objectives and principles.
- All the tactics that you employed during Phase 1 and Phase 2 should be built on during Phase 3.
- We are encouraging campaigns and affinity groups to continue applying pressure on the congress through repeated office visits and civil-disobedience during Phase 3. At this point, defense contractors and big business obviously have more money and influence on the congress than the will of ordinary people and the peace movement. Our firm, non-violent and sustained presence will hopefully challenge these norms.
- Refer to the Appropriations Process and Congres-

sional Timeline documents in the Resources section of the Organizer's Guide to get a better sense of next year's legislative calendar. Highlight each upcoming stage in your campaign's vigils, office visits, and civil disobedience actions. Tell your representatives that you want to see concrete responses and positive legislation instead of vague promises or slogans.

- Continue to send updates about the progress of your campaign to pac@vcnv.org so that we can connect local campaigns with the nationwide movement.



RESOURCES

PLEASE CLICK ON THE TITLES TO OPEN UP THESE DOCUMENTS.

FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT/PROPOSAL WITH SAMPLE LETTER

PHASES OF THE CAMPAIGN

PAC FLYER

THE APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

CONGRESSIONAL TIMELINE

QUESTIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES

TIPS FOR LOBBYING

PAC PETITION FOR SENATORS

PAC PETITION FOR REPRESENTATIVES

PRESS ADVISORY SAMPLE

PRESS RELEASE SAMPLE